

## *Chronological Order of the Events of Akita, Japan:*

**1969:** Angel appeared to Sr. Agnes Sasagawa in the clinic in Myoko, recited the Rosary with her and taught her the Fatima "decade prayer," which Sr. Agnes had not known before.

**Jan. 1973:** Sr. Agnes' hearing began to diminish.

**Fri., March 16, 1973:** Sr. Agnes became totally deaf.

**June 12, 1973:** A brilliant light suddenly appeared, as though coming from the tabernacle. (Same phenomenon occurred the next day.)

**June 14, 1973:** Light again appeared, but this time it was surrounded by a red flame which seemed to envelop the rays shining from the tabernacle.

**Thurs., June 28, 1973** (Eve of Feast of Sacred Heart): Sr. Agnes again saw a blinding light from the Blessed Sacrament, rays of light, and a multitude of angels surrounded the altar in adoration before the Host. Pain began in Sr. Agnes' left hand from a cross shaped wound, and as days went by became increasingly intense.

**Thurs., July 5, 1973:** Her guardian angel again appeared to Sr. Agnes to recite the Rosary with her and speak to her. Pain in Sr. Agnes' left hand became excruciating. Our Lady then spoke to Sr. Agnes for the first time.

**Fri., July 6, 1973:** All Sisters notice the same wound, and blood flowing from the right hand of the statue of Mary.

**Thurs., July 26, 1973** (Feast of St. Ann): Profuse flow of blood from the hand of the statue of Mary. Sr. Agnes felt intense pain from the wound in her hand. She is about to be sent to hospital. (On Saturday,

the pain stopped and her wound disappeared, but wound on statue remained for three months.)

**First Fri., August 3, 1973:** Second message from the Blessed Mother.

**Sept. 29, 1973:** Wound on the hand of the statue disappeared, but bodily parts of the statue ooze an enormous perspiration having a wonderful fragrance.

**Oct. 2, 1973** (Feast of the Guardian Angels): Sr. Agnes saw the guardian angels of seven Sisters and the Bishop present in the room, lovingly attending each one and praying in adoration before the shining Host.

**Sat., Oct. 13, 1973:** Third message of Our Lady.

**Oct 16, 1973:** Appearance of a worm in front of each sister, and the beginning of a horrible stench coming from the confessional (the odor of sin).

**Jan. 30, 1974:** Dream of the weight of the snow.

**Feb., 1974:** Fr. Yasuda's first visit to Akita.

**June 10, 1974:** Dream and appearance of serpent.

**Oct. 13, 1974:** Sister Agnes temporarily regained her hearing, as her angel predicted.

**Jan. 4, 1975:** The first time the statue wept.

**March 7, 1975:** Doctors declared Sr. Agnes incurably deaf.

**Sept. 15, 1981** (Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows): Statue wept for the last of 101 times.

**Sept. 28, 1981:** Invisible angel opens visible Bible to Genesis 3:15, and explains the biblical relationship and meaning of the 101 tears.

Sun., May 30, 1982 (Pentecost and Vigil of the Feast of the Visitation): Complete cure of Sr. Agnes' deafness, as predicted by her guardian angel.

Easter Sun., April 22, 1984: Pastoral letter issued by Bishop John Ito declaring "the events of Akita" to be supernatural.

1987: First publication in English of Fr. Teigi Yasuda's book, *Akita-Tears and Message of Mary*.

## *The Soul of a Child*

The soul of a child is the loveliest flower  
That grows in the garden of God.

It climbs from weakness  
to knowledge and power,  
To the sky from the clay and the clod.

To beauty and sweetness  
it grows under care.  
Neglected, 'tis ragged and wild;

'Tis a plant that is tender  
and wondrously rare,  
The sweet, wistful soul of a child.

Be tender, O gardener, and give it its share  
Of moisture, of warmth, and of light.

And, let it not lack, for painstaking care  
To protect it from frost and from blight.

A glad day shall come  
when its bloom shall unfold,  
It will seem that an angel has smiled,

Reflecting a beauty and sweetness untold,  
In the sensitive soul of a child.

In the breast of a bulb  
is a promise of spring;  
In the little blue egg  
is a bird that will sing;

In the soul of the seed  
is the hope of the sod;  
In the soul of a child  
is the kingdom of God.

# *Padre Pio*

## *And Strength From The Eucharist*

by Fr. Anthony J. Cipolla  
from *Thorns And Roses*,  
Vol. 20, # I, Winter 1998, pp. 1-6

On December 18th, 1997 His Holiness, Pope John Paul II declared Padre Pio Venerable. This means that he is worthy to be honored publicly as a virtuous and holy person. Because of this, paintings, statues, and stained-glass windows of Padre Pio can be displayed in our churches.

There was a time when many enemies of Padre Pio tried to defame his image by ruining his good name and reputation, due to false accusations. He endured all the sufferings that the Good Lord permitted, in a spirit of peace and tranquility. He once said, "Be at peace in everything that you do."

Many people have wondered where Padre Pio got all the strength to endure the excruciating physical pain of the stigmata, his ill health, weakened body, and emotional pain of false accusations regarding his purity and mismanaging money.

It has been said, that in life, there are three wounds of pain inflicted on man. The wounds are physical, emotional, and spiritual.

The first one is physical pain. It can easily be detected because it is seen and very much felt. The physical pain of a disease, illness, or malady is a "first degree" wound of suffering on the body. It is very painful, depending upon its depth and the nature of the physical ailment. Usually, various medications can be taken to lessen the pain and assuage the suffering. Padre Pio's pain of the open wounds in his hands, feet, and side was so severe that no medication was able to stop the bleeding and pain.

Once, a news journalist came to see Padre Pio. He was very inquisitive and curious about the stigmata. He asked Padre Pio, who had a dry sense of humor, about it, and Padre Pio responded, "Well, the Lord didn't give them to me to be decorations!"

Padre Pio often prayed for the stigmata to go away, but he began to understand that the stigmata was God's will for him. Because of it, Padre Pio experienced the emotional strain of embarrassing situations. He was subjected to constant physical and psychological examinations. There were all sorts of examinations and investigations to try to discredit the Divine origin of the stigmata.

Once a student from the north of Italy came to see Padre Pio. He said, "Padre, my professor said that the reason that you have the wounds of Christ crucified, is because you meditate on the Passion of Christ so much that the wounds appeared on your body." Padre Pio said, "Tell your brilliant professor to go out to the barnyard and meditate on a bull, and then see if he grows horns!"

### **Need For An Exorcism?**

There were some ecclesiastical authorities who thought that the stigmata was diabolical. As a matter of fact, Pope Benedict XV, (1914-1922) had authorized a medieval exorcism, in which a chain was placed around the altar when Padre Pio was celebrating Mass. If the chain would have broken, this would have been a sign that his stigmata was demonic. When the report of Padre Pio was presented to His Holiness, Pope Benedict XV responded, "They have chained the Saint, and let the beast run free."

The Vatican, as well as the Capuchin Superior, sent medical doctors, psychiatrists, and scientists to investigate the nature of the stigmata. This went on for ten years. Doctor Amico Bignami, an atheist, was sent by the Vatican to give a scientific explanation of the stigmata. but he could not do so.

Even before Padre Pio received the stigmata in 1918, he never enjoyed good health. He had bronchitis, and often complained of stomach problems, and many times, he could not eat or retain food. He never ate supper. He would join the friars in Franciscan hospitality for meals, but a baby would not have been able to survive on the little food that he ate; yet, he maintained a weight of 160 lbs.

When Padre Pio was a young priest, many people thought that he had tuberculosis, but this was not the case. He endured temperatures of 125 degrees Fahrenheit, that once broke the thermometer.

This can only reasonably be explained that he was given a special grace to endure the severe physical suffering. He received strength to endure pain, as well as high temperatures that would have caused most people to die. He said that he received all his strength from the Holy Eucharist.

### **Emotional Pain**

The emotional pain was even more severe than the physical. The embarrassment of placing him under an investigation because of the stigmata, and because people were coming to San Giovanni Rotondo from all over Italy and many other countries, calling Padre Pio, "11 Santo." The Saint.

Vatican authorities silenced him from 1931-1933. His faculties were taken away from him. This meant that he could not publicly celebrate Mass or administer the Sacraments. He was a prisoner in his own cell. He celebrated Mass alone, with a friar present to serve his Masses, in a small room near his cell.

It was during these years of persecution, that his Masses lasted two to three hours long, because he went into ecstasy. He wept very often at Mass. He was filled with so much joy of Christ's presence, and he felt so privileged and unworthy to be a priest, thus enabling to offer the Holy Sacrifice. The Mass was his sole consolation during these years of persecution. He lived for the Mass. He once said, "This is my only comfort. .. that of being associated with Jesus in the Divine Sacrifice, and in the redemption of souls."

### **Read Nearly Every Book**

It has been reported that Padre Pio practically read every book in the Franciscan library during the years of persecution from 1931-1933. As happens to most of us in life, there are just as many people who will call you a saint, as there are who will call you a demon. Padre Pio had his enemies, and

most of them were members of the clergy, from the bishop of the Diocese of Manfredonia down to the common friar.

### **False Accusations**

He suffered false accusations of sexual impropriety, being called a womanizer, and also of mismanaging money. Archbishop Pasquale Gagliardi was his chief enemy, and made all sorts of sordid and false accusations against Padre Pio. As it turned out, the Bishop, himself, was guilty of everything that he was accusing Padre Pio.

He was in fact, literally projecting his own image on Padre Pio. When the truth about Archbishop Gagliardi was found out, he lost his diocese and was sent to his home practically penniless. Padre Pio, in his mercifulness and kindness, made arrangements with Father Superior, that the Archbishop would receive a pension from the money sent to Padre Pio, from people all over the world. So it was that Archbishop Gagliardi received money from the monastery until he died in 1929.

Padre Pio experienced his purity, his reputation, and his credibility being attacked; yet, he remained strong in spite of the vicious attacks on him as a person and a priest of God. He knew that the devil was constantly tormenting and tempting him, but the Lord continued to give him sufficient graces not to succumb to diabolical attacks.

### **An Agent Of The Devil!**

By his enemies, he was made out to be a villain, a fraud, and even an agent of the devil. But, he was strong in his faith in God. He let the evil tongues of men chatter, and the pens of character assassination run free at his expense. What was alleged, was taken as truth; but what was true about Padre Pio, that he was a humble and holy priest, was never doubted in the minds and hearts of those people who really knew him.

Archbishop Capovilla, Secretary of State under Pope John XXIII, was another chief enemy of Padre Pio. It was believed that the Archbishop did not like mystics, and regarded Padre

Pio as a fraud. Thus, more suffering and investigation came to Padre Pio when Pope John XXIII was pope from 1959-1963, as a result of Archbishop Capovilla's disdain for Padre Pio.

The attacks to discredit, embarrass, or humiliate Padre Pio did not weaken him. He could say, as St. Paul did, "For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 12: 10). He was firm in his faith, determined to serve Christ faithfully, and to draw every soul to Christ through his ministry.

### **Frequented Blessed Sacrament**

He stayed close to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. He was often found several times during the day praying in front of the Blessed Sacrament. The Holy Eucharist gave him all the strength he needed to endure the emotional strain and drain of constant harassment, torment, and temptation.

Like Christ, he was slandered even by priests and some confreres who surrounded him like guardian angels to protect him from the crowds. But their hearts were not pure, and their lives were not conformed to that of the Divine Teacher. Filled with false piety, like the Pharisees, they saw black in every expression, word, and phrase of Padre Pio, and they threw mud on his purity.

The spiritual attacks were the most severe, because it struck at his very soul. The devil knew how powerful Padre Pio was as a priest, so he did everything in his power to persuade Padre Pio to leave the priesthood.

Padre Pio was severely tormented by the devil, who would appear to him as the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Blessed Mother, St. Francis of Assisi, and the Father Superior. Padre Pio was smart, and tested the spirit. He would say, "If you are really Jesus, the Blessed Mother, St. Francis, or Padre Superior, repeat after me, "Viva Gesu!" And, the evil spirit would leave. The diabolical infestation was done with the purpose to ridicule, confuse, and constantly torment Padre Pio, so that he would give up his priesthood and the saving of souls for Christ.

Padre Pio spent fourteen hours a day in the confession box, bringing

many souls back to the grace of Christ, and changing their lives to live as a committed Christian, ridding themselves of sin to live a life of grace. There were hundreds of people lined in the church to confess to Padre Pio. In fact, there were so many people who wanted to go to confession to Padre Pio, that in the 1950's, the friars had to issue numbered tickets to confess to Padre Pio. Some people waited for days.

There was jealousy and suspicion, because Padre Pio was famed among the faithful as a good and holy priest and an extraordinary confessor. Some of his own friars in the monastery bugged his confessional to see how he dealt with penitents, and why he was so popular among the faithful as a confessor. It was not until 1963, that Pope Paul VI ordered that the tapes be destroyed.

He also suffered because he was silenced and ostracized from people, who both needed him and loved him. Prayer and solitude led him closer to the Lord. He would go to the monastery chapel in the early hours of the morning, praying before the Blessed Sacrament. Sometimes a light would illuminate around the tabernacle. Padre Pio saw Our Blessed Lord many times.

Padre Pellegrino Funicelli, who was once the guardian of Padre Pio, would awaken to spy on Padre Pio as he prayed through the night. He would walk in the corridors in his bare feet to follow Padre Pio, so that Padre Pio would not hear him.

He reports: "Unfortunately, I did not have the good fortune of surprising and enjoying my confrere transfigured by a mysterious ecstasy. And this, despite all my great efforts. The ecstasies were totally his and not mine. In compensation, however, through the crack (thin as a razor blade) in the window, I saw him surrounded by a light which was for me, providential, and which I held to be emanating from his soul, abounding with the grace of God. I enjoyed this to the point that I would have liked to shout to him: "Welcome, and thank you for the beautiful things you are showing me."

... And now, he shows us, as well, these wonderful mysteries of God. +++

# *A Proudful Man*

from *Stories of Love*, p. 153  
Jesus to Alan Ames

**T**he man was sitting alone in the church thinking of his life. He thought of the good things he had done, and he thought of the bad things he had done. He then placed in his mind a set of scales, and on one side of the scales he placed the good he had done, and on the other, the bad. No matter how he tried, the man could not get the scales to weigh in favor of the good; the bad always seemed heavier.

He began to feel a little sad and, as he looked at his life, he became disappointed with it and with himself. He looked at his life, and thought, "I will never overcome the bad; it seems always to have been with me and it weighs so heavy on me. I feel it will break my heart."

## **A Weakness To Sin**

As he reflected on his life, he remembered what his father had said to him as a boy. "Son, there will always be temptation in your life, and there will always be the opportunity to sin, for in your humanity, there is a weakness that opens us to sin."

He remembered asking his father, "What can we do to stop sinning, then, Father, and what is this weakness? How can we overcome it?"

"Son," replied the father, "the weakness all people have is their pride. It is in pride people's hearts are opened to many sins, and it is in pride many lives are damaged. To overcome pride is impossible in yourself. The moment you believe you can overcome your pride by yourself, is the moment your pride wins, and you are on the path that leads to certain defeat. It is when a person says, "I am weak,

I cannot win," and the person turns to God, asking for His help, that by God's grace, the person begins to walk the path of assured success.

## **Do Not Rely On Yourself**

"Remember, Son, in yourself is weakness; in God is strength. In those moments, when you feel life is so heavy, when you feel you are being dragged into a dark hole you cannot get out of, in those moments, do not rely on yourself or you may find you are dragged even further down.

"In those moments, turn to God and ask for His help, and He will help you; I promise you, He will. Son, try to remember this and turn to God, asking Him to help, and when you do, remember your old father who gave you this advice. It is the same advice my father gave to me, and it has saved me many times. It is good advice."

The picture of his father telling him this faded from his mind, and as it did he said, quietly, "Thank you, Dad." The man then looked at the altar before him, and said out loud, "God, please help me; I cannot do it by myself. I have committed so many sins, and yet I've done so little good. Please help me, Jesus, to do better."

Then the man knelt down and began to pray over and over, "Forgive me, Lord ... a proudful man."

The more he prayed the stronger he felt inside. Now he saw the scales before him again. It was still weighing heavily on the side of bad, but then he saw a hand tip the scales in favor of the good, and he heard the words, "In My eyes, you are not as bad as you are in your own, and there is still time in your life to do much more good."

The man began to cry, as he continued to pray from his heart, "Forgive me, Lord ... a proudful man." The strength he now felt inside of him was so intense, he knew God was showing him that

God was there for him to lean on. Understanding this, the man also began to feel a deep joy and a deep peace.

"Lord," he said, out loud ... "I will do my best from now on to do good and to please You, but I will always need Your strength. I cannot do it by myself, for I am weak."

The man heard again inside his head a Voice saying, "I will always be there for you." The man smiled, knowing this was the truth, and knowing that ahead of him, by the grace of God, lay the opportunity to do good in his life.

"Son," called the Father, into the church. "You had better get ready; we will have to leave soon for the cathedral. You don't want to be late for your ordination, do you?"

"No, I don't," smiled the man, as he got up and walked out of the church. He went over to his father embracing him, saying, "Thank you, Dad." +++

## *Body or Soul?*

by Fr. Edwin J Duffy  
from Fr. Duffy's Reflections, p. 87

**W**hile on vacation at a relative's home, I observed an older woman spending an hour a day each day, beautifying her hair and face. The amount of instruments she used was amazing.

One morning, knowing she was Catholic, I offered to drive her to Mass, but she declined, stating that she did not have the time. She had all that time to spend on her mortal body, but not one hour for her immortal soul. Can you imagine what would happen if we were to spend the same amount of love, energy, and interest on our souls as we do on our bodies? One lasts a few years, the other forever. If someone made a study of our lives and saw how much attention we give to each, which one would they think we consider immortal? +++

# Churchgoers Live Longer

by Nancy Weaver Teichert  
from The Sacramento Bee, Dec. 24, 2001

Weekly attendance at religious services increases the longevity of worshippers, a new study has found, possibly because of a greater inner peace.

Even after accounting for health-risk factors, such as smoking, churchgoers had a lower mortality rate, concluded Doug Oman, a research scientist at the Human Population Laboratory in Berkeley. His results were presented before the American Psychological Association in August and will be published in the *International Journal for Psychiatry and Medicine*.

Religious attendance cannot be proven as the cause of lower mortality rates, but evidence is accumulating, said Oman, who teaches at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Public Health. "Religious attendance was associated with living longer," he said.

Oman's findings are based on a health study of 6,545 residents of Alameda County that began in 1965 and continues today. The participants are regularly monitored, and the data generated reports documenting the benefits of everything from good diets to churchgoing.

## "I Believe It"

Caryl Learned, 82, of Sacramento, who attends church services at least once a week, said she is not surprised. "I believe it," she said. "It is a part of me. I really do believe it calms one. You always have something to fall back on ... a confidence. I've lived a better life for it."

"One reason may be a greater inner peace, that comes from religious participation," Oman theorized. "When stress situations

come up, people's religious faith is something they can rely on to help them respond in favorable ways," he said. Oman said the reduction in mortality rates was greater for women than men. His study backs up earlier findings by senior research scientist William Strawbridge from the population laboratory, which is part of the Public Health Institute.

Oman extended the research further by looking at the correlation between regular religious attendance and death from several health conditions. He found that the reduction in mortality rates is true for several types of diseases such as heart, respiratory, or digestive problems. But religious participation offers less protection against cancer, according to the study. Oman found less of an increase in longevity for people with cancer.

Strawbridge said his earlier study also documented an increase in longevity from weekly attendance at a variety of religious services. Those who attend religious services regularly are about 80 percent more likely to live longer than those not regularly attending, which is about equal to the benefits of regular exercise," he said. Churchgoers also benefit from the community support available among congregations, and church members do a good job of helping other people.

(Live longer. Try daily Mass, or at least a few times a week!!) +++

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## MEAL PRAYER

(sung to Eidelweis)

*Bless our friends, bless our food,  
Come, O Lord, and sit with us.  
Make our talk glow with peace,  
Come with Your love to surround us.*

*Friendship and peace,  
may they bloom and grow,  
Bloom and grow forever.  
Bless our friends, bless our food,  
Bless our homeland forever.*

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# An Arch For Mary —a Shrine For Life

by Brother John M. Samaha, S.M.  
from *Queen of All Hearts*,  
Nov. /Dec., 2001, pp. 4-7

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 Larry 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 undertaking? Most assuredly. About \$100 million worth.

## A Wonder Of The World

Mr. 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 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. Fund-raising 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 herself 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 directing, in a powerful new way, the world’s attention to the plight of the innocent unborn.

## 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.

## Three Or Four Years To Complete

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

“It’s such a big thing,” mused attorney Nancy M. Langer, a project cooperator, “and it sounds so impossible, that maybe it is something that will happen. It’s one of those things that, if God wants it to happen, He’s got to give Larry the means to make it happen.” And, his Advisory Board and endorsers are poised to request of believers what it takes to accomplish this dream.

The cost is estimated at approximately \$100 million, which will come primarily from generous faithful here and abroad. Hopefully orga-

nizations 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 proposed Arch of Triumph and Shrine. God willing, this project will generate a whole new allure and spirit for the "Queen City," as Buffalo is called.

Some nay-sayers have objected that Mary would not want such a grand monument erected in Hechonor. 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 the 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](http://www.OurLadyofVictory.org)).

### **Guadalupian 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 saris*, "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."

For additional information and to make a contribution please contact:

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## The Glow

by Fr. Edwin J Duffy  
from Fr. Duffy's Reflections, p. 45

Years ago at the Trappist Monastery in Gethsemane, Kentucky, marveled at the glow that encircled the faces of some of the monks I met.

Malcomb Muggeridge, writing of his conversion to the Catholic faith, tells of a strange incident while filming *Something Beautiful For God* (about Mother Teresa and her destitute people).

The lighting was extremely poor in the hospital and the photographer claimed it would be a waste of film to shoot any scenes there. Urged on, he shot the scenes and was astounded to see in the processed film everyone bathed in a soft, luminous light which science could not explain. Muggeridge concluded that "holiness is luminous."

Isn't that what Christ tells us, "That those found worthy will shine like the stars in the sky." (Read Alan Ames new book, *Salaam, Shalom*, dictated by Jesus, for an interesting example of this.) +++



In Akita, Japan, on September 28, 1981, Sister Agnes suddenly felt the presence of the Angel at her side during the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. She did not see the Angel in person, but a Bible appeared open before her eyes and she was invited to read a passage (Genesis 3:15)...the voice of the Angel was heard explaining in sort of a preamble that the passage had relationship with the tears of Mary, then continued:

"There is a meaning to the figure one hundred and one. This signifies that sin came into the world by a woman and it is also by a woman that salvation came to the world. The zero between the two signifies the Eternal God Who is from all eternity until eternity. The first one represents Eve, the last the Virgin Mary." +++

# Pilgrimage Program:

SEND FOR COMPLETE ITINERARIES

**Fatima and Lourdes** - Sat., July 20 to Tues., Aug. 6, 2002, (18 days), \$2399. Our most popular pilgrimage. Feast Day visit to **Santiago Compostella** (Shrine of St. James), **Pontevedra, Zaragosa, Avila, Braga, Santarem, Covadonga, Fatima, Ovieta, Lourdes, Alba de Tormes, and Garabandal.**

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**Ireland** - Fri., Aug. 17, to Tues., Aug. 28, 2002 (12 days), \$1798. Msgr. Joseph James will be our chaplain. In 1985, in Lubbock Texas, he was given the gift of reading souls during confessions. Visits to **Knock, Melleray Grotto, Ballinspittle, Inchigeela, Attymass** (home of Fr. Patrick Peyton), **Achill Sound House of Prayer, Veritas & the Padre Pio Center in Dublin,** & more. Meetings with visionaries Mary Casey, Tom Lennon, others, and Christina Gallagher (if she is available).

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**Poland Shrine Tour** - Sun., October 6 to Sat., October 19, 2002 (14 days), \$2199. By popular demand, our chaplain is again Fr. C. Krisa from Michigan. Includes **Warsaw, Zoliborz, Krakow, Niapokalonow, Zakopane, Zelazowa Wola, Wagnivniki** (Divine Mercy Center), **Wadowice** (birthplace of John Paul II), **Kalwari Zebrzydowska,** and the beautiful Shrine at **Lechen.**

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**Guadalupe, Mexico** - for Feast Day celebrations. Dec. 6 thru 13, 2002, (8 days), \$1299 with flight from Newark, N.J. (Land only, \$899) Includes Feast of the Immac. Concep., Juan Diego's Feast, and both the Eve and Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, **Ocotlan, Puebla, St. Michael's Well, and Our Lady of Good Remedies.**

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**Fatima** - Tues., April 22, to Tues., April 29, 2003 (8 days), \$1199. Visit **Aljustsal, Lisbon, Santarem, Coimbra, Fatima, Ourem,** and the Shrine of Our Lady of Nazareth at **Nazare.** There is much to do in Fatima, yet we stay in one place, providing a relaxing spiritual experience.

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**France** - Fri., May 9, 2003, to Tues., May 27 (19 days), \$2899. Visit **Paris, Paray-Ie-Monial, Taize, La Salatte, Ars, Chateaufort-de-Galaure** (Marthe Robin), **Nevers, Aix,** (St. Eugene Shrine), **Lourdes, St. Anne d'Auray, Mont St. Michel, Pontmain, Lisieux,** & more. +++

**Medjugorje, San Giovanni Rotondo, and Rome** — Sat., Sept. 13 to Sat., Sept. 27, 2003 (15 days), \$2449. Visit, **Rome, San Giovanni Rotondo, Loreto, Lanciano, Medjugorje, Amalfi, Monte Cassino,** and more. +++

**Holy Oil**— Tues., Nov. 11, to Tues., Nov. 25, 2003 (12 days), \$2299. Visit in **Beirut,** in Lebanon, **Damascus** in Syria, and **Cairo** in Egypt. +++

**Shrines of Italy** - Thur., Sept. 9, 2004 to Thur., Sept. 23, (15 days), \$2599. Visit **Milan, San Damiano, Montichiari, Fontanelle** (Rosa Mystica), **Padua, Venice, Florence, Siena, Assisi, Loreto,** (St. J. Cupertino) **Lanciano, San Giovanni Rotondo, St. Michael's Cave, Mugnano** (St. Philomina), **Pompeii, Monte Cassino, Amalfi, Naples** (for the Feast of St. Januarius) (St. Patricia) **Rome, Tre Fontane, & Civitavecchia.** +++

**All pilgrimages include: priest on each bus, daily Mass, three Rosaries, breakfast and dinner, and a blue 101 jacket. Non-refundable deposit is \$150 per person.**

Spend a few quiet days near the Blue Army Shrine in Washington, NJ. Call I O 1 Foundation for details. - -

Write for information regarding the **Garabandal** Miracle Flight.

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