

COR AD COR

Opus Mariæ Mediatrixis

VOL. 5 – No. 2 – 13 February, 2000

Dear Friend of Our Lady,

A number of you have written, e-mailed, or telephoned regarding the item of news in a previous newsletter concerning the consecration of the Church and the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by Our Holy Father, the Pope and the bishops on October 8, 2000. The most frequent question being: "Where did you get the news from?" The only place where we have seen mention made of this event is on the web site of the zenit news agency from Rome. For those of you who are computer literate (I am sure there are many), you can go to their site www.zenit.org. Once you enter the site, enter the archive for 1999, then click the calendar at November 28, 1999. The third item is entitled "Fatima added to Papal Pilgrimages in 2000". Among other things, you will notice the following paragraph:

Navarro-Valls (spokesman for the Vatican) highlighted the extraordinary tie that unites John Paul II to the Virgin at Fatima. On October 8, 2000 her statue will be taken to Rome. On the occasion of the Bishops' Jubilee, the Pope and his brother bishops will solemnly consecrate the Church and the world to Our Lady.

The news item also mentions the pilgrimage of the Holy Father to Fatima where he will beatify Francesco and Jacinta Marto on May 13, 2000, feast of Our Lady of Fatima and anniversary of the attempted assassination in 1981 on the Pope's life in St. Peter's Square.

Devotees of consecration to Jesus through Mary cannot but be heartened by these two events planned for the Great Jubilee of the year 2000.

Soon, we will celebrate the Feast of the Great Protector of Holy Mother Church, i.e., St. Joseph. He was given the title of Protector of the Universal Church by Pope Pius IX, who also will be beatified during the Holy Year of Jubilee. This year, the Feast of St. Joseph is transferred to March 20, due to the fact that March 19, is the second Sunday of Lent. St. Joseph, as is well known, figured greatly in the events at Fatima in 1917. Some believe that the Apostolic Exhortation, *Redemptoris Custos*, of the present Holy Father, is a response given to the promise of St. Joseph in the apparitions to

Sister Lucia, Francesco and Jacinta. Whatever the case may be, it behooves us to give to St. Joseph in our spiritual lives, the place he so richly deserves. To help you, in that regard, I can not recommend enough the book entitled, *True Devotion to St. Joseph and the Church*, with the subtitle, *The Doctrinal Basis and Practice of Total Consecration through St. Joseph and the Church*, by the Dominican Theologian, Dominic de Domenico. It is available from *St. Gabriel Press, 3050 Gap Knob Road, New Hope, KY, 40052*. You will be richly rewarded in the reading of this book. Among other things, he has a beautiful section on the likeness of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, to the Holy Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He enriches our understanding of the relationship between the earthly trinity and the Heavenly Trinity, between the created trinity and the Uncreated Trinity. His emphasis on the role of St. Joseph in the economy of salvation is magnificent. There is no way I can give you a sufficient idea of the richness of this book. Please purchase a copy and see your spiritual life grow by leaps and bounds.

Believe it, or not, the Holy Season of Lent is just around the corner, Ash Wednesday this year being March 8. Our Lord reminds in the Gospel of the necessity of penance: "Unless ye do penance, ye shall all likewise perish." The Code of Canon Law reminds us that:

"All members of the Christian faithful in their own way are bound to do penance in virtue of the Divine Law; in order that all may be joined in a common observance of penance, penitential days are prescribed in which the Christian faithful in a special way pray, exercise works of piety and charity, and deny themselves by fulfilling their responsibilities more faithfully, and especially by observing fast and abstinence according to the norm of the following canons." (Canon 1249)

The following canons from numbers 1250 to 1253 outline the present penitential discipline of the Church. Canon 1250 states as follows: "All Fridays throughout the year and the time of Lent are penitential days and times throughout the Universal Church." In addition, Canon 1251 prescribes that, "Abstinence from eating

meat, or another food according to the prescriptions of the Conference of Bishops is to be observed on Fridays throughout the year unless they are first class feasts; abstinence and fast are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and on the Friday of the Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

Who is obliged to fast and abstain? Canon 1252 states clearly, "All persons who have completed their fourteenth year are bound by the law of abstinence; all adults are bound by the law of fast up to the beginning of their sixtieth year. Nevertheless, pastors and parents are to see to it that minors who are not bound by the law of fast and abstinence are educated in an authentic sense of penance."

The Holy Season of Septuagesima begins this year on Sunday, February 20. It is believed that St. Gregory the Great fixed this season in its present form. The three Sundays and weeks of this season are the time during which we should seriously make our resolutions regarding prayer, penance and almsgiving during the Season of Lent.

May the Season of Lent in the Holy Year of Jubilee be one of singular graces and blessings for you and yours! You are all remembered in my monthly First Saturday Mass for all our benefactors, friends and members.

In the Hearts of Jesus and Mary,

Wiliam F. Ashley
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