



Marian Messenger

News from Our Lady of Fatima Shrine

FR. JOHN'S JOURNAL

Fr. John Hedges, Spiritual Director

On Tuesday, October 13, 2020 the feast of Our Lady of Fatima, the Blue Army chapel will be designated a Shrine in the Archdiocese of Detroit by Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron. Bishop Gerard Battersby will be here to read the Formal Decree, and to celebrate the "first Mass" at the newly-designated Our Lady of Fatima Shrine!

This acknowledgement of the Archbishop is directed to the work of the World Apostolate of Fatima which has its origins in the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1917 at Fatima, Portugal to Lucia dos Santos, St. Jacinta Marto and St. Francisco Marto.

In order to spread the message of Our Lady of Fatima throughout the world, Monsignor Harold Colgan and John Haffert co-founded the "Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima in 1947, asking people to sign a simple pledge:

- To pray five decades of the Rosary every day:
- To wear the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel:
- And to offer to God as a sacrifice their daily duties, in a spirit of reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and for the conversion of poor sinners.

These were the essential requirements.

To show their love for Our Lady, the first members of the apostolate wore a blue ribbon with the Miraculous Medal. Monsignor Colgan, pointing to the blue ribbon called those signing the pledge the "Blue Army" opposing the "Red Army" of atheistic communism coming out of Russia. When John Haffert went to see Sister Lucia at the Carmelite Convent in Cambria, Portugal, to tell her about the "Blue Army", she was delighted. He told her about the blue ribbon. Sister Lucia's response was to make the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel the essential outward sign of consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

As we celebrate the designation of this chapel as a Shrine, it is important to know the story of how the Blue Army began, and to know the essential mission of the World Apostolate of Our Lady of Fatima – the conversion of sinners, and the salvation of souls!

A Shrine is a holy place and a place of pilgrimage for the faithful. To visit Our Lady of Fatima Shrine is to come in humble penitence, and to offer Eucharistic reparation to our Divine Lord in the tabernacle; to console Him so offended by the sins of the world. To visit the Shrine is to come praying for the conversion and healing of souls. For this reason, the Sacrament of Penance is made readily available as an essential part of our mission.

At the very "heart" of this Shrine is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, offered on the First Fridays and First Saturdays of the month and the 13th of the month from May-October "in a spirit of reparation" for sin; and to offer "Communion of reparation" to console the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. On these days, too, we have Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament and Benediction.

The devotion of the five 'First Saturdays' is another constitutive element of the Blue Army. On December 10, 1925, our Lord Himself appeared to Sister Lucia, with His Virgin Mother, asking for this reparative devotion on the First Saturday of five consecutive months.

Every First Saturday we confess our sins (the Sacrament of Penance), receive our Lord in Holy Communion in a spirit of reparation (Holy Mass), recite five decades of the Rosary publicly, and spend fifteen minutes meditating on the mysteries of the Holy Rosary in order to console the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This final reparative act is carried out during Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction.

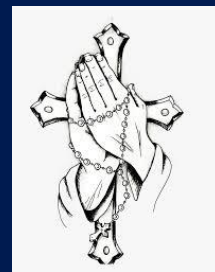
Because our Lady appeared on the 13th day of May thru October 1917, we honor each of these visits with a monthly Mass to show our love and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and to thank Her for coming to Fatima as the "Lady of the Rosary" to warn us of coming punishments, but also to promise the final triumph of Her Immaculate Heart.

How fitting that we become an official Shrine during the Jubilee Year of Our Lady of Loreto, honoring the Holy House of Nazareth. In the 1970's a group of Felician Sisters, led by Sister Mary Miranda, CSSF, built a replica of the Holy House of Loreto at the headquarters of the Blue Army in Washington, New Jersey. I had the privilege of knowing Sister Miranda, of corresponding with her during my seminary year, and of celebrating Mass at the "Holy House" later as a priest. Our Lady of Fatima Shrine Chapel in Riverview has a strong connection to the Holy House in Loreto, Italy, and its replica at the Blue Army headquarters built by sister Miranda and her group of Felicians.

Because the Incarnation took place in the Holy House of Nazareth, and because it was the home of the Holy family for more than thirty years, the House of Loreto is a symbol for the sanctification of life and the family. When Pope Francis declared the "Jubilee Year of Loreto" (ending on the feast of Our Lady of Loreto – December 10, 2020) I was overjoyed at the working of the Holy Spirit to inspire the Church to pray for the protection of the unborn (the Incarnation teaches us that life begins at conception!) and to pray for the sanctification of the family. This is the Year of the Holy Family! This is the time of St. Joseph. We become a Shrine in this year, on the 13th of October when we remember Our Lady of Fatima's final apparition and the Miracle of the Sun. The "First Saturday devotion" was revealed by our Lord and our Lady on December 10, feast of Our Lady of Loreto! God works in mysterious ways!

Our Lady of Fatima Shrine is a "Holy House" of prayer, penance, sacrifice and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. It stands as a living monument to the sanctity of all human life, and the holiness of marriage and the family. I thank Archbishop Vigneron for designating the Blue Army Chapel a Shrine, and I thank Bishop Battersby for proclaiming the Formal Decree, and celebrating the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on this auspicious occasion.

Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima, Queen of the family, pray for us!



Rosary Coast to Coast

Join us to pray for peace in our world at 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 11 at Old Saint Mary's in Greektown, 646 Monroe St. Detroit.

Free, secured parking is available adjacent to the church.

We will meet in the garden area, weather permitting or inside the church.

Our event is part of a series of Rosary prayer rallies happening simultaneously across North America and in over 50 countries worldwide.

*Note this is a new location for this year's event. Please contact Leonard St. Pierre (313) 320-7887 for more information.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Leonard St. Pierre

I feel great joy that our prayers for our chapel to become an official Shrine of the Archdiocese of Detroit have been answered. I thank Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron for his confidence in our efforts to learn, live and spread the messages of Fatima as the World Apostolate of Fatima, Detroit Archdiocesan Division.

In addition, I must give a special note of gratitude to our long time Spiritual Director Father John Hedges who has worked tirelessly and sacrificed so much to help us to hold true to our mission. Please keep him in your prayers. As the volunteer president of the World Apostolate of Fatima in Detroit for the past 25 years, I've had the pleasure of praying alongside many of you who love our Blessed Mother under the title of Our Lady of Fatima. I continue to be inspired by your devotion to Our Lady. Thank you for the great privilege of serving you in my role. Our designation as Our Lady of Fatima Shrine is due in no small part to all of you who have prayed, volunteered or sacrificed financially to support of our mission. Finally, I need to acknowledge someone who greatly inspired me to begin the dream of having the chapel designated as a Shrine. Father Robert J. Fox, known to many as the "Fatima priest" was a prolific writer of religious books and magazines. He was the Director of the International Fatima Family Apostolate, editor of the Immaculate Heart Messenger magazine and Director of Youth for Fatima pilgrimages.

As a young man I traveled to Fatima with Father Fox on one of his pilgrimages and my life was forever changed. His love for Our Lady, dedication to spreading the Fatima messages and love for the rosary were unsurpassed. Father Fox was a personal friend of Sister Lucia, the eldest of the three shepherd children whom Our Lady of Fatima appeared to from May-October 1917 in Fatima, Portugal. He never tired of telling me the importance of the various facets of the Fatima messages and inspired me to continue our mission here in the Detroit area.

Later in life, Father Fox retired and lived near the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Alabama (Mother Angelica's Shrine) where he served the pilgrims there by celebrating Masses and providing the sacraments and spiritual direction. Father Fox conducted many retreats at the former Marian Center in Detroit, the chapel we operated before moving to our Riverview chapel. He may have been retired, but he had boundless energy and whenever I asked, he gladly traveled to our chapel in Riverview for retreats. It was during one of those visits that he encouraged me to begin calling our chapel a Shrine as he believed it truly already was a special, holy place for pilgrims to come to learn to live the Fatima messages.

Thank you, Father Fox, for all you did to inspire me. I feel your prayers even now, believing that you must be in the presence of Our Lady watching over all of us and celebrating with us all our new designation of Our Lady of Fatima Shrine.

I look forward to hearing from many of you who have beautiful memories to share. My email is bluearmy18637@gmail.com Phone: 313 320-7887. Whether you were part of the Blue Army from the beginning from its earliest days in 1955 at St. Andrew Church on McGraw in Detroit to St. Claude's in Clinton Township to the Marian Center in Southwest Detroit or now as part of our newly designated Shrine in Riverview. During these past 65 years, we have been blessed as members of the Blue Army/World Apostolate of Fatima Detroit Archdiocesan Division. Please know that as we move forward, we have more work to do to learn, live and spread the Fatima messages. Please visit our new and improved website fatimashrinedetroit.org to keep up to date on all of our activities here at the Our Lady of Fatima Shrine and to learn more about Fatima.

Let us continue to pray for each other as we have much work to do as we continue to promote Our Lady of Fatima's peace plan from heaven. When Our Blessed Mother appeared to the children at Fatima for the first time on May 13, 1917, she told them "You will have much to suffer, but the grace of God will be your comfort." According to Lucia, one of the children, a bright light shone all around them, and without thinking about it, they all started reciting this prayer, which I ask you to join me in praying often:

Most Holy Trinity, I adore Thee! My God, my God, I love thee in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

God bless you all!



Our Lady of Fatima Shrine

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Our Lady of Fatima Shrine is funded solely by your donations. Please use the envelope in this newsletter to support our mission! Keep us in mind when planning your estate and will.

Holy Mass Schedule

October

October 2 | First Friday 7:00 PM Mass
October 3 | First Saturday 8:00 AM Mass
October 13 | 7:00 PM Mass

November

November 6 | First Friday 7:00 PM Mass
November 7 | First Saturday 8:00 AM Mass

December

December 4 | First Friday 7:00 PM Mass
December 5 | First Saturday 8:00 AM Mass

7:00 PM on the 13th of each month
May – October

*Confessions are heard 1/2 hour before First
Friday and First Saturday Masses*

St. Joseph Bookstore Hours

Before and after all Masses
Wednesdays 11:00 AM— 4:00 PM
Saturdays 11:00 AM— 4:00 PM

*We are completely staffed by volunteers,
please call before visiting the bookstore to
ensure we have someone available to help you
with your shopping.
734-281-1445*

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www.fatimashrinedetroit.org