

Fifth Sunday of Easter May 14, 2017



"She is clothed with strength and dignity,
and laughs at the days to come. She
opens her mouth in wisdom; kindly
instruction is on her tongue. She watches
over the affairs of her household, and
does not eat the bread of idleness. Her
children rise up and call her blessed; her
husband, too, praises her: Many are the
women of proven worth, but you have
excelled them all." Proverbs 31
Happy Mother's Day!

Mission Statement

We, the parishioners of St. Peter's Church, are called to holiness by God as present day disciples of Jesus Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are united in service to God to share our faith with one another and our community. May our participation in the Holy Sacraments, our ministries and our devotion to Mary bring glory to God and His Kingdom.

Pregnancy Support

Catholic Social Services (800) 982-4310
Crisis Pregnancy Help line (888) 4-OPTIONS
Endless Mountains Pregnancy Care Center (570) 673-4476

Welcome to St. Peter's Church!

If you are visiting Tioga County this weekend, welcome and thank you for worshipping with us! If you are searching for a Spiritual home, we welcome you to join us and invite you to become part of our church family. Please complete this form and return it to the parish office or drop it in the offertory basket.

Request for Parishioner Registration Form

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

St. Peter's Church

47 Central Avenue, Wellsboro, Pennsylvania 16901

Rectory Phone: 570-724-3371 ~ Fax: 570-724-6322

Religious Education Office: 570-724-9789

Website: www.stpeterswellsboro.org ~ Email: stpch@ptd.net

Rectory Office Hours

Monday through Friday 9:00–2:00pm

Parish Staff

Pastor: Rev. David Bechtel – Dbechtel100@yahoo.com

Secretary: Connie Spang – stpch@ptd.net

Business Manager: Patti Mitchell – stpadm@ptd.net

Directors of Religious Ed.: Maureen Poirier & Melissa Mann –
stpreled@ptd.net

Maintenance Staff: Connie Spang, Francis Kennedy

Schedule of Weekend Masses

Saturday Vigil: 5:00pm ~ Sunday: 8:30am & 11:00am

Reconciliation

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 11:45am-12:00noon;

Saturday 4:15 – 4:45pm; By appointment by calling the Rectory.

Emergency Contact

In the event of an emergency, please call the rectory at 570-724-3371. If no answer, please call 570-329-5762. This is a pager. You will be instructed to enter your phone number and Fr. Bechtel will return your call.

Parish Contact Listing

Women's Bible Study – Sue Singer 570-724-2360

St. John Neumann's Prayer Group – Christina Simonis 570-724-2085

Contemplative Spirituality Group – Kate Black 570-724-3047

Cards & Games – Patty Kramer 570-948-9023

Knights of Columbus – George Gamble 570-724-5216

Social Concerns – Karen Plumley 570-439-0175

Parish Rummage Sale – Mary Lasko 570-439-7706

Mary Beth Sampson 570-724-2953

Church Linens & Decorations – Sue Singer 570-724-2360

Buildings & Grounds – Rick Joachim 570-439-2591

Cemetery Committee – Howard Rutledge 570-724-4529

Fundraising Dinners – Tara Gordon 570-439-0006

Paul Urner 570-723-9970

Music Ministry – Christina Simonis 570-724-2085,

Marilyn deGuzman 570-376-5427

Samaritan House – Daria Guelig 570-724-3030

Youth Group – Maureen Poirier/ Melissa Mann 570-724-9789

Eucharistic Adoration – Mary Cleveland 570-724-5286

Finance Council – Priscilla Walrath 570-724-2056

Parish Council – Rectory 570-724-3371

Worship Committee – Rectory 570- 724-3371

Sunday Nursing Home Communion – Eileen Evert 570-439-4470

Prayer Chain – Kate Black 570-724-3047

Order of Secular Carmelite – Lori Makos 570-724-3371

ChristLife – Norb Josten 570-724-9095

Prayer Shawl Ministry – Jan Bernethy 307-267-0677

Religious Education and Formation

Religious Education classes are held for Pre-K – 12th grade. Classes begin in September and conclude in May. Pre-K (ages 3-5) is held during the 8:30am Mass. K-12th begins at 9:30am and concludes at 10:40am. To register, please contact the Religious Education Office at 570-724-9789 or the Rectory at 570-724-3371.

Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 14, 2017

Date	Time	Confession Time and Mass Intention
Monday 5/15 <i>Acts 14:5-18; Jn 14:21-26</i>	No Mass	
Tuesday 5/16 <i>Acts 14:19-28; Jn 14:</i>	7:30am	Our Mother's Day Intentions
Wednesday 5/17 <i>Acts 15:1-6; Jn 15:1-8</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confession Our Mother's Day Intentions
Thursday 5/18 <i>Acts 15:7-21; Jn 15:9-11</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confession Our Mother's Day Intentions
Friday 5/19 <i>Acts 15:22-31; Jn 15:12-17</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confession Our Mother's Day Intentions
Saturday 5/20 <i>Acts 16:10-1; Jn 15:18-1</i>	4:00-4:45pm 5:00pm	Confessions Our Mother's Day Intentions
Sunday 5/21 <i>Acts 8:5-8,14-17; 1 Pt 3:15-18; Jn 14:15-21</i>	8:30am 11:00am	Our Mother's Day Intentions Our Mother's Day Intentions

This week's Sanctuary Candle is offered in Memory of **Ellner Jane Kowitz** (Janet Perkowski Bober)

The Week Ahead

TUESDAY, May 16, 2017

Adoration – 8:00am – 7:00pm

Eucharistic Adoration – 8:00am-7:00pm

Evening Prayer/Benediction – 6:45pm

Women's Bible Study – 9:00am, Parish Center

AA/Al-Anon – 8:00pm, Parish Center

WEDNESDAY, May 17, 2017

ChristLife – 6:30pm, Parish Center

THURSDAY, May 18, 2017

Cards & Games – 12:00pm, Parish Center

St. John Neumann Prayer Group – 7:00pm, Parish Center

SUNDAY, May 21, 2017

Secular Carmelites – 12:30pm, Parish Center

Ministers of the Altar Schedule

April May 20th/21st

5:00pm

Servers: J. Grab, M. Mann, X. Tellgren

Lectors: T. Sampson, L. Sampson

E. Min.: K. Tellgren, G. Brown, K. Wilcox

8:30am

Servers: A. Dunkel, J. Gordon, L. Gordon

Lectors: D. Bleggi, D. Gordon

E. Min.: L. Whitney, N. Josten, N. Ostapowicz

11:00am

Servers: B. Levindoski, L. Burge, B. Burge

Lectors: C. Wacławik, M. Stirnaman

E. Min.: C. Lannak, V. Anthony, M. Stirnaman

Sacramental Information

Baptisms - Parents anticipating the birth of their first child are asked to attend baptismal instructions classes before the birth of their child, if possible. Please contact the Rectory to register. Note: Baptisms cannot be scheduled until all the necessary paperwork is completed.

Confirmation - Confirmation is administered every year to all 8th grade students in our Parish Religious Education program. Children wishing to receive Confirmation must be enrolled and participating in the program for two years before they are eligible to receive the sacrament.

Marriages- In order to complete the necessary paperwork, couples are asked to contact the Rectory at least one full year in advance of the proposed marriage date.

Anointing of the Sick - Please contact the Rectory whenever a member of your family has become sick or hospitalized.

Monthly Visitations - Any parishioner who is homebound and wishes to receive the Eucharist on a monthly basis is asked to contact the Rectory to schedule a visit.

Rite of Christian Initiation in Adults (R.C.I.A.) - The R.C.I.A. prepares interested adults for reception into the Catholic Church. The program is adapted to the needs of each person and prepares them for full initiation into the faith. Please contact the rectory to register for the classes or for more information.

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS - This month's food pantry items are: ***Canned tuna, ham, and chicken (5-6 ounce.)*** Please place your donations in the box at the entrance of the church.

GOODIES FOR OUR TROOPS - This month's Goodies for our Troops items are: ***"To Go" Powdered Drink Straws, Beef Jerky/Slim Jims (no pork or ham), Cookies – Oreos, etc., Homemade cookies & Fudge, & Personal Notes (cards, letters, drawings from children.)*** Please place your donations in the box at the entrance of the church.

St. Thomas/St. Catherine Mass Schedule

Saturday, St. Catherine, Westfield - 7:00pm

Sunday, St. Thomas, Elkland - 4:00pm

Italian Dinner Financial Report:

Income (door sales & donations) \$2,284.00

Expenses (supplies) 934.03

Total Profit **\$1,349.97**



Liturgical Reflection

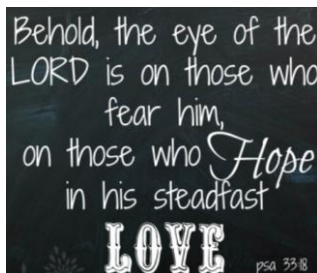
Fifth Sunday of Easter

FIRST READING: Acts 6:1-7

As the community of believers grew, they developed a need for greater organization and shared ministry. The Twelve recognize that their role it is to teach, and commission seven men to serve the physical needs of all in the community. This insures that everyone, regardless of nationality, will be treated fairly, that all will be cared for, diminishing cause for division among them. With the administration of the community in hand, the word of God continued to spread.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 33

As the growth of the community in the Acts of the Apostles results from the trusting prayer and faithful witness of the Apostles, we sing our praises, invoking God's mercy. All of God's works are trustworthy, calling from us justice and right living. In this season of Easter, we sing of Christ's Resurrection, assured that in the sight of the Lord, we are delivered from death. Our praise is always fitting.



SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2:4-9

Jesus was rejected and yet "chosen and precious in the sight of God," and so are we, called to be built into a spiritual house which lives as God's holy people in the world. We who have faith are called to live as people of faith, offering a spiritual sacrifice through our lives. We have been called out of darkness into the light of Christ, as a people of God's own, announcing the praises of the Risen One.

GOSPEL: John 14:1-12



Today's Gospel reading begins the lengthy Last Supper discourses, presenting several teachings that are repeated throughout. Jesus attempts to prepare the disciples for his departure from his

mortal life in this world, but assures them that he will return and take them to himself, promising "where I am you also may be." The disciples are confused; Jesus confronts their fear, and in doing so points to his union with the Father and promises that those who believe in him will do great works through him.

Parish Activities and Information

THANK YOU!

The Social Concerns Committee would like to thank all who generously donated clothing, blankets and diapers for the Mother's Day Layette project.

GIFT BEARERS AND GREETERS

If you or your family would like to take up the gifts or greet those coming to Mass at the door, please let an usher know or call the rectory. Our goal is to have a greeter at each door for all Masses and many individuals/families taking up the gifts. All are welcome to participate.

SECOND COLLECTION



There will be a second collection taken up at all Masses this weekend, May 14th, in support of St. Peter's Religious Education Program.

All money stays here in our parish. Please be as generous as you are able.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

The prayer shawl ministry is made up of individuals who like to knit or crochet. We make shawls for sick, homebound, and bereaved friends and family. As we make each shawl we pray for those who will receive the shawls that they will feel comfort and love. If you would like to know more about this ministry, please join us for our next meeting, June 4th following the 8:30am Mass in front of the Blessed Sacrament. For more information, call Jan Bernethy at 307-267-0677. Also if anyone is in need of a shawl, please let the ministry know.

SUGGESTION BOX

There is now a suggestion box hanging on the side wall of the Confessional where the literature is kept. If you have suggestions but prefer to remain anonymous, you may write suggestions on the index cards and place them in the box. We will empty the box from time to time and talk about the suggestions at the parish council meetings.

Religious Education and Youth Group News

SAVE THE DATE FOR VBS

Vacation Bible School will be held July 16-19, 2017. More information will be provided as the date gets closer.



Pro Life News

PRIESTS FOR LIFE

Politics and Religion Do Mix - The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in its doctrinal note "On some questions regarding the participation of Catholics in political life" (2002) said about St. Thomas More: "[He] gave witness by his martyrdom to the inalienable dignity of the human conscience. Though subjected to various forms of psychological pressure, Saint Thomas More refused to compromise, never forsaking the constant fidelity to legitimate authority and institutions which distinguished him; he taught by his life and his death that 'man cannot be separated from God, nor politics from morality.'"

That's The Way It Is!



This Sunday is Mother's Day—or at least this is when we observe Mother's Day. The first Mothers day was celebrated by Anna Jarvis in 1908. She is the reason Mother's Day is recognized nationally. She said that our mothers are the ones who have done more for us than any other person in the world. Our mothers nurtured us for nine months, gave us birth, nursed us, raised us, etc. The most important thing our mothers did for us was that they gave us life. All of us have life today because of one simple fact: our mothers choose life.

I think the unsung heroes of the world today are mothers—but especially single mothers. Perhaps on this special day we can give particular honor to those women who have chosen life and love as single mothers when the odds were against them. Pattie Mallette is one such person. At just 17 years old she struggled with addiction to drugs. I am not just talking about Marijuana. She was using some pretty hard core drugs—drugs like LSD. She also was a drug dealer. Sadly, this woman also suffered sexual abuse. She eventually attempted suicide. She wound up in a mental ward as a result. That is where she became a Christian. At age 18 she became pregnant.

Pattie Mallette was encouraged to have an abortion by the doctors. After all, this was not a person who was in a position to raise a child. But she refused to even consider an abortion. She knew that she was pregnant with her child and she could not bring herself to kill her child as the doctors suggested. On March 1, 1994, in London Ontario, Pattie Mallette gave birth to a son. I am sure you have all heard of her son---his name is Justin Bieber.

Pattie Mallette is pro-life. One article I read said "Justin Bieber 'came out' as pro-life." Yes the article said "came out." Unfortunately "pro-life" and "Hollywood" is an oxymoron. It is sad that Hollywood Celebrities who are pro-life and whose mothers choose life against the odds must keep their thoughts secret. And I thought Hollywood celebrities were supposed to be the bastions of tolerance and diversity. So much for tolerance and diversity in liberal Hollywood; tolerance and diversity only so long as you agree with the tolerant and diverse ones.

Another Hollywood celebrity who "came out" as pro-life is Jack Nicholson. His mother became pregnant as a teenager as well. His mother also chose life. Nicholson said in an interview in 2003: "I'm very contra my constituency in terms of abortion because I'm positively against it. I don't have the right to any other view. My only emotion is gratitude, literally, for my life." I want to note that Nicholson didn't even know the identity of his birth mother until 1974.

Indeed all mothers, but especially single mothers should be lauded for choosing life. Whatever your relationship with your mother, she gave you the gift of life. I realize not everyone has a good relationship with their mothers.

Perhaps some parishioner's mothers are deceased; and they never reconciled. Parents aren't perfect. Whatever a person's mother did wrong, the one thing she did right was choosing life. We can all thank our mothers for that. For those who might not have had a good relationship with their mother, or for those whose mother might have passed away without being reconciled, I invite you to pray for the repose of the soul of your mother. That is the way to healing. For those who are not reconciled to their mothers who are living, I invite you to pray for your mother. Again, that is the way to healing.

I take this opportunity to wish all mothers well on this, their special day. Thank you for choosing life and love. Thank you to all single mothers who choose life and love against the odds. Thank you to all mothers, and especially single mothers for your gifts. Pray for all mothers today, but especially single mothers. May God bless them and their children abundantly.

To any women reading this who has had an abortion; the best thing you can do is go to Confession. God has not given up on you. God wants only to heal you. Do not let the fact that you have had an abortion keep you from God. I am unapologetically pro-life. I rail against abortion at times from the pulpit. That does not mean I am like that in the Confessional. There is a time for everything under the sun. Confession is only a time for mercy.

That's the way it is! The Reverend David W. Bechtel

Stewardship

Sunday Collection for May 7th: \$5,784.00

Weekly Goal to Meet Expenses: \$5,990.00

Difference:(\$ 206.00)

Year-to-Date Budget Variance:(\$1,925.64)

We are grateful to all those who financially sacrifice every week to support our parish and its ministries!

May – Month of Mary

Gerald Hopkins wondered about this in a lovely poem called, "The May Magnificat." "May is Mary's month, and I/ Muse at that and wonder why...the Lady Month, May/ Why fasten that upon her,/ With a feasting in her honor?" he asked. Hopkins speculates that is it the springtime explosion of new life, in birds and flowers, that make May the right month for Mary. "This ecstasy all through mothering earth/ Tells Mary her mirth till Christ's birth."

Whatever the reason, May is a special time of prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is also Easter Time, so we join with Mary in rejoicing in Christ's Resurrection from the dead. We can honor Mary in this month by praying the Rosary or another Marian devotion and by participating in Mass on the Feast of the Visitation, which concludes the month on May 31st. It's also a good time for quiet reflection on the seven joys of Mary, the traditional counterpart to her seven sorrows. The joys of Mary are the Annunciation, the birth of Jesus, the adoration of the Magi, the Resurrection, the Ascension of Jesus, the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and Mary's coronation as Queen of Heaven.

Dioceses of Scranton News

ONLINE SURVEY TO PARTNER WITH FRANCIS

The young church (16-35) and those who work with them are encouraged to let their voice be heard as the Diocese of Scranton 'partners with Francis' in preparation for the 2018 Synod on the topic of Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment. Both those who identify as Catholic and those who do not, can complete an online survey at www.partnerwithfrancis.org. The results of this survey will not only help Pope Francis and the Bishops as they prepare for the Synod, but also help shape programming for the young church here in our Diocese. For more information, please contact Dominick Costantino, program coordinator for the Diocesan vocation office, at 570-780-2996.

BISHOP BAMBERA STATEMENT REGARDING THE OBSERVANCE OF THE 100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE APPARITION OF THE BLESSED MOTHER AT FATIMA.

At their recent Provincial Meeting on May 1, 2017, the Bishops of Pennsylvania voted to approve a recommendation that each Catholic diocese and eparchy in the Commonwealth be dedicated to the protection of the Blessed Mother.

What prompted the proposal was the intent for the dioceses and eparchies in the Commonwealth to observe the 100th Anniversary of the apparition of the Blessed Mother at Fatima.

The official dedication will be marked with a special Mass to be celebrated in St. Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg at 12:00 noon on Wednesday, September 27, 2017 by all the bishops in the state. This Mass is scheduled during the time when the bishops will gather for their next Provincial Meeting.

The second part of the dedication will be an observance in each diocese and eparchy the weekend of October 14-15, 2017.

More details will be forthcoming.

With every best wish, I remain Faithfully yours in Christ,

† *Joseph C. Bambera*

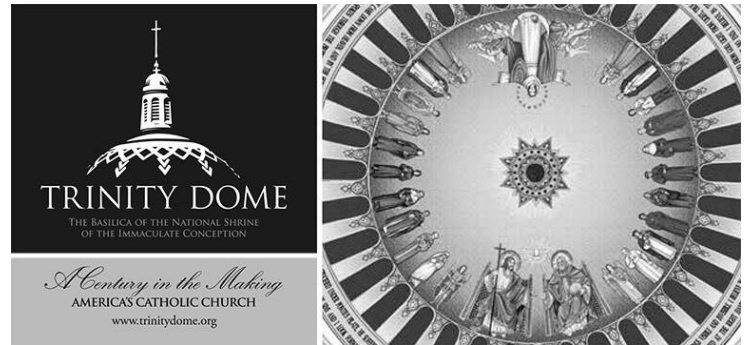
Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton

CONCERT AT SS PETER & PAUL CHURCH

Please come and enjoy a free choral concert at SS Peter & Paul Church in Towanda at 2:00pm on Sunday, May 21st. The featured group will be the award-winning Notre Dame High School Choir of Elmira, NY. Local musicians for the event are Emily Hockenberry and Kathryn Christian, with vocal numbers accompanied by Kathy Hammerly. Ed Hilscher, an accomplished banjo-man will be on hand, as will be the St. Agnes School Choir. This event is part of the 175th Anniversary year-long celebration of the parish. The church, located at Third and Lombard Streets, was built in 1867-69 and has exceptional acoustics for music.

SECOND COLLECTION NEXT WEEKEND

Next week, our parish will participate in a national collection for the Trinity Dome to complete the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC, before its 100th anniversary. Also known as America's Catholic Church, the National Shrine has been a century in the making, built by and for the faithful of our great nation in honor of our Blessed Mother, the patroness of the United States. Become a part of Mary's Shrine and help to bring to completion our church! For more information, please visit www.trinitydome.org or contact the National Shrine at 202-281-0615.



Notice Regarding Reporting Sexual Abuse of a Minor

It is the policy of the Diocese of Scranton to report any allegation of sexual abuse of a minor to law enforcement. If you are a victim of sexual abuse committed by a priest, deacon, religious or lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton, you are encouraged to immediately report the matter to law enforcement. If any priest, deacon, religious, lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton has cause or reason to suspect that a minor has been subjected to any form of abuse, including child sexual abuse, the matter will be reported to law enforcement. In accordance with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Laws, reports of suspected child abuse should also be made immediately by phone to the 24-Hour Child Abuse hotline (ChildLine) at 1-800-932-0313 or electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis.

It is also the policy of the Diocese to adhere to all civil and state regulations. To this end, the Diocese is equally committed to adhering to the norms of the Code of Canon Law and to upholding the tenets of the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, which includes supporting victims of sexual abuse in their pursuit of emotional and spiritual well-being. As such, information regarding an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor should also be reported to the Victim Assistance Coordinator, Joseph DeVizia at (570-862-7551) or to Diocesan officials, including the Vicar General, Monsignor Thomas M. Muldowney, V.G., at (570-207-2269).

"Say the Rosary every day, to bring peace to the world and the end of the war."

Our Lady of Fatima

100th ANNIVERSARY OF FATIMA

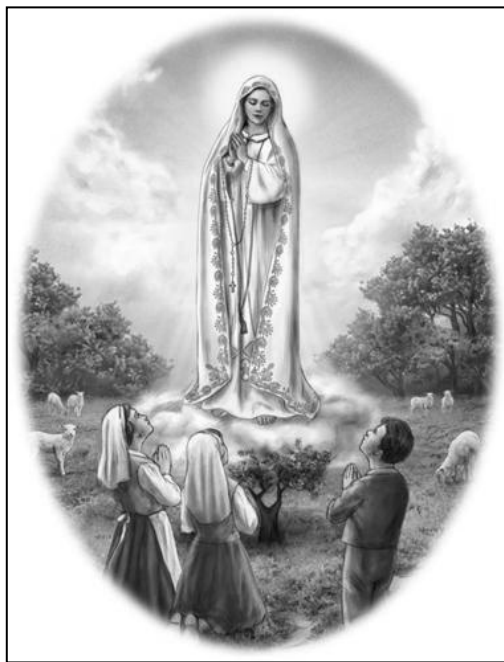
May 13th is the anniversary of the apparition of Our Lady to three shepherd children in the small village of Fatima in Portugal in 1917. She appeared six times to Lucia, 9, and her cousins Francisco, 8, and his sister Jacinta, 6, between May 13, 1917 and October 13, 1917.

The story of Fatima begins in 1916, when, against the backdrop of the First World War which had introduced Europe to the most horrific and powerful forms of warfare yet seen, and a year before the Communist revolution would plunge Russia and later Eastern Europe into six decades of oppression under militant atheistic governments, a resplendent figure appeared to the three children who were in the field tending the family sheep. A flash of lightning took them by surprise. There, standing a lady dressed all in white, more brilliant than the sun, shedding rays of light, clear and stronger than a crystal glass filled with the most sparkling water, pierced by the burning rays of the sun". The lady spoke to them and said: "Fear not! I will not harm you." Lucia asked her where she came from and she responded, "I come from Heaven." The woman wore a white mantle edged with gold and held a rosary in her hand. The woman asked them to pray and devote themselves to the Holy Trinity and to "say the Rosary every day, to bring peace to the world and an end to the war." She also revealed that the children would suffer, especially from the unbelief of their friends and families, and that the two younger children, Francisco and Jacinta would be taken to Heaven very soon but Lucia would live longer in order to spread her message and devotion to the Immaculate Heart.

In the last apparition the woman revealed her name in response to Lucia's question: "I am the Lady of the Rosary." That same day, 70,000 people had turned out to witness the apparition, following a promise by the woman that she would show the people that the apparitions were true. They saw the sun make three circles and move around the sky in an incredible zigzag movement in a manner which left no doubt in their minds about the veracity of the apparitions. By 1930 the Bishop had approved of the apparitions and they have been approved by the Church as authentic.

The messages Our Lady imparted during the apparitions to the children concerned the violent trials that would afflict the world by means of war, starvation, and the persecution of the Church and the Holy Father in the twentieth century if the world did not make reparation for sins. She exhorted the Church to pray and offer sacrifices to God in order that peace may come upon the world, and that the trials may be averted. Our Lady of Fatima revealed three prophetic "secrets," the first two of which were revealed earlier and refer to the vision of hell and the souls languishing there, the request for an ardent devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the

prediction of the Second World War, and finally the prediction of the immense damage that Russia would do to humanity by abandoning the Christian faith and embracing Communist totalitarianism. The third "secret" was not revealed until the year 2000, and referred to the persecutions that humanity would undergo in the last century: "The good will be martyred; the Holy Father will have much to suffer; various nations will be annihilated." The suffering of the popes of the 20th century has been interpreted to include the assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II in 1981, which took place on May 13th, the 64th anniversary of the apparitions. The Holy Father attributed his escape from certain death to the intervention of Our Lady: "... it was a mother's hand that guided the bullet's path and in his throes the Pope halted at the threshold of death."



What is the central meaning of the message of Fatima? Nothing different from what the Church has always taught: it is, as Cardinal Ratzinger, now Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI, has put it, "the exhortation to prayer as the path of salvation for souls and, likewise, the summons to penance and conversion." The fiat of Mary, the word of her heart, has changed the history of the world, because it brought the Savior into the world—because, thanks to her Yes, God could become man in our world and remains so for all time. The Evil One has power in this world, as we see and experience continually; he has power because our freedom continually lets itself be led away from God. But since God himself took a human heart and has thus steered human freedom towards what is good, the freedom to choose evil no longer has the last word.

From that time forth, the word that prevails is this: "In the world you will have tribulation, but take heart; I have overcome the world" (Jn 16:33). The message of Fatima invites us to trust in this promise.

Fatima Centennial Plenary Indulgence

2017 marks the 100th anniversary of the Fatima apparitions. In honor of this, Pope Francis has granted a plenary indulgence opportunity throughout the entire anniversary year:

To obtain the indulgence: visit with devotion and pray before any statue of Our Lady of Fatima solemnly exposed for public veneration in any church, oratory, or proper place on the 13th of each month from May to October 2017, and there devoutly participate in some celebration or prayer in honor of the Virgin Mary, pray the "Our Father," recite the "Creed," and invoke Our Lady of Fatima.

To obtain any plenary indulgence one must also: Go to confession, Receive Holy Communion, Be interiorly detached from all sin, and Pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.

Want to know more?

<http://theholynosary.org/fatimaapparitions>

News from the Vatican



GOD ALWAYS SURPRISES US

The Pope's homily focused on the episode of the Acts of the Apostles where St. Peter confronts the first Christian community regarding being open to pagans who joined the Church. The Pope stressed that the Holy Spirit always moves the Church and the Christian community, urging therefore to not resist the Spirit and be open to God's surprises. The Holy Spirit works miracles and creates new things, but obviously, some feared these novelties of the Church. The Spirit is the gift of God, of this God, our Father who always surprises us. The God of surprise. Why? Because He is a living God, who dwells in us, a God who moves our hearts, a God who is in the Church and walks with us and in this journey He surprises us. It is He, He, who has the creativity to create the world, the creativity to create new things every day. He is the God who surprises us.

Don't Resist the Spirit. This can create difficulties like those that Peter faced when he was challenged by other disciples, because they knew that even pagans had welcomed the Word of God. For them, Peter had gone too far and they reprimanded him because, according to them, he was scandalous even to the point of saying, "You, Peter, the rock of the Church! Where are you leading us to?"

The Pope then urged those present not to resist the Holy Spirit, saying "it's always done this way." He recalled that Peter narrated his vision as a sign from God, and this helped him to "take a courageous decision" and welcome God's surprise. Faced with God's many surprises the disciples came together, discussed and agreed on matters "in order to take a step ahead that the Lord wanted." "From the times of the prophets until now, the sin to resist the Holy Spirit had always been there: this resistance to the Spirit. This is the sin with which Stephen accuses the members of the Sanhedrin: 'You and your fathers have always resisted the Holy Spirit.' No, it has always been done this way, and must be done so." They tell Peter not to bring this 'newness,' to remain calm... take a tranquilizer and calm the nerves... be calm ... so the voice of God is shut off. In the psalm the Lord speaks to the people: 'Do not harden your hearts like your fathers.'

Pope Francis invited faithful to ask for the grace of discernment to distinguish between good and evil. Recalling today's Gospel speaks of the Good Shepherd, the Lord always asks us not to harden our hearts. The phrase, 'It is has always been done like this' shuts out and resists the Holy Spirit, and this kills freedom, kills joy, kills fidelity to the Holy Spirit who always acts in advance and carries the Church forward. But then the question – how can I know if it is from the Holy Spirit or from worldliness, the spirit of the world or spirit of the devil? For this one needs to ask for the grace of discernment, namely the tool that the very Spirit has granted us. How should one discern in every occasion? The answer is the

way the Apostles did it: they came together, talked and saw the path of the Holy Spirit. Instead, those without this grace or those who did not pray for it remained closed and still. Christians must learn how to discern, discern one thing from another, discern newness, the new wine that comes from God and the newness that comes from the spirit of the world and the devil.

Faith he stressed never changes. It's always the same. But it broadens and grows into a movement. In the words of St. Vincent of Lerins, a monk of the early centuries: "The truths of the Church forge ahead: they are strengthened with years, develop with time, become profound with age, and they grow stronger with time and years and broaden with time and they become more prominent with the age of the Church."

Pope Francis concluded, urging those present to ask "for the grace of discernment in order not to mistake the path and be trapped in immobility, rigidity and closing in of the heart."

POPE FRANCIS SAYS EVERY MARRIED COUPLE MUST KNOW THESE 3 WORDS

During his papacy, Pope Francis has given practical advice for married couples to avoid struggles in their marriage. Whether in his Encyclical, *Amoris Laetitia*, or in addresses, the Holy Father has made marriage a key area of teaching. Pope Francis shared three words he says are key to a successful marriage. "Sometimes they ask me how to make it so that the family always goes forward and overcomes difficulties, I suggest to them to practice three words. These words can help to live married life because in married life there are difficulties," adding that marriage is something we have to take care of, "because it's forever." **The three words are permission, gratitude, and forgiveness.**

On the topic of *permission*, the Pope said to "always ask your spouse, the wife to the husband and the husband to the wife, 'what do you think, what do you think if we do this?'" rather than just "running over" the other without getting their opinion.

He also stressed the need to be *grateful*, "because it's the spouses who confer the sacrament of marriage, one to the other. And this sacramental relationship is maintained with this sentiment of gratitude, of thanks."

The third word, he noted, is *forgiveness*, which is "a very hard word to say." In marriage, mistakes are always made, he said, noting that the important thing is to know how to recognize one's mistakes and ask for forgiveness.

This "does a lot of good," Francis continued, urging families and engaged couples to "remember these three words, which will help you a lot in married life: permission, thank you, and forgiveness."

POPE FRANCIS' MONTHLY PRAYER INTENTION

Pope's Prayer Intention for May -That Christians in Africa, in imitation of the Merciful Jesus, may give prophetic witness to reconciliation, justice, and peace.

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Parish Prayer List



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Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them, O Lord and
Let the Perpetual Light Shine Upon Them.

Maryann Greves

Lord, this we know, no matter how difficult life may be at this time, we know you will not stop loving us and will always hold us in the palm of your hand. We are reaching to you, Lord, to hold us, comfort us, and heal us. Lord, this we know, you are faithful in your love for us today and forever. You are with us, and we are with you. Amen.