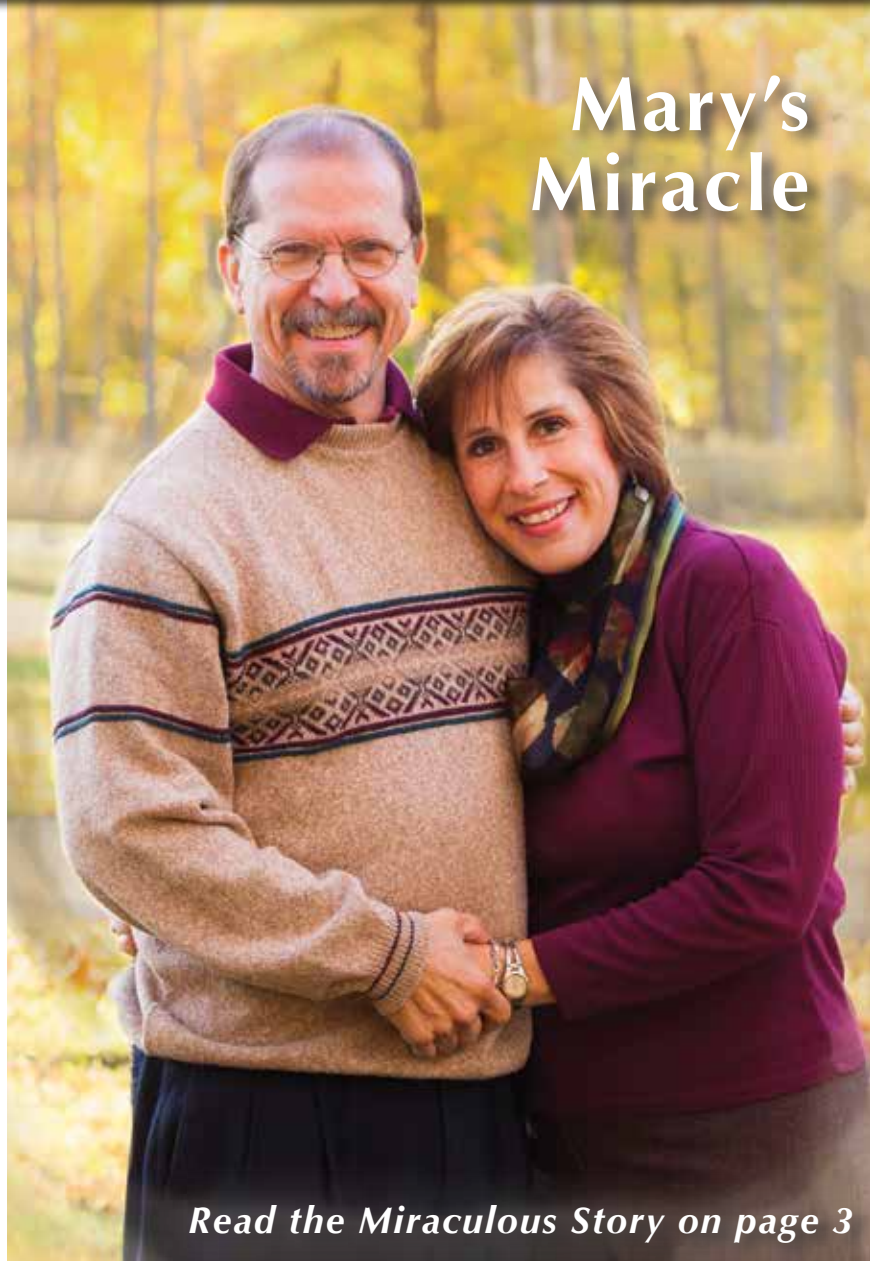


The MESSENGER

MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Mary's Miracle



Read the Miraculous Story on page 3

WINTER 2013 - 2014

The MESSENGER

MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY FAMILY

In this issue

<i>Provincial Perspective</i>	1
<i>An Invitation from Father Phil</i>	2
<i>A Miracle of God's Grace</i>	3
<i>All in the Family</i>	7
<i>I Never Would Have Thought</i>	9
<i>Harden Not Your Hearts</i>	12
<i>Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish</i>	13
<i>Holy Family Prayer Books</i>	14
<i>Go See this Movie!</i>	15
<i>Mary, Mother of God?</i>	16
<i>Undoing the Damage</i>	18
<i>Too Old for Kindergarten</i>	20
<i>A Family Vacation</i>	22
<i>The Authentic Religious Life</i>	25
<i>The Poetry Corner</i>	28
<i>Masses for Life</i>	<i>Inside Back Cover</i>

The MESSENGER

MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Copyright © 2014. The Messenger is published semi-annually and is owned and operated by the

Missionaries of the Holy Family (MSF)

3014 Oregon Avenue
Saint Louis, Missouri 63118-1412
Phone: 888.484.9945
www.MSF-America.org

Publisher: Very Rev. Philip Sosa, M.S.F.
Editor: Maurice Prater
Designer: Bill Herberholt,
Graphic Masters
Printer: Universal Printing Company
Front Cover: Dr. John & Mary Timmons,
owners of the
Ave Maria Retreat Center
in Danville, Illinois.
Back Cover: Promotion for the
Mary of Nazareth
movie by Ignatius Press.

Provincial Perspective

Dear Family,

The end of one year and the beginning of a New Year provides us with the opportunity to reflect on the past and think of the future. No doubt these are challenging times in which we live, and we long to find peace to refresh and renew our wearied hearts and minds.

God has not been silent! He has spoken to humanity down through the ages. It is important for us to read the Word of God even when we do not fully understand it. The Holy Family went through difficult times, too. We must imitate them by submitting to God's will even when we do not understand our situation or our future.

Faith and trust in God will help us to live out our lives in confidence. There are many societal threats against the family, but they can be overcome by lives centered on the Words of Christ and by a genuine desire to respect, love, and protect one another, born or unborn.

In this Year of Our Lord 2014, consider spending some time every day – perhaps at the beginning of each day – reading the Bible, the Sacred Scriptures. Allow God's Word to dwell within you, and you will find that your life begins to be filled with greater gifts of grace, peace, and truth.

Wishing you and your family a Very Blessed 2014!

Sincerely in the Holy Family, I am

Fr. Phil Sosa, M.S.F.

Very Reverend Philip Sosa, M.S.F.
Provincial Superior



Very Rev. Philip Sosa, M.S.F.

Apostolate Board

Mr. Ed Glisky
Mr. Jim Grouchy
Lt. John Harper
Dr. Mark Hickman, MD
Mr. Walter Lukaszek
Mr. Ed Koeninger, Jr.
Mr. Guy Parasch
Dr. Abe Saavedra, PhD

Advisors

Mr. Martie Aboussie
Mr. Harry Fabick
Mr. Tom Kutis III

Advisory Committee

Robert & Gracie Mirabal
Dr. Terri Quebedeaux, MD

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Very Rev. Philip Sosa, M.S.F.
Provincial Superior

Rev. Daniel Hawkins, M.S.F.
Vicar

Rev. James E. Wuerth, M.S.F.
Second Assistant

Rev. Alberto Treviño, Jr., M.S.F.
Third Assistant



An Invitation

The Family Forever Society

by Very Reverend Philip Sosa, M.S.F.

What is the Family Forever Society? It's very simple! Members of this special society are people who have remembered the Missionaries of the Holy Family in their wills or estate plans. Their bequests are called Legacy Gifts.

While most Legacy Gifts are made with the intention of the Missionaries of the Holy Family receiving benefits in the future, some Legacy Gifts are realized in the present. Gifts of securities or stock, real estate, and other tangible property are usually transferred before December 31 of any year so the benefactor can realize tax breaks for charitable donations.

Most Legacy Gifts are used as principal for our Retirement Trust Fund. While we do have a modest trust fund to help cover the rising cost of healthcare needed by the elderly and disabled members of our religious community, it is currently under funded.

Please consider joining our Family Forever Society. To receive a free booklet on preparing your will, please send your request to me using the envelope in the middle of this magazine, or call me at 1-888-484-9945. If you are remembering us in your will, please remember us as: Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Family - North American Province.

Our Holy Family priests and brothers will always hold you and your loved ones in prayer. Isn't that what a Family is supposed to do? Thank you and God bless you... *forever*.



Forever Yours in the Holy Family,

Fr. Phil Sosa, M.S.F.

Very Reverend Philip Sosa, M.S.F.
Provincial Superior, North American Province



THE DIVINE PHYSICIAN

A Miracle of God's Grace

by Dr. John Timmons, M.D.

On October 22, 2013, my family and I were blessed with a miracle. There really is no other explanation.

It all began in late September 2013 when my dear wife Mary scheduled an appointment with her internist because of headaches, dizziness, and upper neck pains. An MRI of her brain was ordered, and, after the test, my wife's doctor requested to see both of us at the next appointment. Well, I knew this meant 'something was up!'

The MRI showed, much to everyone's surprise, that Mary had suffered, at some time in the past, a cerebellar stroke. It was a small lesion, but verified by both the neuroradiologist and the neurology consultant. My wife is a young 52-year-old, was running marathons up until about 15 years ago, and she is generally in pretty good health. Other than these non-specific symptoms, she had no other signs of a stroke. In the ensuing work up to find the cause of this unusual finding, a transesophageal echocardiogram was performed. When the cardiologist

asked to see both of us in the Echo Room, I thought, "Okay, what's next, Lord?"



Dr. John & Mary Timmons

The cardiologist showed us the images on the echo, and he pointed out what he called a fibroelastoma. He also gave us a review article to read about this relatively rare diagnosis. This tumor, which was flopping around on the aortic valve of Mary's heart, was a small, three-millimeter

mass on a one-centimeter long stalk. I described it to family and friends as looking like a jellyfish on a stick.

The cardiologist felt confident that a tiny piece of this had broken off previously, and was the cause of the cerebellar stroke that we had seen on the MRI. Okay, fine, now we have gotten to the bottom of this. Whew! So this is all over, right? Wrong. When his recommendation came to have open heart surgery to remove this floppy mass of tissue, Mary and I were kind of speechless. I remember thinking to myself, "This is like a dream; I feel like I am walking around in kind of a fog."

Over the next couple of hours, and

after reading the review article, I felt more comfortable about the plan, and so my wife courageously prepared for the surgery. We saw the cardiovascular surgeon in consultation and went through all the pre-operative testing and teaching.

During this preparation time, prayer requests were sent out and many people were offering prayers and sacrifices. We had friends in Fatima, Portugal at the time, and they had Masses offered up for her successful surgery. A friend of ours gave us Holy Water from Lourdes, and I used it to bless Mary's chest several times with the Sign of the Cross. I prayed a Novena to Saint Jude, and I asked for God's

intercession through Servant of God Gwen Coniker, co-founder of the Apostolate for Family Consecration. Mary and I are Life Members of the **Apostolate for Family Consecration.**

We prayed the Family Rosary daily for God's will to be done, and we offered all of our daily morning and meal prayers and Masses for the same. I also asked for the intercession of Blessed John Paul II for help in Mary's recovery. I know that many of our family members and friends were diligently praying, too, for a successful surgery for Mary.

The day before the surgery, a very profound peace came over Mary, something we felt was a true gift from God,

and it is clear to me in retrospect that she had surrendered herself completely into God's hands. So, we got up early the next morning and prayed the Rosary on the way to the hospital, which was about 45 minutes from our house. We checked in and waited a short time until they took her into the pre-op area to prepare her for the surgery.

I was alone during this period, and I had a lot of time to think. I was trying to prepare myself for whatever lies ahead. I am a full-time, practicing physician, and I lead an extremely busy professional life, but **Mary takes care of everything at home!**

How were we going to survive the next four to six weeks without this

vital member of our family -- the person who cooks, cleans, grocery shops, home schools one child, and helps with daily homework for two of our other children? She runs the kids anywhere and everywhere. Anyone who knows Mary knows that this woman never stops. She is like the Energizer Bunny! She actively helps a gazillion people, and she never misses a beat! She is the heart and soul of our family. I dearly love my beautiful wife!

Now it was my time to surrender. I just kept repeating to myself, "*God brought us to it, and He will bring us through it.*"

About an hour after the scheduled start of the surgery, and much sooner than expected, the cardiovascular surgeon



The Timmons Family

and cardiologist came to the surgical waiting room looking for me. I saw them from a distance. As soon as I saw them together, the thought immediately came to me, ***“They can’t find the tumor... it’s gone.”***

I walked over to meet them, and the surgeon said they couldn’t find the tumor. The cardiologist, the same cardiologist who had done the original echocardiogram and so knew exactly what he was looking for, said he couldn’t find it either. It was gone. I just smiled at both of them, shook their hands, and said, *“Thank you!”*

There really was nothing else to say. I quickly went to a nearby computer terminal and sent out an e-mail to all of my contacts about the good news, and I thanked everyone for their prayers. It was truly a moment of great gratitude and wonderment. Joy filled my heart, and I was eager to share the news and the joy with all of my family and friends.

Interestingly, I found out later that day, when I got to share the joy with my dear wife, that they were fully prepared to operate. The arterial line was started in her wrist; the central line was placed in her neck; the Foley catheter was placed, as well as the endotracheal tube (breathing tube); and they had put her under general anesthesia. The surgeon had even drawn the long mark on her chest and a line over her sternum or breastbone where he was about to cut.

It was only after all of this that he decided to do a ‘quick look’ repeat echo so he could plan his surgical cut through the aorta, depending on which valve leaflet the tumor was attached. When the surgeon couldn’t find the tumor, he called the cardiologist to the operating

room to help locate it. The cardiologist couldn’t find it either, so surgery was cancelled.

When Mary woke up from general anesthesia, she immediately felt her upper chest for what she expected to be the dressing. There was none, and when the recovery room nurse explained what had happened, Mary knew a miracle had occurred. Mary asked the nurse if she had ever heard the story of Abraham and Isaac from the Old Testament. Mary proceeded to tell the nurse that she felt as if she was Isaac, who had completely surrendered himself to God’s will, but Isaac had ultimately been spared by an intervention from heaven, and so had she.

Within 24 hours after this miraculous encounter with God, through the intercession of so many, Mary was back in action at 100 miles per hour, doing all the things for so many people who depend on her. She saw her cardiologist again, and he said that he could not explain what had happened. If the tumor had broken off, it would have caused some serious, clinical, end-organ problems wherever it stopped. All he could do is shake his head and say, *“It disappeared.”* When my wife asked the cardiologist if this was a miracle, he said, *“I have no explanation. It very well could have been.”*

So, I ended the e-mail message to my family and friends on that wonderful day of Thursday, October 22, 2013, the same way I end this story:

“GOD IS ALIVE AND WELL!” 

Editor’s Note: The feast day of Blessed Pope John Paul II is October 22, the date of Mary’s miracle. Dr. John had asked for the Pope’s intercession.

Pieta Votive Candles



This beautiful Pieta statue is in Saint Wenceslaus Church in Saint Louis, Missouri, and in the rectory are the offices of the North American Province of the Missionaries of the Holy Family. If you would like us to light a seven-day votive candle for your family and your intentions, please use the return envelope stapled in the middle of this magazine. Candles burn in a rack to the right of the statue. (The suggested donation is \$7.00.) May God bless you.

Thank You & God Bless You, to everyone who made a financial gift in the Year of Our Lord 2013.

We, the priests and brothers of the Missionaries of the Holy Family, extend our deep gratitude to all our benefactors. You are remembered in our prayers.

www.MSF-America.org



Missionaries of the Holy Family
Family • Vocations • Ministry

About Us / Supporting Our Work / Contact Us

Like 48

Welcome! We are a worldwide, Roman Catholic religious order of over 800 priests and brothers, faithful to Jesus Christ and His Vicar, emphasizing the Holy Family as the standard of holiness for all Catholics. We are truly happy to share their inspiration, wisdom and example, in caring for the family.

Consecrate your family to the Holy Family! Please [click here](#).

WORDS WILL FOR YOUR LIFE

CANDLES FOR YOUR FAMILY

PRAYERS FOR THE HOLY FAMILY

Our Video on EWTN.

FIND CATHOLIC BUSINESSES

CatholicBusiness.com
Discover and Connect with Catholic Businesses



HOLY FAMILY LIFE

All in the Family

by Mary J. Wisniewski

Mission Office Director, Archdiocese of San Antonio

Many of us remember the popular TV program, *All in the Family*, in which the audience entered into an intergenerational home to overhear the discussions, questions, tensions, joys, and sorrows of an imagined American family. It was comforting to know that after the arguments of the day, the family could gather around the piano and sing together, “*Those were the Days!*”

Those were the days. In today’s world, the family is confronted by overwhelming challenges. Many of them have seeped into the fabric of our lives without being noticed. The ties, traditions, and attitudes that have held us close are slowly disintegrating, resulting in many wandering about like sheep without a shepherd.

The good news is that we have a shepherd, and that He had a human mother and father and a Heavenly Father. Through prayer and reading of the Scriptures, we can strengthen our connection to this Holy Family. We can find direction for our lives, comfort in our sorrows, and hope for life everlasting.

Recently, an article appeared suggesting that one of the purposes of marriage and family life is the passing



The Wisniewski Family in December 1986: Seated in the front row is Thaddeus, Jr. (now deceased) and Mary. Standing in the back row, left to right, is Mark; Thaddeus, Sr.; Rita (mother); and John.

on of inherited wealth. “*It is through legitimate marriages that empires and dynasties continue,*” stated the author. As Catholic Christians, we know that we are children of God. It is through our families that we inherit the spiritual treasure and rewards of eternal life.

I had the blessing to be raised in a very faith-filled family. My grandfather’s bakery donated the day-old rolls and doughnuts to neighbor nuns who distributed them to the hungry and homeless. My paternal grandmother prayed her Rosary daily, and she walked to

Mass and to the Tuesday night devotions to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. My maternal grandmother sang in the

Their legacy remains in my faith life and work for the Mission Office of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, and in the lives of my brothers who faithfully attend Mass and give generously to provide a Catholic education for their own children.




The Wisniewski Family in August 2012: Seated in the front row is Thaddeus, Sr. and Rita. Standing in the back row, left to right, is John (married to Connie, not pictured); Mary; Elizabeth (married to Mark); and Mark.

In addition to the outer signs of being Catholic, our parents and grandparents instill in us the hidden or internal Catholic values of integrity, truthfulness, faithfulness, trust in God, dedication to the poor, and Respect for Life. The need to transmit these values continues to be vital to our world today.

parish choir and sewed the special altar cloths and pillows that were used in the processions for the first Masses of newly ordained priests.

Those were the days. But, these are the days for a variety of new ways of communication. Whether twittered or blogged, texted or simply spoken, all generations must continue to communicate love to one another.

My parents were leaders in the Catholic Family Movement and prepared couples for marriage, in addition to sacrificing to send their children to Catholic schools. Now they are leaders in the parish choir, Altar Society, Bible Study, and Knights of Columbus.

Then, we can be reassured that we are all in the family – God’s Family – as we remember the words of Jesus Christ in **Matthew 12:50**, “For whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, and sister, and mother.” 

Around The Province...



▲ Forty-four government members from all 15 international provinces of the Missionaries of the Holy Family met in Rome, Italy for the XIII General Chapter in October 2013.



YOUTHFUL OUTLOOK

I Never Would Have Thought

by Selena Perez

Parishioner at Our Lady of Guadalupe in Seguin, Texas

As an eight-year-old, I'd imagine what I would be like as a teenager. What would I achieve and where would I be by the time I graduated from high school? I had no idea what I would do or what kind of people would be my friends. As a kid, I never would have thought about all the adventures I would take.

I was always labeled as "The Miracle Baby" because my mom wanted another daughter, but she did not give birth to me until 20 years after having my sister!

Growing up, I would go to Mass every Sunday, attend Sunday School, and even participate in prayer group services at our church, Our Lady of Guadalupe, in Seguin, Texas.

When I was only five years old, I had this fascination with the Eucharist. Every Sunday, I would see people take "the bread," and I would ask my mom if I could receive it, too. She told me that I would have to wait until I made my First Communion. When I finally made my First Communion, I felt like I had just become a member



of an exclusive club where I could finally receive the Body of Christ!

After that, my mom and I continued attending Mass and religious education classes, but we were not a part of any specific organization until I was 11. When I entered the sixth grade,

my mom attended an A.C.T.S. (Adoration, Community, Theology & Service) Retreat. Coming back from the retreat, she had made new friends among those whom I would see at church and even one who had been my Sunday School teacher.

One of these women wanted to organize a group of young ladies that her aunt used to belong to, called Hijas de Maria or Daughters of Mary. This group of young ladies, who had already made their First Communion, would attend Mass together on the third Sunday of every month, dress in white, and engage in prayer and service. Joining Daughters of Mary was the first step for me to becoming fully involved in the Church. We would pray the Rosary at a local nursing

home and help out at our parish festival. This all began the summer before my freshman year of high school.

When my parish was planning to host its Annual Teen A.C.T.S. Retreat, I was excited to go, but nervous because I did not know anyone who was attending. Coming back from the retreat, however, I had a closer relationship with God, and I made so many new friends in the Church. Throughout high school, I was involved on a whole

istry. As graduation approached, I thought of everything I had done and everywhere I had gone with the Church.

I had performed skits in front of hundreds of teens, and I had traveled to Louisiana, Arkansas, and Florida. Just as I was closing the final chapter of my high school life and opening up a new one with college, I was about to take a trip of a lifetime. A month before I started college, I attended World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



World Youth Day Banner



San Antonio and Petropolis Pilgrims

new level. I was a Catechist Aid, joined the Youth Group, stayed involved in the Daughters of Mary, and became an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.

I was also on a team for two more Teen A.C.T.S. Retreats, and I was fortunate enough to be Director of Teen A.C.T.S. the summer before my senior year. I even had the opportunity to be on the Leadership Team at the Archdiocese of San Antonio. I helped with many activities, such as the middle school and high school Spectacular Event through the Office of Youth Min-

In November 2012, I learned that there were still spots left to go with the Archdiocese of San Antonio to World Youth Day. I talked to my mom about it, and we agreed that this would be a memorable lifetime experience. There were pilgrims representing parishes from all over the Archdiocese, but I was the only one representing my parish. I thought going to another continent, even another country, by myself would be scary, but we met together four or five times before

our journey so we could get to know one another. Before I knew it, I was packing my backpack and getting ready to board my first plane to Brazil.

All 43 of us pilgrims – including Archbishop Gustavo, four priests, and one religious sister – took a brief flight from San Antonio to Dallas, then a 10-hour flight from Dallas to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Upon arrival, we were greeted by youth from the parish church who would be hosting us in Petropolis. After being greeted with hugs and kisses, we boarded a bus for Petropolis, the town where we stayed



In the Shadow of the Cross

the week before World Youth Day began. We were given a tour of the city, and we met pilgrims from all over the world, including our host families. Another pilgrim and I stayed with a host family who threw us a party our first night there!

Throughout the week, we engaged in activities with pilgrims staying in Petropolis and the youth of the host church. When it was time for us to say goodbye, we loaded the bus with tears in our eyes for we did not want to leave the new friends we had met.

After leaving Petropolis, it was time for World Youth Day in Rio. We again stayed with another host family, but only saw them late at night after finishing all our events. Everything took place on Copacabana Beach, and we experienced some unexpected weather. Although it was cold and raining, that didn't stop us from celebrating Mass with millions of young adults from all over the world. We were so excited to meet our newly elected papa, Pope Francis!

I was fortunate enough to be standing against the street gate where he drove by everyday. On the last night of World Youth Day, we slept on the street across from the beach after an eight-mile walk, and we woke to attend the closing Mass with nearly 4,000,000 people!

As a freshman now at the University of the Incarnate Word, I look back at everything I had done with my local church. Every event and every person has helped me to get to where I am today. Thinking back to my days as an eight-year-old, I never would have thought of all the things I would do as a teenager.

God bless everyone! [MJ]



YOUTHFUL RETREAT

Harden Not Your Hearts

by Father Francois Rakotoavoay, M.S.F.

Oh, that today you would hear his voice: Do not harden your hearts.

Psalm 95:7-8

Since 2005, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Seguin, Texas has hosted an Annual Teen A.C.T.S. Retreat. A.C.T.S. is an acronym for Adoration, Community, Theology, and Service. Our most

"It has strengthened my faith. It has brought me closer to God, and I am not alone. I recommend it to other teens." — Cameron Guitierrez

"It was fun, and it brought me closer to God and prayer. I am going to appreciate going to church and praying." — Matthew Wallace



Some retreat members with Father Tomasz Grabara, M.S.F. and Father Francois Rakotoavoay, M.S.F.


Christ calls upon His people to hear His voice. We call Him "Master" or "Lord." That demands that we do His will and that we are His obedient people. We must hear the voice of His teach-

ing and His law in the Spirit. In both, we must heed, hear, and yield. This day of opportunity will not always last; improve upon it while it is still today.

recent retreat for 30 teenagers took place in August 2013. The retreat was held at Cathedral Oaks Retreat Center in Weimer, Texas. Vanessa Amador was the spiritual director, and she is also the youth minister at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish. During this weekend retreat, there were personal testimonies, skits, activities, praise and worship, Confessions, outdoor Mass, and so much more.

Hearing the voice of Christ is the same as believing. Hardness of heart is at the bottom of all distrust of the Lord. Let us be aware of evils in our hearts, which lead us to wander from the Lord. There is a rest ordained for believers, the rest of everlasting refreshment, begun in this life and perfected in the life to come. This is the rest which God calls His Rest.

"I feel like I have changed a lot. It has changed me from not only thinking about myself, but thinking of others as well." — Deangelo Sutton

May God bless you always! 



PARISH SPOTLIGHT

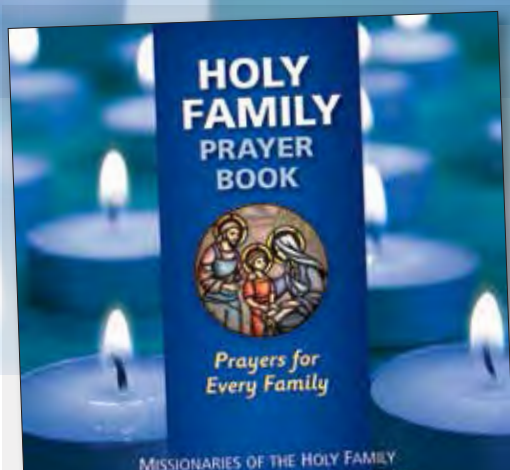
Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church is a parish in Seguin, Texas, served by the Missionaries of the Holy Family. Father David Tonary, M.S.F. is the pastor, and assisting him are: Brother Rolland Kapsner, M.S.F., Father Ignatius Pajak, M.S.F., and Father Francois Rakotovoavy, M.S.F.



God bless you, Father David, and your parish family at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church!

A Great Gift for All Occasions!



Holy Family Prayer Book

Prayers for Every Family
Missionaries of the Holy Family

Foreword by
Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan

This simple prayer book, devoted to the Holy Family, offers traditional and original prayers dedicated to helping families today. Included in the *Holy Family Prayer Book* are a variety of prayers that will help families stay spiritually grounded and ever-present in faith.

112-page paperback – 5 x 5
9780764-822179 • **\$8.99**

Libro de oraciones de la Sagrada Familia

Oraciones para todas las familias
Misioneros De La Sagrada Familia

Prólogo del Reverendísimo Gustavo
García-Siller, MSpS



Este sencillo libro de oraciones

dedicadas a la Sagrada Familia, ofrece oraciones nuevas y tradicionales para ayudar a las familias de hoy. En el *Libro de oraciones de la Sagrada Familia* hay toda una variedad de oraciones que ayudarán a las familias a fortalecerse espiritualmente y a permanecer fervorosas en la vivencia de su fe.

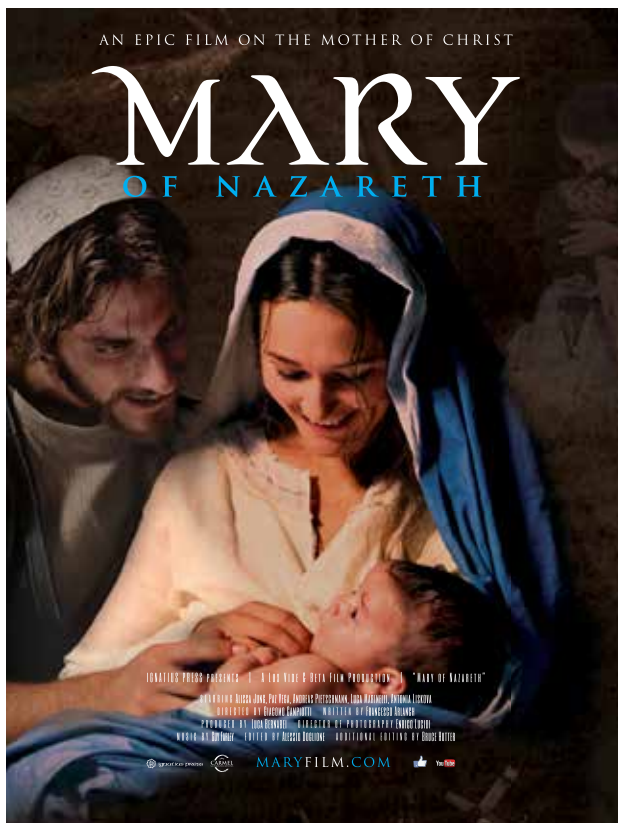
112 páginas; cubierta rústica – 5 x 5
9780764-822186 • **\$8.99**

To order, call (800) 325-9521.

Both editions have an imprimatur.

Las dos ediciones tienen Imprimátur.

Print and eBooks available. Order today!



Missionaries of the Holy Family

Family • Vocations • Missions

Brought to you by the Missionaries of the Holy Family,
 Dr. Mark & Elsa Hickman, and
 the Mission Awareness Office of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

Wednesday, March 19, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Texas Cinema – Creekside 14

214 Creekside Way, New Braunfels, Texas 78130

Only \$5.00 per ticket!

Contact Maurice at (888) 484-9945 or MPrater@MSF-America.org.

Movie is approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes.

Attention! PG-13: Children under 13 must be accompanied by a parent.



SACRED SCRIPTURE EXPLAINED

Mary, Mother of God

by Father Jim Beegan, M.S.F.

One of the great feast days on the Catholic Church calendar is the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, which is celebrated every January 1. This title – Mary, Mother of God – is accepted by both Roman Catholics and the Eastern Orthodox. But, it is rejected by most Protestants.

One day, a Catholic theology professor was talking with a Protestant woman who was taking one of his classes. This woman said to him, “I have a very deep affection and respect for the Blessed Virgin Mary.” But then she added, “I must say, however, that there is one thing that bothers me about you Catholics. You call Mary the ‘Mother of God.’ That title seems to mark Mary as even greater than God Himself.”

The professor then said to the woman, “Let me ask you a question: Who is Jesus Christ?”

The woman answered, “Jesus is God the Son; He is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.”

The professor said, “Well then, do you agree with these three simple steps of logic:



“Mother of Life” by Nellie Edwards depicts Our Lady of Guadalupe kneeling in adoration of her unborn Savior-Son. NellieKranzEdwards@gmail.com and www.PaintedFaith.net.

#1 – Jesus is God.

#2 – Mary is the Mother of Jesus.


#3 – Therefore, Mary is the Mother of God.”

The woman responded, “Yes, that is logical. I would have to agree with that.”

The professor went on to explain that when we call Mary the Mother of God,

we do not mean that Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, began to exist in her womb. Jesus is a Divine Person who has existed from all eternity. But, at one point in human history, He entered the womb of Mary where He took on human flesh and a human nature. Then on Christmas Day, Mary gave birth to her child Jesus who was both God and man. **See Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23, and Luke 1:43.**

This has always been the teaching of the Catholic Church, going back even to the earliest Church Fathers. In one of the great Church Councils, Mary was even given the title of *Theotokos*, which is a Greek word that means *God-bearer*, the one who carries Almighty God in her womb.

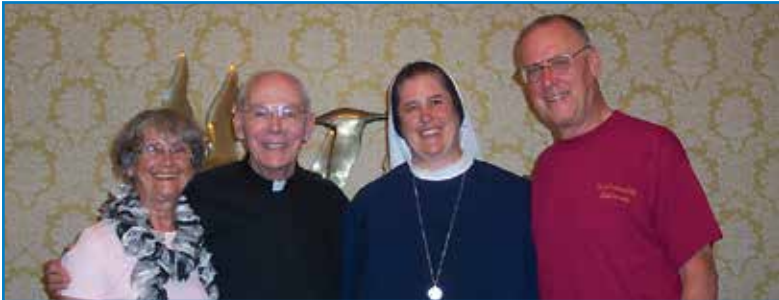
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us! 

Umbert the Unborn

by Gary Cangemi



Around The Province...



▲ In the summer of 2013, Father Jim Wuerth, M.S.F., pastor of Saint Wenceslaus Parish in Saint Louis, Missouri, received a surprise visit. Sister Dorothy Guadalupe Schuster, S.V. stopped by the rectory with her parents, Walt and Jackie Schuster.

Sister Dorothy Guadalupe was baptized at Saint Wenceslaus Parish on April 26, 1964. She is now a member of the religious order, Sisters of Life, based out of Suffern, New York, who help promote the sanctity of life. Her parents live in Webster Groves, Missouri.

Thank you, Sister Dorothy Guadalupe, for working to protect God's unborn children and to renew a Culture of Life in the United States!



DEAR FATHER

Ask Father John

by Father John Carl Lombardi, M.S.F.

Q: *Dear Father,* as a young married couple, my wife was told by her doctor that she should not have any children because she has a kidney disease, and he suggested that I get a vasectomy to prevent her from getting pregnant. Well, I went ahead and had a vasectomy, and later we learned as practicing Catholics with a high commitment to our faith that it is against Church teaching to do this. What can I do about this terrible mistake I've made?

A: First of all, let me explain why the Church teaches that direct or contraceptive sterilization is immoral because it impedes the life-giving feature of marital intercourse. In his encyclical on human life, *Humanae Vitae*, Pope Paul VI rejected abortion as a "licit means of regulating birth," and then states: "Equally to be excluded, as the teaching authority of the Church has frequently declared, is direct sterilization whether perpetual or temporary, whether of the man or of the woman." (n. 14)

Let me make it very clear. Morally wrong means it cannot be used to justify the end, such as the intention of protecting a woman's health or life. So, you cannot do evil (procuring a vasectomy) to achieve good, especially when the preferred end could be achieved by the moral means of Natural Family Planning. For reference, visit www.usccb.org, the website of the United States

Conference of Catholic Bishops, or call (202) 541-3240.

You mention that you are both practicing Catholics with a high commitment to your faith. I take it to mean that you are daily communicants whenever possible and that you go to Confession frequently. I commend you both on your commitment to the faith and for the desire to right the wrong that has been done.

As I previously stated, the Church teaches that sterilization procedures are gravely sinful. Therefore, in staying loyal to the Magisterium, those who have sincerely repented of their vasectomies ought to take additional steps as a sign of their genuine repentance. Otherwise, as a couple, you would be expressively engaging in sin every time you had intercourse during the fertile stage.

I would suggest that the first thing

to do is to have your sterilization reversed, a step that has become more and more possible with the advances of microsurgery. This sincere attempt to return to your normal state of fertility would be a clear sign of your contrition.

I recommend that you contact Dr. Mark S. Hickman, MD, a gifted surgeon and a Catholic man of

“I recommend that you contact Dr. Mark S. Hickman, MD, a gifted surgeon and a Catholic man of deep faith,”

deep faith, who routinely, successfully, and *inexpensively* reverses vasectomies. Please contact him to set up a free consultation:

Dr. Mark S. Hickman, MD, FACS
598 North Union Avenue
Suite 200
New Braunfels, TX 78130

www.micro-vas-reversals.com

(830) 660-0600 or

drhickman@micro-vas-reversals.com

After the reversal of your vasectomy, since your wife should not get pregnant for health reasons, you should practice Natural Family Planning, which is to abstain from intercourse at those times when your wife would normally be fertile. Contact your local Couple to Couple League, via telephone or online (800-745-8252 or www.ccli.org), or call your Diocesan Marriage & Family Life Office to help you with Natural Family Planning.

However, since you are a newly

married couple, I would also get another doctor’s opinion on your wife’s condition. You never know what you may learn from consulting another doctor, and your wife may still be able to have children.

I leave you with this teaching from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: “The regulation of births represents one of

the aspects of responsible fatherhood and motherhood. Legitimate intentions on the part of the spouses do not justify recourse to morally unacceptable means (for example, direct sterilization or contraception).” **CCC #2399**

God bless your family! 



Father John Lombardi, M.S.F., a retired priest of the Missionaries of the Holy Family, lives at Padua Place in San Antonio, Texas. He writes a regular column on apologetics for *Today's Catholic*, the official newspaper of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.



PARENTS' TIME-OUT

Too Old by Kindergarten

Contributed by Dr. Ray Guarendi

Dear Dr. Ray,

Some theories say that personality is pretty much established by age five or six. What does that mean for adopting children older than that?— Older Than Six Myself

Before pondering what any such theory might mean for adoption, let's ask the primary question: Is the theory true? If not, then whatever conclusions it leads to can be ignored.

The idea that personality is settled by the age of five or so has its roots back in the early years of psychology. It started with Freud, and others have since added their own twists to it. Research, experience, and common sense have all shown it to be, at the least, incomplete, or at the most, wrong.

Yes, children's innate personality or temperament is wired in them. It's genetically part of who they are. Also, many behaviors, traits, and habits get a solid start in the first several years of life. To assert that personality is crystallized that young, however, or that it will stubbornly resist reshaping, is quite a psychological stretch.

I don't know about you, but I'm very different now than I was at age five.

My wife says I have the maturity level of a ten-year-old, which to me seems pretty high for a husband!

For example, at age five or six, did you have any political party affiliation?

Deep religious convictions? Moving on to second grade, what qualities did you value in a future spouse? Could you

even read, much less know whether it's good strategy to call a draw play on third down and seven in football?

You don't need a rocket scientist's personality to know that we have a virtually unlimited potential to change. For some more than others, change can be a slow, steep slog. Still, the potential is there. Barring serious mental complications, it's there until our lives come to an end.

In almost everything we do, we are to some degree free to choose or act differently than we've acted in the past. In other words, we are not irresistibly bound to what we were, but we can recognize and work to

“My wife says I have the maturity level of a ten-year-old, which to me seems pretty high for a husband!”

alter whatever we wish about ourselves. Most folks, even we “shrink” types, would agree that if grownups can change, kids are even more malleable.

Don’t mishear me (Is that part of your personality?). I’m not saying that a child’s early life experiences don’t matter. On the contrary, some kids experience neglect, trauma, or misguided upbringing, and redirecting their personality, however young they are, can take a long time and great effort. Still, it is not impossible.

All else being equal, if a child has known turbulence at a young age, the sooner one removes the turbulence the better. All four children whom we adopted beyond infancy (ages two, three, four, and five) had some nasty or chaotic experiences prior to coming to us. Nevertheless, ever so slowly over the years, what looked to be their personalities began to evolve. The kids gradually reflected more of our values, our expectations.

To be sure, shyness essentially stayed shyness, impulsiveness continued as a lack of caution, and talkativeness morphed into verbosity. The essence of personality will remain somewhat durable; the expression of it can be influenced by parenting.

Children’s personalities have come to reflect a complex interplay of their inborn wiring, early experiences, and family life. How it all will look with time only God fully knows. One thing is certain: We’re feeling better with time about the direction.

To briefly reiterate (a personality trait I’ve had since the age of three):

- Personality is not established by the age of six.
- How a child’s early life affects his later life depends upon many intervening factors, not the least of which is high quality parenting.
- Humans often change only by the inch, but the younger the human, the more quickly the inches come.
- Some kids mature more from thirteen to sixteen than they do from five to thirteen.
- If you wish to adopt an older child, realize that you will be loving and raising a unique personality from day one. Unique doesn’t mean “set in stone.”

Adoption: Choosing It, Living It, Loving It (pages 22-24)

Copyright © 2010, Dr. Ray Guarendi, Servant Books 



Dr. Ray Guarendi

The father of 10, Dr. Ray is a psychologist and a popular TV and radio personality and guest speaker offering parenting advice in concert with Catholic values. More information about Dr. Ray’s books and DVDs can be found on the internet at www.DrRay.com.



A FAMILY VACATION

The Marian Shrine in La Crosse, Wisconsin is Dedicated to...

by Maurice Prater, Advancement Director

- A.) Our Lady of La Salette
- B.) Our Lady of Good Help
- C.) Our Lady of Guadalupe

The answer is... C!

The most famous Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the world, home of the original and miraculous image of Our Blessed Mother on Saint Juan Diego's tilma, is in Mexico City, Mexico. After

The entire campus encompasses 100 acres of beautiful Wisconsin woodlands.

The Marian title of Our Lady of Guadalupe refers to a series of apparitions approved by the Catholic Church. On December 12, 1531, Our Blessed Mother appeared a fourth time to Saint Juan Diego near Mexico City. When the Bishop of Mexico City asked for a sign that the apparition was authentic, Saint Juan Diego was told to bring the roses he found blooming out of season. When he opened his tilma to display the flowers, a picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe was imprinted on his cloak. This picture of the Virgin Mary can still be seen today at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City.

The faithful also affectionately refer to Our Lady of Guadalupe as the Mystical Rose, Empress of the Americas, Star of the New Evangelization, and Patroness of the Unborn.



Main entrance of the Shrine Church.

Mexico City, however, the next largest shrine in the world dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe is the one in La Crosse, according to a shrine employee.

The Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse is the fruit of persistent prayer by Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke, then Bishop of the Diocese of La Crosse,



Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke, Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura, visits with pilgrims after Mass on July 31, 2013, the fifth anniversary of the dedication of the Shrine Church.

who founded the Shrine to honor the sanctity of life and family and to counter a growing Culture of Death.

Official ground breaking for the Shrine took place on June 17, 2001, and **many significant events followed:**

- The Pilgrim Center and Mother of Good Counsel Votive Candle Chapel were completed on December 12, 2002.
- The outdoor Stations of the Cross were dedicated on December 9, 2004.
- The inaugural induction for the Saint Juan Diego Guild for Children took place on December 9, 2005, the feast day of Saint Juan Diego. The Guild's mission is to assist children in imitating the virtues of this "great lay apostle."
- Excavation began on the construction of the Blessed John Duns Scotus Friary on May 14, 2007. The Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate provide spiritual assistance and pastoral care for the Shrine's many pilgrims.
- The devotional area to Saint Joseph the Worker was blessed on September 21, 2007.
- The outdoor Rosary Walk was blessed on December 8, 2007.
- The devotional area to Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, "Lily of the Mohawks" and our first Native American saint, was blessed on July 30, 2008.
- The Shrine Church, the magnificent "Heart of the Shrine," was dedicated on July 31, 2008.
- The Memorial to the Unborn and Mary's Garden were dedicated on December 12, 2008.
- The Marian Catechist Apostolate officially established its international headquarters at the Shrine on September 23, 2011.
- The statue of Blessed John Duns Scotus, a great Franciscan theologian, was unveiled in the exterior alcove



The sanctuary of the Shrine Church.



The cupola, the interior dome of the Shrine Church.

of the Blessed John Duns Scotus Friary on December 12, 2012.

To plan a pilgrimage to the Shrine with your family, please visit www.guadalupe Shrine.org or call (877) 799-4059.

God bless your family! 

Men of God: Priests Forever

In this Year of Our Lord 2014, six priests of the Missionaries of the Holy Family are celebrating anniversaries of their ordination to the Priesthood of Jesus Christ.



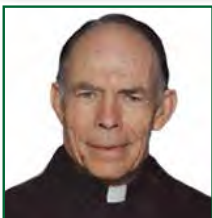
Fr. Arthur Ockwood, M.S.F.
55 years



Fr. Simon Brzozowski, M.S.F.
50 years



Fr. James Wasser, M.S.F.
40 years



Fr. Jack Kilburg, M.S.F.
35 years



Fr. Ignatius Pajak, M.S.F.
30 years



Fr. Alberto Treviño, M.S.F.
30 years

We thank God for our priests, and we beseech Him to send us many more. If you would like to send a Tribute Gift in honor of one or more of these Men of God, please use the envelope found in the middle of this magazine. Thank you and God bless your family!



UNITED IN CHRIST

The Authentic Religious Life

by Father Eka Yuantoro, M.S.F.



Some members of the Missionaries of the Holy Family gather together after Mass in the chapel at the Oblate Renewal Center.

The authentic religious life begins with the simple but profound desire to play the role God has designed for us in human history. It's the moment when we stop asking "What's in it for me?" and we humbly turn to God in our hearts and ask, "How may I serve? What work do you wish for me to do in my life?" We bow our heads and let God tell us what He wants us to do.

In modern times, people have revolted violently against the idea of God's will. Desperate to maintain the illusion of being in control of their lives, many of us as religious are doing the same thing by failing to keep an intimate relationship with Christ.

During our annual retreat, we tried to

begin anew to see Jesus and meet with Him personally. We were invited to meet again with Him as if for the very first time. When we celebrate a Mass, do we truly realize that we are touched by God's love and that we are accepted by Him?

Sometimes we are under pressure between human or divine, natural or supernatural, and ordinary or extraordinary. While we are each called to live an authentic religious life in our Community, and to share that joy with one another, we also have very personal experiences with Jesus Christ as Our Savior.

A retreat is an opportunity to have an encounter with Christ. The members of

the Missionaries of the Holy Family of the North American Province gathered together for a spiritual retreat in October 2013 at the Oblate Renewal Center in San Antonio, Texas.

Our retreat master was Father William “Bill” Mason, OMI. He always began each meeting with a joke because he said that sometimes God touches us with funny experiences, and we often realize later that God was calling us to Himself. An encounter with Jesus Christ is a beautiful moment that touches us personally. In that moment when we are feeling, seeing, and touching, we are inspired to dig more deeply into our relationship with God. This moment brings a

“God does take all things seriously, but a fruit of charity and a fruit of the Holy Spirit is joy.”

new perspective in our faith to do God’s will and work with Him to proclaim the Good News.

Fr. Bill challenged us to find Jesus again for the very first time. Praying the Divine Office, celebrating Mass, sharing at meetings, adoring Christ during Holy Hour, and socializing together were expressions of our time with Jesus Christ within our Community. These were moments when we encountered Jesus Christ anew and fell in love with Him. A moment of grace can help us to receive the power of God’s love and share our spirituality with great joy. If we do not have or grow in our personal relationship with Christ, how can we share our joy with others? How can we lead the People of God in our many ministries without joy?

As members of a religious order, we take vows of poverty, chastity, and

obedience. These vows grow in importance over time. Sharing and acting justly is more important than choosing to live in poverty. Within our vow of chastity, we grow in our capacity to love others. This is never a vow of loneliness because we are members of a Family of God. The vow of obedience helps us to walk humbly with God and to discern His will for us.

The retreat was a good time to socialize and talk, and whatever food was left over from one day, we would keep it for the next. God does take all things seriously, but a fruit of charity and a fruit of the Holy Spirit is joy. When Jesus, with Mary and His disciples, attended the

wedding in Cana, He danced according to the Jewish tradition. Jesus is eternally authentic, and we must also live an authentic religious life in our Community and in the world.

Finally, we received the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It is a wonderful moment of grace to confess our sins. We are human beings. Repentance and penance are important, but Reconciliation should change our lives for the better in whatever ministries or parishes we serve.

God has called us to be Men of Prayer, and we returned home with a renewed sense of mission to proclaim the Kingdom of God. We have been re-energized to serve, and we rely on your prayers and the grace of God’s love to perform our ministries with joy.

God bless you! 

Do You Want More Holy Priests?

Join the Holy Family Circle and help foster vocations to the priesthood and brotherhood. Member benefits include:

- Daily Remembrance in Prayer by Holy Family Priests and Brothers.
- Enrollment in the Holy Family Perpetual Mass Association.
- Invitations to Holy Family Events. (i.e., ordinations, anniversaries, etc.)

Find your level of joyful giving below, complete the contact information, and mail this form, or a copy of it, in the envelope in the middle of the magazine. Thank you and God bless you!

Giving Level	Associate..... up to \$49 per month	Patriarch/Matriarch
Examples:	Samaritan \$50 per month	\$10,000 annual gift
	Companion \$100 per month	
	Disciple..... \$300 per month	
	Apostle..... \$600 per month	

My Contact Information:

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

My Level of Joyful Giving per month: _____

Around The Province...



▲ Father Francois Rakotovoavy, M.S.F. loves baptizing children! Here he is baptizing a beautiful baby boy in October 2013 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Seguin, Texas.



THE POETRY CORNER



You were a Mother

© Felipa H. Montoya

Parishioner at Our Lady of Guadalupe in Seguin, Texas

I bring you a bouquet of flowers, Mother, here to your burial site.
Like every other creature, Mother, you left this world.
You have left your sufferings and took your good works.
How blest you are, Mother, because you have won the glory.
You knew to fulfill your obligations, Mother, with God and society.
Your children long to see you, there in eternity.
I know that you pray for me now that you are in Heaven.
That is why your prayers, Mother, give me consolation.

Tu Fuiste Madre

Te traigo un ramillete de flores, Madre, aquí a tu sepultura.
Te has ido de este mundo, Madre, como toda creatura.
Dejaste tus sufrimientos, Madre, y te llevaste tus buenas obras.
Que dichosa eres ahora, Madre, porque te has ganado la gloria.
Supiste cumplir tus deberes, Madre, con Dios y la sociedad.
Tus hijos desean verte, Madre, allá en la eternidad.
Sé que tú ruegas por mí, O Madre, ahora que estas en el cielo.
Por eso se que tus ruegos, Madre, me han concedido el consuelo.

*© Reproduction and use of these poems,
without written permission, are strictly prohibited.*



Missionaries of the Holy Family

Family • Vocations • Missions



Perpetual Mass Association Enrollment

Since 1933, we have been providing Family and Friends all over the world with daily spiritual support! Enrollment in the **Perpetual Mass Association** is a beautiful gift at special times in life and at the time of death.

- ◆ **Wedding**
- ◆ **Birth of Child**
- ◆ **Anniversary**
- ◆ **Birthdays**
- ◆ **Ordination**
- ◆ **Employment**
- ◆ **Graduation**
- ◆ **Get Well**
- ◆ **Patron Saint's Day**
- ◆ **Serious Illness**
- ◆ **Sympathy**
- ◆ **Repose of a Soul**

Please complete and return this form for enrollment.

Date: _____

Please Enroll: _____ Living Deceased
(Please print - Person or Family Name)

On the occasion of _____

Enrolled By:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Phone: (_____) _____

E-Mail: _____

Gift:

- \$10
- \$25 Suggested for family enrollment.
- \$50
- \$100
- Other _____

Please make checks payable to: **Missionaries of the Holy Family**
Mail this enrollment to: **3014 Oregon Avenue, Saint Louis, MO 63118-1412**

Perpetual Mass Card Destination:

- Send the completed card to my address as shown above.
- I already sent the card - please send a replacement card to me for future use.
- Send the card to the name and address shown below.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Your gift to the Missionaries of the Holy Family is tax deductible.

Perpetual Mass Enrollments are available immediately on our website, www.MSF-America.org - click on "Prayer and the Holy Family" - look for Perpetual Mass. You can also call our office at 1-888-484-9945.



MARY OF NAZARETH

*Enjoy a movie this Lent about the Holy Family!
See page 15 for details.*

Missionaries of the
Holy Family

3014 Oregon Avenue
Saint Louis, Missouri 63118



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT # 5818
ST. LOUIS, MO