



THE RAY

The newsletter of Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center

June 2017

Vol.7 Issue 2

Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center
2281 North Swan Boulevard
Wauwatosa, WI 53226

(414) 302-0240
www.ourladyofgracespiritualitycenter.org

From the desk of Mary... 

Warm greetings from Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center!

In keeping with our sacred mission of celebrating the Universal Call to Holiness, we continue to rejoice with the whole Church for the blessing of her two newest and youngest (non-martyred) saints, the amazing brother and sister team, Francisco and Jacinta Marto. We are so grateful to Pope Francis who travelled to Fatima, Portugal to canonize these extraordinary youngsters on the land where Our Lady of the Rosary first appeared to them one hundred years ago to the day, on May 13, 1917.

In this special Fatima edition of *The Ray*, I am honored to introduce to you a wonderful Marian priest, Monsignor Charles M. Mangan, from the Diocese of Sioux Falls, South Dakota who has graciously written a feature article for us entitled "A Saintly Duo" that is sure to inspire you. It is a beautiful piece that you will not want to miss.

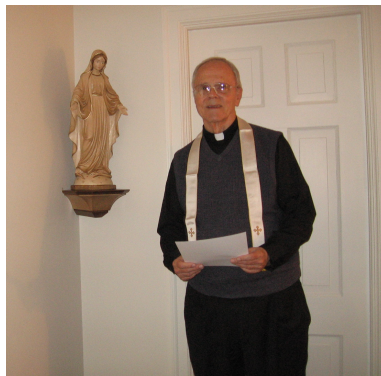
We are so grateful to Monsignor Mangan for taking the time out of his very demanding ministry to share his reflections with us. May God continue to bless his generous spirit and love of Our Lady.

Speaking of blessings, we continue to be humbled by so many referrals to Our Lady of Grace from priests and many others throughout the Archdiocese and beyond. Thank you all for your prayers, sacrifices and financial support of our very important work of spiritual direction and vocational discernment. It is a joy to share this mission with you, a mission that continues to flourish beautifully under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, through the intercession of Our Lady of Grace, and with your help. May God reward you in time and in eternity for all of your love and support.

I wish you a summer filled with refreshment and peace.



A friend of the Center bringing flowers on the feast of Our Lady of Grace, Feb. 7, 2017



Father Wally Stohrer, S.J. at the Center on October 18, 2013 blessing the Our Lady of Grace statue

Our Lady's Great Gift to Us—The Promise of the Five First Saturdays

During her third apparition to the three children on July 13, 1917, Our Lady said to Lucia dos Santos, the eldest of the three, that she would come to ask for "the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays."¹

Eight years later, on December 10, 1925, Our Lady reappeared to Lucia in her room in a Dorothean Convent in Spain where she had begun her pursuit of religious life. This time the Child Jesus was with the Blessed Mother, and He spoke these words, "Have compassion on the Heart of your Most Holy Mother, covered with thorns, with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment, and there is no one to make an act of reparation to remove them."²

Then Our Lady said, "Look, my daughter, at my Heart surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce me at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You at least try to console me and say that I promise to assist at the hour of death, with all the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months, shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me."³

It is important to note that Our Lady specifically requests that all of the above be done each time with the intention of making reparation for offenses committed against her Immaculate Heart.

¹*Fatima in Lucia's Own Words: Sr. Lucia's Memoirs*, 162(1995) 9th Ed.

²⁻³*Ibid.*, p. 231.

All in the Family for Seventy Years

We congratulate a great friend of the Center, Father Wally Stohrer, S.J., on the splendid occasion of his 70th anniversary as a Jesuit. Also this summer, his only sister, Sister Baptist Stohrer, O.P. is celebrating her 70th anniversary of Religious Life as a Sinsinawa Dominican. They are the only two children of the late Walter and Elvera (Glanzner) Stohrer.

For the past several years, Father Wally has offered Masses quarterly at the Marquette University Jesuit Residence, and more recently, at the San Camillo Jesuit Retirement Community Chapel for the intentions of our benefactors, volunteers and directees at Our Lady of Grace.

We are so grateful to you, Father Wally, for your wonderful support of our mission. We rejoice with you and your dear sister as you jointly celebrate these extraordinary jubilees.



A Saintly Duo *Monsignor Charles M. Mangan*



The announcement that this year's Centenary of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima would include the Canonization of Blessed Francisco Marto and Jacinta Marto on May 13th by Pope Francis intrigued and uplifted the Catholic faithful.

One saw the visible interest on the faces of so many as they heard the long-awaited news: the Bishop of Rome would travel to the Cova da Iria to raise this venerable duo to the glories of the Altar on the very Feast of Our Lady of Fatima.

The exemplary charity, patience and perseverance of Francisco and Jacinta along with their older cousin Lucia continue to awaken deep within the friends of Jesus the desire to love God more and to serve Him better as Mary pleaded one hundred years ago.

These children are holy. And they remain a template for our own efforts to be good before Our Lord.

From the ample testimony given by their contemporaries, Francisco and Jacinta frequently received the Sacraments, particularly Confession and Holy Communion, with profound fervor, daily recited the Holy Rosary with sincere devotion and routinely commended the sick, the suffering and the wayward to Almighty God with remarkable trust.

Although privileged with three appearances of the Angel of Peace in 1916 and six visits from Our Lady during 1917, Francisco and Jacinta did not haughtily exempt themselves from obedience to their parents and their local pastor. They humbly submitted themselves even to misguided civil authority but without retreating an inch from their divinely-inspired convictions.

Mary's summons to make reparation for sin found a permanent home in these children. As they fasted from their lunch and gave it instead to the sheep they were tending, tied a coarse rope around their tiny waists to mirror the sacrifice of their Savior, bore without complaint the scorching Portugal sun and endured the angry glances and snide remarks from *querulous* relatives and strangers alike, Francisco and Jacinta embraced mortification not as a means to attract attention but rather to invoke the abiding mercy of God upon themselves and sinners everywhere.

The children acknowledged their nothingness in the sight of their Creator while simultaneously they treasured His tender love. They were well aware of what He required of them, and they sought to perform their daily duty with exactitude and promptness.

In her gentle, forthright manner, Our Lady presented difficult and frightening realities to the children—the horror of sin, the annihilation of nations, the promotion of error, the deliberate attempt to thwart the plan of God, the awfulness of Hell. Far from refusing to accept all that she shared, Francisco and Jacinta recognized Divine Providence. They confided in this kind Mother and welcomed her care for them. Had she not promised that they and Lucia would one

day go to Heaven and that, in the end, her Immaculate Heart would triumph?

The parlous state of our era induces us to look again to those who preceded us, certain that we can learn something about how to navigate our treacherous age. Unlettered, poor children from a backwater village as mentors for us and our advanced society? We should take the opportunity to learn from the virtuous Francisco and Jacinta. Their proximity to Jesus and Mary transcends time and place and provides us with a salutary influence as we confront the perennial hazards lurking around us.

These earnest youth experienced what Pope Francis, just hours before he left for Fatima, prayed that Our Lady would do for all Portuguese believers: to “whisper into the ears of each one of them, and assure them that her Immaculate Heart is a refuge and a path leading them to God.”

Conveyed by the Ever-Virgin, the Fatima message of prayer, reparation and the fulfillment of one's daily duty was observed to an extraordinary degree in the lives of the little shepherds. What great things are accomplished when the counsel of the Mother of God, which, of course, is identical to that of her Divine Son, resonates and is enthroned in the hearts of her sons and daughters!

Saints Francisco and Jacinta are proof that lasting conversion and purity of soul are both possible and necessary. No matter where we have been or who we have been, Our Lady is here for us.

We rejoice with these children—indeed, the entire Mystical Body of Christ—who once were physically small but veritable spiritual giants, whose names are now enrolled in the catalog of the canonized.

V. Saints Francisco and Jacinta. R. Pray for us.

Fatima Plenary Indulgence

Pope Francis is offering the faithful a wonderful opportunity to receive a plenary indulgence during the Fatima Centenary Year which has been extended to November 26, 2017. Information about the ways to obtain the indulgence can be downloaded from the World Apostolate of Fatima USA website at: <https://wafusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Jubilee-Year-of-Fatima-Indulgence.pdf>.

Raymond Gerner 1953-2017

We are saddened by the death of one our loyal volunteers, Raymond Gerner, who met our Lord on Monday of Holy Week. Always eager to help, Ray was a devout Catholic layman who attended daily Mass and had a deep love of Our Lady. We remember him fondly, and with gratitude for his generous service to the Center. May he rest in peace.

As Always... 

This newsletter is made possible through the generosity and skills of Miss Nicolette Bardele.

We are so grateful for any donation to the Center. All donations are tax-deductible and may be made payable to ***Our Lady of Grace.***