



Rejoice!

Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Newsletter

Winter 2016

Dear Friends and Families,

As the *Rejoice* undergoes its final editing and I pen my letter, it is the final Sunday of the liturgical year, the Solemnity of Christ the King. This great feast is a magnificent reminder to not only recognize Jesus Christ as King of the Universe, but also king of our hearts, our lives and our families. How wonderful this feast! In today's world God is ignored, overlooked and belittled. We need to reclaim and proclaim His sovereignty over us! In 1979, Pope John Paul II, a prophet for our times, wrote in *Familiaris Consortio*,

"May Christ the Lord, the Universal King, the King of Families, be present in every Christian home as He was at Cana, bestowing light, joy, serenity and strength. On the solemn day dedicated to His Kingship I beg of Him that every family may generously make its own contribution to the coming of His Kingdom in the World – "a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace," towards which history is journeying." (FC, 86)



The liturgy is a great teacher, for not only is this great solemnity the end of the liturgical year, but it also provides a fitting transition into the new liturgical year. The liturgies of Advent help us prepare for the birth of the King. I have been thinking about those days more than 2,000 years ago when Christ was born in Bethlehem. Have you ever thought about how many events were coalescing and how God was bringing about the fullness of time?

God foresaw and used the Roman census to realize His plan; Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem and the Old Testament prophecy was fulfilled. The Light of the Nations was born in a stable.

The pilgrimage of the Magi is another. *"When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold the magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage.'" (Matthew 2:1-2)*

continued on next page ...



*O Come
Let Us
Adore
Him!*

Even as an infant, perhaps even before He was born, the Divine Light of Jesus was guiding, drawing others to Himself. The Magi were inspired to follow the star of the newborn King, to honor and pay homage to Him. To cite the wisdom of Pope Benedict XVI, *"The Wise Men from the East mark a 'new beginning' ... the journeying of humanity toward Christ."* This journey is one that must never end in this life.

The Magi risked everything following this star into foreign lands! Despite dangers and their critics, they had the conviction to follow the star. We will never know what inspired them to do so, yet the fact remains that at great risk to themselves, they did. They set out to follow *that star...that light...*and they were persistent throughout their journey. Even when the star disappeared, they did not abandon their purpose, requesting a meeting with Herod who, surely, would know the location of the newborn King of the Jews. King Herod, though, did not share the hopes or the natural faith of the magi.

"When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all of Jerusalem with him. Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. "They said to him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea, for this it has been written..." (Matthew 2:3-5)

King Herod's role in these events also needs to be examined, as he is the first to persecute families because of the birth of the Christ Child. Perhaps this is where the attack on the Christian family first began and this attack has continued ever since. Herod's malevolent atrocities in his attack on the innocent have carried forward from generation to generation.

"Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage.' After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." (Matthew 2: 7-11)

Advent is the perfect check point for us on our journey, a perfect time to reflect on these things, a perfect time to think about Herod, the Magi, and Pope Benedict XVI's observation that this historical event marked the

beginning of mankind's journey toward Christ. Are we truly proclaiming Christ as our King in our lives or are we to be counted among those about whom God spoke to Samuel, that is, those who reject God as king?

"Samuel was displeased when they asked for a king to judge them. He prayed to the Lord, however, who said in an answer. "Grant the people's every request. It is not you they reject, they are rejecting me as their king. As they have treated me constantly from the day I brought them up from Egypt to this day, deserting me and worshiping strange gods, so do they treat you too." (1 Samuel 8:6-8)

My hope this Advent is that we all strive to be like the Magi, perhaps best echoed by Pope Francis when he said:

"We do well to repeat the question asked by the Magi: 'Where is the child who has been born the King of Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage' (Matthew 2:2). We are impelled, especially in an age like our own, to seek the signs which God offers us, realizing that great effort is needed to interpret them and thus to understand his will. We are challenged to go to Bethlehem, to find the Child and his Mother. Let us follow the light which God offers us – that tiny light. ... The light which streams from the face of Christ, full of mercy and fidelity. And once we have found him, let us worship him with all our heart, and present him with our gifts: our freedom, our understanding and our love. True wisdom lies concealed in the face of this Child. It is here, in the simplicity of Bethlehem, that the life of the Church is summed up. For here is the wellspring of the light which draws to itself every individual in the world and guides the journey of the peoples along the path of peace." (Homily of Pope Francis on the Epiphany of the Lord)

Christ is the Light of the World; as Christians, we too are to bring light to the world. Be the light in your homes, be the light in your families, be the light in your work place, be the light in your school, be the light in your cities, be the light in our country, be the light in the world. Everyone you meet is longing for God, desires to love Him and be loved by Him. May your light introduce them to Him anew.

May His star shine in our hearts and herald the way of truth, love and peace. O come let us adore him!

Mother Mary Magdalene .dHM
Mother Mary Magdalene O'Halloran, IHM
General Superior

Then and Now

Fr. Masmitjá was born into on December 29, 1808, was heading into its most tumultuous century. Throughout his young adulthood and during his seminary days political unrest in Spain was growing. Even before he was ordained a priest on February 22, 1834, the government had already begun threatening to dissolve religious orders and some monasteries were already demolished. The secularization of Catholic Spain had begun.

1834 Spain would become infamous for its attack on the Catholic Church, which the liberals saw as altogether too powerful amongst the people. From 1834 on, numerous priests, nuns, brothers and other religious were murdered, executed, imprisoned, or exiled. Never before had Catholic Spain seen such clerical slaughter and the violent seizure of Church property. One day in particular, July 17, 1834, is now known as the Day of Infamy; rioting mobs in Madrid left 78 Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans and Mercedarians dead and their residences devastated.

Fr. Masmitjá was assigned to a parish right after ordination but soon after, he was sent to his hometown parish in Olot to replace the pastor who was removed for being too vocal about his political beliefs. In March of 1836, the government abolished all religious orders and seized their property: Churches, convents and schools. The demolition of convents and monasteries had a devastating effect on society, the spiritual consequences were far reaching. In such an overtly Catholic country the desire for monasteries and convents was, so to speak, in the daily life and breath of the people; with their destruction the Faith experienced a sustained loss of spiritual strength from which it has yet to recover. Fr. Masmitjá watched, listened and prayed.

As the government enforced secularization continued, Fr. Masmitjá became increasingly concerned about the social problems in Spanish society, especially the plight of women. Poorly educated and deprived of their religious models, the young women would be unable to pass on the Faith to their future children and now neither were there any religious sponsored schools.

While praying before a statue of the Sorrowful Mother, Fr. Masmitjá conceived the idea of founding a religious congregation for the apostolate of education and prayer. The plan seemed reckless and imprudent given the anticlerical laws of the time and women's place in society. Nonetheless, having seen the "painful and extraordinary abandonment of the poor girls



Fr. Joaquin Masmitja

in Olot", and their need for education and spiritual formation, Fr. Masmitjá was sure that his inspiration was from the Holy Spirit and that he would be given the strength and means necessary to accomplish the work. It became his desire to rebuild society through prayer and education in Christian Doctrine.

All of this while bishops, priests and religious were being imprisoned and the confiscation and sale of church property became a daily occurrence. Churches, monasteries, convents, Catholic libraries and manuscripts were burned and religious works of art were mutilated. The liberal authorities were shameless, uttering despicable calumnies to discredit the Church. Amidst all of this to confront the evil with truth in charity, on July 1, 1848, Fr. Joaquin Masmitjá founded the Daughters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

In 1843 a more moderate party regained power and Catholics regained some rights, but the damage had been done. From 1820 to 1859 the number of religious congregations in Spain was reduced from 27 to 8 and the number of diocesan clergy from 46,000 to 719. There are no numbers recorded regarding religious women, but the persecution was the same and so were the results.

Heritage Series

Fr. Masmitjá's concern for the plight of women grew even more as the Industrial Revolution caused large numbers of men and women to flood the cities from the rural areas. Most were uneducated and illiterate, and the work in the newly founded factories was little better than slavery. Many of the women were forced into prostitution as a means of survival. The material and spiritual needs of these thousands of people were tremendous. Due to the government enforced secularization for the span of a generation ignorance (especially of the Faith), superstition, and a loss of piety were widespread

Though the means differ, the fruits are similar. Our society suffers from its separation from God. God is ignored, His revelation ridiculed, His priests, religious and families are attacked. Perhaps because the means are more subtle, they are more insidious. Our culture has taught us to be comfortable with forgetting God. The message communicated is that it is permissible to worship God on Sunday mornings within the walls of our church buildings, but He is not welcome any other place or time.

NUMBER OF	1965	2015	% CHANGE
US Catholics	46.3 MILLION	68.1 MILLION	47% INCREASE
US Priests	59,192	37,578	37% DECREASE
US Religious	179,954	48,546	73% DECREASE

PER CATHOLIC CAPITA	1965	2015
US Priests	1:782	1:1,812
US Religious	1:257	1:1,403

Catholics today are faced with countless societal influences that are directly opposed to their Faith, from attacks against the dignity of human life, to attacks on the family, to widespread ignorance of the Faith. Through societal influences, children today are taught and formed to accept, in the name of tolerance and acceptance, moral situations that directly contradict the divine law placed in their hearts at conception and nurtured by sacramental graces.

Fr. Masmitjá founded our community in an atmosphere and environment similar to what we live in today. The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary are just as committed today as they were at their foundation 168 years ago to form the young in the truth, love and beauty of Divine Revelation and all the teachings of the Church. The Sisters are just as committed to helping strengthen the family and helping the parents give their children a solid formation. Spain of the 18th century looks strikingly similar to the US of 2016, but Mary's Heart will triumph!



(All information gathered from the Newsletter of Abbaye Saint-Joseph de Clairval, dated May 1, 2009; the article "But What About the Faith? Catholicism and Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Spain" by Patrick Foley; and the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate on their "Frequently Requested Statistics" page of their website)

Consoling the Heart of Our Mother through the Five First Saturdays

“Have compassion on the Heart of your most holy mother, covered with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment.”

The Child Jesus spoke these words to Lucia when He appeared with Mary, asking Lucia to make reparation for offenses and ingratitude toward the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

During the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima in 1917, the Lady from Heaven told Lucia, Jacinta, and Francisco to pray the rosary daily to obtain peace in the world and the end of war. She also asked the three children to make sacrifices for the conversion of sinners. In June, the Lady revealed that God willed to establish devotion to her Immaculate Heart in order to save sinners. She promised to come again to ask for “the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays.”

And she did come again! In 1925, when Lucia was a postulant with the Dorthean Sisters, the Child Jesus and Our Lady of Fatima appeared to her and asked for the Five First Saturdays of reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Not understanding what was asked of her, she wasn’t able to fulfill that request. In 1930 Jesus appeared again to Sister Lucia and revealed the meaning of the Five First Saturdays.

What is the meaning behind this request of Jesus and Mary? Jesus desires that we make reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of His Most Blessed Mother. The five Saturdays would correspond to the five blasphemies and insults against our Blessed Mother.

Blasphemy is a word we don’t hear often, but that doesn’t mean it is a light offense or that it is uncommon. What it does mean is that, in general, as a society, we have become desensitized to what has become very common. We hear so much about tolerance that we feel unwelcoming and unloving if we judge an action to be wrong, but the fact remains that Our God and His Blessed Mother are often the object of blasphemy. Blasphemy is a direct insult of God in speech, action, or thought and it also extends to contemptuous ridicule of the saints, sacred objects, and persons consecrated to God.

In justice, but also in love, we need to make reparation for these sins, we need to make it right or repair what has been injured or broken, namely our relationship with God and His saints. Through reparation we attempt to compensate for the wrong. It was to this the Child Jesus was referring when He asked us to offer reparation to Our Lady revealed for the blasphemies and ingratitude of men to his dear Mother.

Heaven’s request is simple (though not necessarily easy!) The Five First Saturday devotion consists in making reparation for the five offenses against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, particularly by going to Confession, receiving Holy Communion, praying five decades of the Rosary, and meditating an additional 15 minutes on the mysteries (or mystery) of the Rosary, all with the intention of being in loving communion with Mary and making reparation to her for the offenses committed against her.

Even with those familiar with the devotion, the additional 15-minute meditation is often overlooked, with the (mis)understanding that taking 15 minutes to meditatively pray the rosary fulfilled Our Lord’s request. However, Mary specifically requested this when speaking to Lucia: “Recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary.” The additional 15-minute meditation extends the rosary’s time of reflection on the life of Jesus.

The word “meditation” need not trouble anyone nor seem to bump this devotion up to the “professional pray-ers” level. It simply consists of considering or reflecting on the life of Jesus; in this case, in Mary’s company, and with her ponder the depths of the events in the life of Jesus. The meditation can focus on one of the mysteries of the rosary or on several; it is entirely flexible, but not dispensable. This meditation is quality time with our Heavenly Mother, who knows Jesus better than anyone else on earth and who loyally leads us to Him.

Consoling the Heart of Our Mother through the Five First Saturdays

It is interesting just how specific the Child Jesus was when describing this devotion to Lucia of Fatima. He not only stated five First Saturdays in reparation for five offenses against His Mother, but He also named the blasphemies, perhaps for us who have been trained to overlook the sins of others in the name of tolerance, or perhaps because we don't see or hear of their occurrence. When considering the five offenses He named, we don't really have to look too far to see how common they really are.

The five blasphemies against the Immaculate Heart of Mary named by the Child Jesus are: blasphemies against her Immaculate Conception, her Perpetual Virginity, her Divine Maternity, influencing children to have indifference, contempt or hatred toward Mary, and, lastly, insults made against Mary's sacred images.

I know it is not the norm to overhear a blasphemous conversation about Mary's Immaculate Conception, her Perpetual Virginity or her Divine Maternity. But what is common is to hear others reduce Mary to be just like us in all of our sinfulness, to hear others speak of Jesus' "brethren" as if they were his siblings born of a marital union between Joseph and Mary, or, yet, to hear others proclaim that Mary may be the mother of Jesus (hence her established place in the nativity scene or her multiple images on Christmas cards), but she is not the mother God, or even our mother in the order of grace. Well, who is Jesus but God Incarnate in Mary's immaculate and virginal womb? Yes, these blasphemies are common.

Even more odious is teaching children through word or deed to do the same. Jesus had hard words for those who lead children astray: "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea." (Matthew 18:6) In teaching children these error those who do so are not only blaspheming and denying the intervention of the all-powerful, all-good God in human history to bring about the redemption of mankind,

but also depriving these children of a guaranteed way to deeper knowledge and love of Jesus Christ through the shortest and surest way ... His Blessed Mother. He came to us through Mary, it pleases Him when we return to Him in the same way.

Purposely showing disrespect, or even violence, to images of Our Lady is an offense against Mary, whom the images represent, and against God, who created her, called her, and raised her to a pre-eminent holiness. Even to the present-day occult movements purposely disfigure and damage images of Mary; the devil cannot stand Our Lady's immaculate holiness and freedom from sin, so he incites humans to dishonor her as an insult to her and to God.

These offenses are common and they are displeasing to God and His Mother, even if they are done in ignorance. How pleasing it is for the Lord to see us desire and attempt to repair these offenses of others. How moved we are to see a small child offer his mother the simple gift of a colorful weed and how reassuring it is to see the mother so lovingly accept that gift. We are no less the child and Mary no less the mother.

Let us, then, heed the call of Jesus to make the First Five Saturdays of reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary: "Have compassion on the Heart of your most holy mother!"



You are invited to join the Sisters for the First Saturday Devotions. We have Holy Mass at 8:00 am then we spend 15 minutes in reparation meditating on a mystery or mysteries of the Rosary. We take a short breakfast for a simple breakfast and then return to the Chapel for the recitation of the Rosary.

News in Notes and Photos



1 & 2: As part of their preparation for perpetual profession, Sister Mary Guadalupe and Sister Rose Marie attended the **Vita Consecrata** Institute at Christendom College.

3: On September 8, Feast of the Nativity of Mary, Maggie Schaeffer received her white veil and new name! Introducing ... Sister Maria Kolbe, IHM!!

4: Sister Mary Guadalupe Bergkamp and Sister Rose Marie Weber professed perpetual vows in the hands of Mother Mary Magdalene on August 20, 2016.

5 & 6: On the occasion of her Silver Jubilee, Sister Joseph Mary O'Brien renewed her vows and received a jubilee crucifix and a papal blessing.

7 & 8: Introducing: Postulants Melia Korbe and Ashley Winters. Melia is from Hays, KS, and Ashley is from Plainville, KS. Both of the "western Kansans" entered on September 14, 2016.

9 & 10 The Knights of Columbus and the Knights of the Holy Queen led our October 13 Fatima Procession. The procession stretched from its beginning point next to the Novitiate House of Formation all the way to the Shrine. The crowd gathered at the Shrine for the offering of Memorares, the Rosary and hymns. Save the date: our next Fatima procession is on May 13, 2017, at 6:30 pm. Please come and bring the family!



News in Notes and Photos



The Power of (Our Lady of) the Rosary

From the 13th century to the present, countless personal intentions have been answered through the power of Our Lady of the Rosary.

1213 – St. Dominic taught the faithful how to pray the Rosary, thus enabling the Christians to overcome the Albigensian

1571 – The Battle of Lepanto
On October 7 the Turks attempted to invade Christian Europe at Lepanto. The Pope asked Catholics to pray the Rosary; out-numbered 3-1 the Christian forces were victorious.

As stated in *Fatima: the Great Sign*, in those countries where the faithful prayed the Rosary, the Communist, even at the last moment, mysteriously halted and left. This happened in Brazil (1966), Chile and Portugal (both in 1975). "In Belo Horizonte 20,000 women organized and prayed the Rosary, disbanding the leftist meeting there. In Sao Paulo, 600,000 women praying the Rosary in one of the most moving demonstrations in Brazilian history, sounded the death knell of the Communist

1628 – The Siege of La Rochelle France was torn apart by religious wars, for 8 months public rosaries were held throughout France and the soldiers prayed the rosary daily. On October 28, the Huguenots surrendered.

1646 – La Naval de Manila
After a six month siege the Dutch Protestants with 18 warships were defeated by two vessels of Catholics mariners who daily prayed the rosary begging Mary's assistance and made a vow to the Lady of the Rosary to make a pilgrimage to her shrine.

1955 -- Austria
Facing the seeming inevitable Communist take over, the Austrian people prayed the Rosary every day for seven years. For no apparent reason, the Communist forces quietly withdrew.

1815 – The Battle of New Orleans
During the Revolutionary War, Andrew Jackson led a small army (whose families gathered to pray the Rosary during the battle) to victory despite all

1683 -- Battle of Vienna, Austria
300,000 Turks tried to take Vienna from a small defensive garrison. Meanwhile, armies of Europe united and marched to assist, praying the rosary. They defeated the

1945 – Hiroshima, Japan
Eight people living at ground zero, survived the nuclear bomb and its after effects because, "we were living the message of Fatima" and praying the rosary daily.

1716 – Peterwardein, Hungary
Continuing their assault on Europe, the Turks continued their threat. With the aid of the Christian faithful praying the Rosary, Prince Eugen led the Christian armies to victory.



Save the Date: May 7, 2017

**THE INTERNATIONAL
PILGRIM VIRGIN STATUE
OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA
IS VISITING THE NOVITIATE HOUSE
OF FORMATION OF THE
SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE HEART
OF MARY!**



Plans are in progress and more details will follow in the next newsletter. What a wonderful way to start our celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima.

"In 1946, we crowned Our Lady of Fatima as Queen of the World; and the next year, through her Pilgrim statue, She set forth as though to claim Her dominion; and the favors She performs along the way are such that we can hardly believe what we are seeing with our eyes."

Pope Pius XII

May the angels lead them into paradise.



Memorials have been established for

*Bernice Bergkamp
William Peltzer
Frank Joseph Blanding
Sylvester Stuhlsatz*

Gifts have been given in memory of

*Gene and Mae Rose Patry
Michael J. Gann
Damon Horsch
Marian Fine
Dick Tucker
Stephen Sapp
Florence Clupney*

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*Thank you
so very much!*



St. Gianna, Pray for Us!

St. Gianna is known for her sacrificial, motherly love. Pregnant wither fourth child, when diagnosed with cancer she chose to forego the treatment that would have saved her life while endangering the life of her child. She is a wonderful example of motherly love, a love that will go to any length to protect her child from impending dangers.

Becoming a mother or father changes one forever. All of a sudden the new parent knows this tiny child's life is more important than one's own. The parent becomes the guardian of this most precious life.

St. Gianna, help us protect the children Our Lord has entrusted to our care. Pray for us, that we may see and avert the dangers that threaten the innocence and well-being of our children, that we may love and nurture our children, and lead them to Our Lord and Our Lady and eventually to Heaven. Amen.



*St. Gianna Molla
October 4, 1922 - April 28, 1962
Canonized May 16, 2004*