



# the magnificat

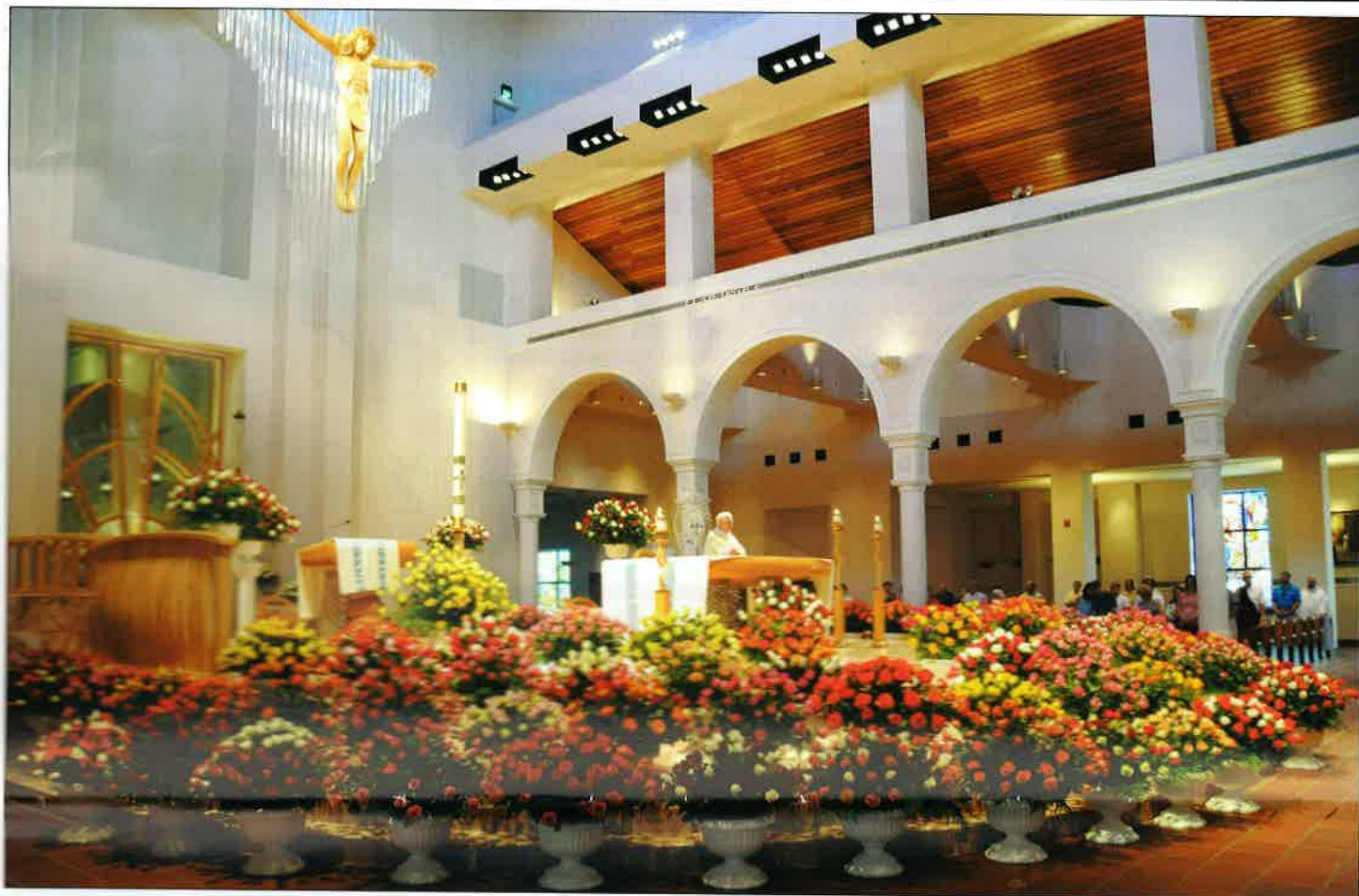
Vol. 19 No. 3

SUMMER 2009

A PUBLICATION OF

NATIONAL SHRINE OF

MARY, QUEEN OF THE UNIVERSE



## Mother's Day 2009 at the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe

The sanctuary at Mary's Shrine was filled with a display of more than 10,000 roses in celebration of Mother's Day 2009. Each rose represented a mother, daughter, grandmother, sister, niece, friend or loved one of Shrine donors across the country.

## Reflections on Mary's Shrine

My first recollection of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe was that I could see it from I-4, but had great difficulty figuring out how to get there. Like many diocesan priests, as the Shrine took shape, I developed a great admiration for Fr. Joe Harte and the many parishioners of Holy Family parish who laid the groundwork for what this center of devotion to the Blessed Mother has offered to Catholics from around the world and to those of us who live in this local church. Although, I have not had too many opportunities to enjoy its facilities for just myself, the beautiful settings and the peace and solitude it offers are very soothing. On occasion, I find it spiritually calming to just go there, not talk necessarily to anyone or be recognized, but to appreciate the Blessed Sacrament exposed and also go to confession.

This past May we were happy to accept the gracious hospitality of Fr. Ed McCarthy and staff as we celebrated our parish's First Holy Communion at the Shrine, due to the planned restoration of the Cathedral. It has also been a location where we have enjoyed staff retreats and workshops, a relaxing and meditative location to escape from downtown. The religious articles store is well laid out and without question lends a wonderful service to Catholics from all over. It is almost impossible to go in and not find something that I need, either for myself or someone else. The garden dedicated to Our Blessed Mother, the discrete manner in which the unborn child is honored, strolling in the main church, when there are few people around, all of this allows me to mumble in quiet conversation and think, that for once, God is just paying attention to me.

Of course, with the growth in numbers, the shrine is also being used more and more for diocesan functions, and we are blessed to be able to do so. The Chrism Mass and the funeral Mass for Bishop Grady stand out in my mind. But, in the final analysis, my greatest appreciation of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe is that it has given me a little personal oasis, twenty five minutes from downtown, and the world does not need to know.



Father John McCormick  
"... in quiet conversation ... God is just paying attention to me."

**Fr. John McCormick,**  
Rector, St. James Cathedral  
Diocese of Orlando, FL



## A Letter from the Rector

My Dear Friends,

It is a pleasure to present to you another issue of the *Magnificat*. The theme of this issue is "Priesthood, Laity a Dynamic Union."

During a March 16th plenary assembly with members of the Congregation for the Clergy, the Pope declared that the year 2009-2010 would be a Jubilee year of the Priest, beginning June 19, 2009, the Feast of the Sacred Heart. The year will also commemorate the 150th Anniversary of St. John Vianney's death - the patron of parish priests. The Pope said he was calling for the special year for priests in an effort to foster the priest's yearning for:

"spiritual perfection upon which the effectiveness of their ministry principally depends."

He went on to say:

"priests must also be present and identifiable and recognizable for their judgment of faith, their personal virtues and their attire in the fields of culture and charity, which have always been at the heart of the Church's mission."

In his opening letter to the priests of the world, announcing the Year of the Priest dated June 16, 2009, our Holy Father states:

"Here we ought to recall the Second Vatican Council's hearty encouragement of priests 'to be sincere in their appreciation and promotion of the dignity of the laity and of the special role they have to play in the church's mission. ... They should be willing to listen to lay people, give brotherly consideration to their wishes, and acknowledge their experience and competence in the different fields of human activity. In this way they will be able, together with them, to discern the signs of the times.'"  
(*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 9.)

For this reason there will be many pictures of what the priest does at the Shrine. As you will see, it has been a very full year. Without the priest, there would be no celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick - there would be no Shrine.

Both the priest and the laity bring the ministry of the Church to its fullest potential. Because of this, there will be pictures of those who work at the Shrine. With these people, as well as the hundreds of volunteers, the Shrine comes to life - ministry happens.

None of this would be possible if it were not for you. By your prayers and donations the ministry of the Shrine continues. You are an indispensable partner of all of this. Because of your generosity, the work of the staff and volunteers, and the Sacramental actions of the priests - the Shrine becomes a place of peace and joy for tens of thousands of Catholics every week. It is this fruitful union of faith, priests and laity together, that make this Shrine such a wonderful place. From the closing Mass of the summer meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, through each and every celebration of the Eucharist, to the First Communion of the children of St. James Cathedral parish, the Shrine continues to be a place where our life with Christ is deepened. I hope you enjoy the issue of the *Magnificat*.

In the love of Jesus and Mary,

*Fr. Edward J. McCarthy*

Very Reverend Edward J. McCarthy, STL, D.Min.

## NOVENA

FRIENDS AND MEMBERS  
OF THE  
NATIONAL SHRINE OF MARY,  
QUEEN OF THE UNIVERSE FAMILY  
ARE INVITED TO SHARE  
IN THE SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS  
OF A NOVENA OF MASSES  
HONORING  
THE  
QUEENSHIP OF MARY

AUGUST 22,  
2009

## MASS SCHEDULE

### WEEKDAY MASSES

- 8:00 AM
- 12:05 PM
- 7:00 PM  
(MONDAY)  
*Mass and  
Perpetual  
Novena  
in honor of  
the Miraculous  
Medal*



### SATURDAY VIGIL MASS

- 6:00 PM

### SUNDAY & HOLY DAYS

- 7:30 AM
- 9:30 AM
- 11:30 AM
- 6:00 PM

## A LEGACY OF FAITH

By means of a bequest,  
naming Mary, Queen of  
the Universe Shrine in your will,  
you can bequeath to a  
new generation—a legacy of faith  
and gain for yourself  
the immeasurable blessing  
and deep personal satisfaction  
of knowing that your gift  
will help, in perpetuity,  
to further the work of  
Our Lord Jesus Christ.

## the magnificat

ISSUED PERIODICALLY FOR THE  
FRIENDS AND BENEFACTORS OF

NATIONAL SHRINE OF  
MARY, QUEEN OF THE UNIVERSE  
8300 VINELAND AVENUE  
ORLANDO, FLORIDA 32821  
(407) 239-6600



Maintaining the Shrine is expensive! We have searched for ways to be better stewards of the resources the Lord has blessed us with while maintaining a beautiful and peaceful worship space and continuing the ministry of the Shrine to serve all who come here.

### **The Shrine Goes Green**

One of the biggest bills the Shrine has each month is the electric bill; it takes a lot to heat and cool the Shrine and to keep the lights on inside and outside the buildings. The Shrine building controls were the originals installed when the buildings went up in the mid-eighties, and we were experiencing more and more maintenance issues with them. They were unique to the Shrine and represented old technology that was becoming increasingly difficult to repair and replace. Bids were submitted by several companies for a new building control system and we have subsequently replaced the old system with current technology that has an open systems architecture, allowing us greater flexibility in terms of maintenance, growth and ease of use. We have been able to incorporate additional building systems within the control system, enabling us to reduce our power consumption with better control of timing and power settings. We even incorporated the controls for the bells and the fountains into this system, making maintenance and operations easier and saving the Shrine additional monies. We have been

charting energy usage over the last four months and noted a 20-30% saving in kilowatt hours used each month compared to the same period last year. Replacing the control system and upgrading or replacing the associated duct work and sensors has made a difference.

As previously mentioned, when the parking lot was redone, we added a dumpster enclosure which was big enough to also incorporate a pad for a recycling bin. The Gift Shop generates a lot of cardboard and Shrine offices generate a lot of paper and other recyclables. It costs a little extra for the additional recycling dumpster, but it means a lot less "stuff" going to the landfill, and it also helps to reduce our overall bill for waste management, enabling us to be better stewards of the Shrine's resources.

### **The Shrine Updates Its Office Systems To Improve Communication And Efficiency**

Technology improves as time goes on, and the incorporation of new technology in the operation of the Shrine has improved our use of time as helping us to be more efficient. The phone system at Mary's Shrine was just under twenty years old, and was becoming increasingly unreliable and costly to maintain, so last spring we installed a new phone system and incorporated a new telecommunications plan that also reduced our monthly phone bill. In addition, we have invested in a number

of upgrades to our computer hardware and peripherals like printers, copiers and other office automation devices that assist with mailing and postage for the tremendous amount of printed material that goes out to the Shrine family throughout the year. We are currently in the process of a systems analysis to improve overall efficiency and security of our information systems, and we are looking at new ways to better communicate with everyone online. Over the next several months we will update our webpage to provide more current information in a timely manner and perhaps incorporate some new features like a photo gallery, improved online shopping and an online donation capability.

### **The Means**

Several Shrine family members chose to leave a legacy of faith for generations to come by means of a bequest naming the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe in their wills. Such gifts aided in the completion of these major projects.

I share all of this information to let you know that we are doing our best to be good stewards of your generosity. This is an absolutely beautiful place, and we want to maintain a safe, serene, and peaceful environment for all who come to pray and worship. May the Lord continue to bless you in all that you do.

## **Volunteers**





# "Mary's Song"

## Notes from the Music Department

Music at Mary's Shrine continues to lead sung prayer in many areas of Shrine life. As Pope Benedict XVI has said, "[music] has the power to lead us back ... to the Creator of all harmony, creating a resonance within us which is like being in tune with the beauty and truth of God, with the reality which no human knowledge or philosophy can ever express." With this in mind, we continue to acknowledge the sacred mission music has to the service of God and His people.

On Sundays and selected holy days throughout the year, the Shrine Choir (the resident professional choir at the Shrine) sings at both 9:30am and 11:30am Masses. This expanded schedule, begun in October of 2008, allows the Choir to reach many more thousands of people throughout the year, as they draw freely upon the Church's rich legacy of sacred music. Recordings of the Shrine Music ministry — organ and choir — are available in the Shrine's Gift Shop.

The Shrine continues to offer sacred concerts throughout the year. Two of our most successful offerings this past season were attended by many local residents as well as tourists. The annual *Christmas with the Shrine Choir* featured holiday music for organ, brass, choir, percussion and handbells, while *Ave Maria – A Celebration of Mother's Day* found the Shrine Choir singing amidst 10,000 roses in homage to mothers throughout the world.

The 2009-2010 season of concerts promises to be equally successful. Although plans are still in development, the highlight of the season

will certainly be a performance of George Frederick Handel's immortal oratorio, *Messiah*, in Lent of 2010. An expanded Shrine Choir, accompanied by an orchestra of strings, winds, percussion and organ will present this masterpiece, one of the most beloved works in all of the choral repertoire.

Written over the course of 23 days (Most musicians couldn't even copy the piece that fast!), *Messiah* then sat in Handel's desk untouched for the next seven weeks. The first performance took place on April 13, 1742 at the Musick Hall in Fishamble-Street in Dublin, in which city the work has since been performed annually.

Certainly Handel was deeply moved during the composition of *Messiah*. At one point, after having written the famous "Hallelujah" chorus, the composer's eyes filled with tears and he exclaimed, "I did think I did see all heaven before me, and the great God himself!" This is not a hard story to believe, since the powerful music of *Messiah* has been moving listeners closer to God since its first performance in 1742.

Through the text and music of *Messiah*, we are called to participate closely in the life of our Lord. Through Handel's exquisite music, the Messiah of all is "made flesh, and walks among us." Watch future issues of the Magnificat, or stay in touch with the Shrine Music Department ([music@maryqueenoftheuniverse.org](mailto:music@maryqueenoftheuniverse.org)) to receive notices of all upcoming musical events at Mary's Shrine.

If you would like to be involved with a soon-to-be-formed support group for the Shrine Concert Series, please contact the music department at 407-239-6600, ext. 317, or email the address above. Any level of involvement and support is welcome!

*The Shrine Choir sings at Mother's Day concert*



### 2009-2010 Concert Season

**Thursday, October 15, 2009, 7:30pm**  
**SOVEREIGN BRASS UNION**

Thrilling music for 15-piece brass and percussion ensemble in the resonant acoustics of the Shrine. Tickets \$10

**Friday, December 4, 2009, 7:30pm**  
**CHRISTMAS WITH THE SHRINE CHOIR**

Our annual celebration of Advent and Christmas music, this year featuring the famous "Gloria" by John Rutter for choir, brass, organ and percussion. Tickets \$10

**Friday, March 19, 2010, 7:30pm**  
**Handel's MESSIAH**

The immortal oratorio performed by an expanded Shine Choir and Orchestra, directed by Dr. William Picher. Tickets \$15

**Thursday, April 22, 2010, 7:30pm**  
**THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA CHOIRS**

Directed by Dr. David L. Bruner  
Talented students from the UCF Music Department perform antiphonal works for multiple choirs and instrumentalists. Free admission, offering to be taken for UCF Scholarship Fund

**Sunday, May 30, 2010, 3:00pm**

**A SALUTE TO THE FALLEN: A CELEBRATION OF MEMORIAL DAY**

Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service. Join the Shrine Choir, and organist, Dr. William Picher, as we pay tribute to those beloved who have gone before us. Tickets \$10

For further information, contact the music department at the National Shrine: 407-239-6600 ext. 317, or [music@maryqueenoftheuniverse.org](mailto:music@maryqueenoftheuniverse.org)

## Letter - Commenting on Shrine

When the clergy and the laity work together, great things happen for God. An example of that is expressed in a letter received at Mary's Shrine. This couple came to Mass with little expectation, but left having a most memorable experience.

Dear Father McCarthy,

Staying in Orlando recently, we asked the hotel for the location of the nearest Catholic Church. Frankly, we approached the Shrine with low expectations — a "vacation church" — pass the basket, sell 'em a raffle ticket and get ready for the next batch.

How wrong we were, and how deeply we thank you. As we entered the gathering space with its soaring, inspirational artwork, we were warmly greeted. Entering the worship space we heard not good, but excellent music. But the best part of the experience was the

way the celebrant managed, within minutes, to create a community. Having listened and participated, even chatted with the people near us, by the time the liturgy (the Second Sunday of Advent) began, we felt "at home." Finally, the liturgy itself was beautifully presented.

Sadly, at the time, we were carrying only a few dollars and a credit card and were thus unable to make our donation. So please accept this token of our appreciation for the ministry of Mary Queen of the Universe and the warmth and sincerity with which you carry it out. Attending Mass that vacation Sunday was not the empty fulfilling of an obligation, but a spirit-filled community experience.

Joanne & David M.

## Reflections of a Seminarian ...continued.

So far my experience at the Shrine has been a blessed one and I look forward to the rest of my time here. I would like to thank all of the priests, staff, and volunteers of the Shrine for teaching me the ins and outs of the ministry and for the amazing job they do in maintaining and bettering the Shrine for the enjoyment of all. I also must thank the visitors and benefactors of the Shrine for it never ceases to amaze me that such a large Shrine cannot only sustain itself, but also grow only from the donations from its visitors, without them, I would never have had this opportunity. Know that even when my summer here is over, the Shrine and all of those involved in its ministry will continue in my prayers and I ask that you remember me in your prayers as I continue my journey toward the priesthood.



## Museum Spotlight...

by Catherine Davies, Museum Curator

In his Letter to Artist (1969), Pope John Paul II wrote of art as “a bridge to the religious experience”, and that same bridge would today seem most keenly observed in the work of Fr. Valdemar Maciag – artist, musician and priest.



**Crown of Thorns**

In this painting Fr. Valdemar evokes Christ's suffering by highlighting the thorns that encircle His head. The shadows of brown and blood red paint add an expressive dimension to the painting, touching on the mystery of our Lord's Passion.

In anticipation of the year of the priest, the Shrine Museum was pleased to feature a collection of Fr. Valdemar's artwork this past spring. The exhibit, *Sacred Illuminations*, was developed out of the artist's own love for God and featured beautiful original paintings accompanied with inspirational poetry.

It is through this powerful medium that Fr. Valdemar is able to reach out and evangelize. His artwork doesn't convey psychological depths, or make social statements; rather it connects us to the sacred.

Both the work of art and prayer require us to extinguish ourselves and pause to contemplate a larger vision. It is the mission of the Shrine Museum and the purpose of this extension of Fr. Valdemar's ministry – creating artwork that illuminates the soul.



**Angel Series**

In his series of Angels, there is an ethereal quality. Here the images welcome the viewer yet, we quickly find ourselves stirred, challenged even, by the life within such works.

## What's in store ...

by Valerie Runci, Retail Manager

Every year I am grateful to have the opportunity to attend a conference where book publishers introduce all of their new titles for the upcoming year. It is a book lover's paradise. There are aisles after aisles of books waiting to find a reader. The sheer number of titles makes the job a bit daunting, but it is my task to select which books will fill the store's shelves in the upcoming months. Books that I hope will find a place in your home and your heart.

Books provide a marvelous opportunity to evangelize. The right book can speak to the reader in a very unique and real way. Everyday our dedicated gift shop volunteers assist people who are hungry for the word of God to fill their lives. Books are a wonderful way to satiate this hunger.

Books give us the opportunity to travel



to faraway places, to go back in time, to imagine the future, to challenge our ideas and expand our vistas. Reading the words of St. Therese of Lisieux, St. Augustine, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Ignatius, to name a few, is akin to spending time in their presence. For us lucky readers, the words of so many of the great saints are immortalized in books. In addition to biographies of the saints, the Shrine's Gift Shop stocks a vast selection of titles. Subjects encompass such areas as prayer, Bibles and bible study, art

history, church history, Marian studies, spirituality, personal growth and healing. Not to be overlooked, our young readers have their very own corner in the shop, stocked up with treasures to be discovered.

We invite you to come and explore our ever-changing book department. Don't see the title you are looking for? Our knowledgeable volunteers and staff are waiting to assist you. Not a local? Send us an email at [giftshop@maryqueenoftheuniverse.org](mailto:giftshop@maryqueenoftheuniverse.org). We now have the ability to ship thousands of titles directly to your doorstep as a result of a newly formed publishing partnership.

The gift shop is open daily M-F 8:30 a.m.– 5:00 p.m., Weekends 8:30 a.m.– 8:00 p.m..

Always available online at [www.maryqueenoftheuniverse.org](http://www.maryqueenoftheuniverse.org)

# Transformation:

## Maintaining the Shrine for All of Us to Better Serve the Lord

by Joseph Buranosky, Director of Operations

This place never ceases to amaze me! As I walk around the Shrine, through the Rosary Garden or about the grounds, I am in awe at what faith and the love of God has accomplished and continues to accomplish here. The ministry of the Shrine continues to grow and flourish midway through its third decade with the ongoing generosity of the thousands of visitors and benefactors who are part of the Shrine family. In my short tenure here I have become keenly aware of what it takes in terms of manpower and fiscal resources to maintain this facility as a peaceful and welcoming place for all to pray and worship. I can never say enough about the staff and the hundreds of volunteers who make it all happen, but it is also the generosity of our benefactors and countless visitors who both literally and spiritually keep the "light" on and the doors open.

As wonderful as the Shrine is, I must continually remind myself that time, the elements and constant use take their toll on the grounds, the structure, and the mechanical, information, and communication systems that allow it to function so well – things wear out! To that end we have been involved in a transformation / restoration effort at the Shrine over the past year. Let me tell you about some of the projects we have completed ... and some of the projects we have on the drawing board.

### The Shrine Gets a Facelift

Last spring we began with the parking lot. The parking lot had not had any major repairs since the Shrine opened, and it was time to address several issues that had been worsening.



We had some drainage problems at the back of the lot; a good amount of the curbing was broken up by years of abuse and the growth of trees; there were numerous pot holes and cracks throughout the lot; and our dumpster for refuse was out in the open in the overflow parking area. Repairs and repaving took a few months, but when the project was complete we had a well-drained and functional lot with an enclosed dumpster pad at the back corner of the Shrine Property.

If you have visited the Shrine since last winter you may also have noted that both the Shrine Church and the Administration/Gift Shop buildings have undergone a major facelift. Both buildings had experienced a failure of the paint system, and there was widespread blistering, cracking and peeling of paint. The problem was particularly bad on the buttresses that run down each side of the Church. The buildings were repainted and metal caps were constructed for all of the

Before



After



buttresses, and attached in such a way as to prevent further water intrusion to eliminate the severe blistering problem in this area; note the before and after pictures of the buttresses.

There were several smaller projects necessary to repair and improve the walkways and general access to the Shrine. We had to replace a good portion of the concrete walkway at the bus parking area at the rear of the Shrine as well as a major portion of the slab and pavers at the bridge by the parking lot because it had been undermined by water, dropped a few inches and posed a significant trip hazard. We also added a handicap ramp at the drop off circle by the Mother and Child Chapel and put in a new walkway from the access road behind the Gift Shop to the courtyard at the entrance to the Rosary Garden. These items all addressed safety concerns and improved overall accessibility.

The beautiful bronze doors at the entrance to the Shrine are extremely heavy ... each door weighs approximately 1400 pounds ... and open and close easily with the assistance of hydraulic closers located underneath the threshold of each door. The weight of each door was being carried on a single-pivot point at the top along with the closer on the bottom. This caused a failure of the closer device which cracked and leaked out all of the hydraulic fluid. A fix was designed to add another pivot point or hinge to each door and take the weight off the closers. This required some engineering and a lot of careful installation work on the part of the artists to ensure that the doors were not damaged and that everything was safely put back in place. The doors should now work without any problem for a very long time.





## Ministry of the Clergy



Bishops from all regions of the United States arrive at the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe.



In the John Paul II Rosary Garden



Bishop Thomas G. Wenski, D.D., Bishop of Orlando



Bishops gather to begin procession into the Shrine



Closing Mass for the USCCB



Father Edward McCarthy, Cardinal George, Bishop Wenski, Archbishop Sambi



James Schoenfeld with Cardinal George



Cardinal George, President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; Bishop Wenski; Archbishop Sambi, Nuncio of the Holy See to the United States



Bishops at Mass



Bishops process from Shrine at conclusion of Mass

## Ordination to the Diaconate



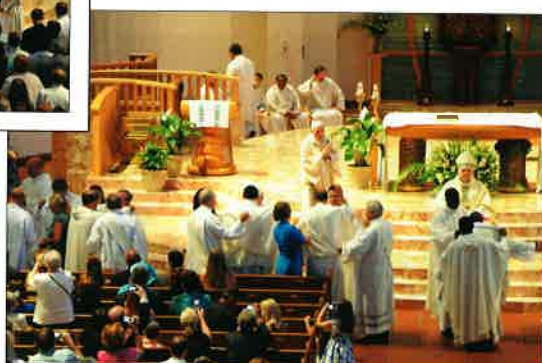
Candidates prostrate before the altar



Deacon's being called



Candidates are ordained



Newly ordained deacons are vested by their wives and friends

## Anointing of the sick



Fr. Martin Gerber



Fr. Barry Down



# Ministry of the Laity



## Board of Advisors

*Seated, left to right: Thomas Moran, Richard Kelley, Most Reverend Thomas G. Wenski, D.D., Bishop of Orlando, Father Edward McCarthy, Clarence Geis*

*Standing, left to right: Steve Klement, George Vell, James Nagy, John Lord, Steve Bakich, Joseph Buranosky*

## Staff



**Joseph Buranosky**  
*Director of Operations*



**Joseph Larkin**  
*Facilities Manager*



**Carol Chaplinski**  
*Volunteer Manager*



**Catherine Davies**  
*Museum Curator*



**Valerie Runci**  
*Retail Manager / Buyer*



**Bill Richardson**  
*Environmental Services Manager*



**Jim DiBiase**  
*Finance Manager*



**Susan Kimmel**  
*Executive Assistant to the Rector*



**Sharon Mayer**  
*Development Manager*



## Staff at the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe

**Front row, left to right:** Valerie Runci, Elizabeth McGill, Sol Rulloda, Anne Pinkosh, Michele Bodre, Gloria Anzalone, Susan Olson, Sonia Avila, Margaret Hahn, Sharon Mayer.

**Back row, left to right:** Jim DiBiase, Joseph Larkin, Mary Beth Pietrzak, Theresa Polk, Susan Kimmel, Mary McGrath, Rory Rosencrans, Catherine Davies, Joseph Buranosky



## Holy Week



## St. James Cathedral celebrates First Communion at Mary's Shrine.

Due to renovations taking place at the Cathedral of St. James in downtown Orlando, their First Communion celebration took place at the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe.



Father John McCormick celebrates mass for the first communicants and their families. Concelebrating were Father Ed McCarthy, Father Ybain Ramirez and Father Scott Circe



First Communicants process into Mary's Shrine



Father John McCormick, Rector at the Cathedral of St. James, speaks to the first communicants and their families.

## Volunteers



Volunteers greet the faithful gathering for the Diaconate Ordination



Shrine Volunteer Ivan Olmo has been accepted at the Blessed John XXIII National Seminary in Boston, Massachusetts.



# Queenship of Mary

Father Tom Surlis, a newly ordained visiting priest from Ireland, delivered this homily in celebration of the Queenship of Mary in 2008.

Homily for the 21st Sunday  
in Ordinary Time.

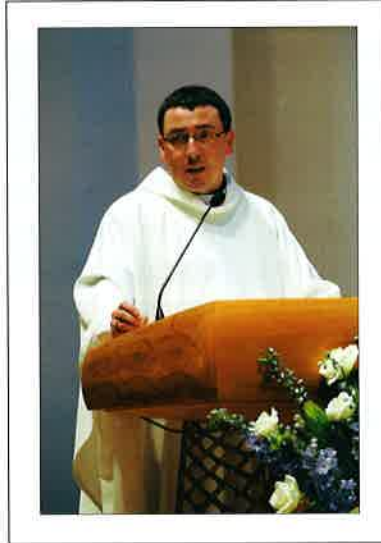
Shrine of Mary, Queen of  
the Universe, Orlando.  
August 24th 2008.

Celebration of Patronal  
Feast of the  
Queenship of Mary.

"It has happened on occasion that when some of my childhood friends and I get together, the conversation often turns to questions about God, faith, and religion. One or two of these dear friends wouldn't exactly be what one might call "Gospel greedy!" In fact, they seem to have given up on faith and Church. They protest that they don't need an institution to tell them how to live their lives, thank you very much. The usual excuses for not attending Mass or the other sacraments are given. "I get nothing out of it," "It's boring." "How can some dried up old celibate tell me how to live my life?" "When the Church gets its own act together then it can tell me how to deal with mine!" And the list goes on! This has been going on for years. In the last few years, however, I have noticed that some of those who had been indifferent to the faith of their childhood for quite some time have begun to take another look. Maybe it has something to do with the fact that as they have gotten a little older, gotten married, and had children, the fundamental questions of life have become more immediate for them.

"Who am I? Why am I here? What's the purpose of it all? Where am I going? Why believe in God? Why be a Catholic? Why not be a Buddhist or a Hindu or a Muslim? Why be anything at all?"

"Why indeed?! As you sit here this morning, my friends, may I ask you whether these questions have ever entered your mind? How do you deal with such questions when they do arise? Like my childhood friends, you may have avoided them for years. Or, maybe you consider yourself too young to bother with such issues. Or, maybe you have faced these questions, have found the answers you were looking for and are



*Father Tom Surlis*

here to celebrate that fact. Whatever our situation in life, these fundamental questions of identity and purpose are inescapable and, if we are ever to mature and grow in the faith and in our relationship with God, we must seek the answers to these questions and build our lives based on those answers.

"As Christians, we believe that the Scriptures are the living Word of God to us and that, especially when we gather to celebrate the Mass, Jesus speaks directly to us in and through the word which is proclaimed in the first half of the Mass. Well then, what is Jesus saying to you and to me this day? He is asking us a question that we cannot fail to answer if we are serious about our relationship with Him: Who do you say that I am?"

"It is important to notice the context in which this question arises in the Gospel story as recorded for us by St. Matthew. Jesus and His disciples are gathered in a place called Caesarea Philippi which is located on the southwestern slope of Mount Hermon in the north of Galilee. This is pagan territory. In the city, there is a temple built by Herod the Great in honour of the divinity of Caesar. Jesus and the Twelve are standing before a cave near the mountain on which the city is built and all around the mouth of the cave itself there are various niches in which stand statues to the various gods and goddesses of the Graeco-Roman pantheon. This sanctuary is a symbol of the confusion of answers offered by the pre-Christian Greeks and Romans to the basic questions about life which we are considering today.

"So, Jesus stands with His back to this bewildering variety of gods and asks His disciples: Who do you say that

I am? They are looking at what the pagan world has to offer behind Jesus and they all fall silent in the face of this fundamental question. All, that is, save one: Peter. Impulsive, emotional and rash, Peter emerges as the leader, the one chosen by God to confirm the faith of the others and to exercise the office of overseer in the Church established by Christ on the rock of Peter's faith. "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus' reaction to this declaration is to give to Peter -- and through him to all the Apostles and their successors -- the awesome power of the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, the power to forgive sins and the power to open or close the gates to salvation.

"What Jesus does here is in keeping with the tradition begun by King David which we got a glimpse of in today's first reading. King David had a council of twelve ministers to assist him in governing the kingdom of Israel. One of these ministers was the Master of the Palace, the equivalent to a modern Prime Minister, who was invested with the king's own authority. The symbol of his authority was the key given to him by the king which controlled access to the palace and thus to the person of the king himself. In today's Gospel, Jesus is giving such authority to Peter and as such this event provides the basis for all papal authority as we know it today. Thus, the Pope's coat of arms bears the symbol of the keys. His role is to govern the church on behalf of Christ and he together with the bishops, holds the awesome power to bind and loose and to control access to the Kingdom of Heaven which Christ came to establish fully on earth. Because the Church is the continuation of the work of Christ, it is the gateway to salvation.

"This is why we look today to the successor of Peter to clarify the faith for us, to guide us on our way as we seek to follow Christ and to imitate Him in word and deed. The Pope is gifted with the special charism to discern the will of God for the Church and therefore, we are called to listen carefully to what the Pope has to say when he speaks to us about the faith and about moral living.

"One example of a Pope giving direction to the people of God as they continue on their pilgrim way was that



given by the late Pope Pius XII in 1954 when he instituted the feast which we celebrate this weekend here at Mary's Shrine: the feast of the Queenship of Mary. The Queenship of Mary is based on two particular texts in the bible: one in the Old Testament and one in the New Testament. In the first Book of Kings, King David's wife, Bathsheba, assumes the title of Queen Mother when her son, Solomon, becomes king. After becoming king, he keeps his mother at his side during official court functions and especially when he is called to make judgments for the people. In her role as Queen Mother, Bathsheba quickly comes to be seen as an intercessor and the people often present their petitions to her so that she can then plead their cause to her son the king. From that time on in the history of the kingdom of Judah the Queen Mother carries out this role.

"The second biblical passage which provides the basis for the feast of the Queenship of Mary is from the Book of Revelation when the woman clothed with the sun, who stands on the moon and wears a crown of twelve stars on her head appears in

the sky. This image has always been seen to refer to the Church and to Mary as the perfect image of the Church and the perfect model for all disciples of Jesus. Just as it was Mary's role to give birth to the Saviour, so the Church continues to bring Jesus to the world and through His action and presence in the Church, all mankind will be saved.

"Today, my friends, in celebrating the Queenship of Mary, we give thanks to God for her role as Queen Mother who stands beside her Son interceding for the needs of her children, pleading with Him to grant salvation to all of us. Today, we also stand face to face with Jesus. Behind him we see all the alternative answers to the questions



*Statue of Mary, Queen of the Universe*

about life and its meaning which we are faced with in all their glittering array. We are faced, just as the apostles were that day in Caesarea Philippi, with the question which Jesus asks of all those who would follow him: Who do you say that I am? Let us pray this day for the courage of Peter to answer with all our hearts: You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. In you alone is the source of life. From you alone do we receive the gift of salvation. Today too, we pray for the successor of Peter, Pope Benedict, as he seeks to guide and direct the Church safely to her destination, which is the palace of the King, where at Jesus' side stands Mary, the Queen Mother and our intercessor. May Mary, Queen of the Universe bless each one of us gathered here today to honour her at her shrine and may she bless our friends and families as each of us strives to answer ever more clearly and with even deeper faith Jesus' call to discover His true identity as our Saviour and to bring His saving love to every corner of this world. Amen."

## ***Reflections of a Seminarian***

*By Chris Dorsey*

Hello, my name is Chris Dorsey and I am a Seminarian for the Diocese of Orlando. I have just completed my first year at St. John Vianney College seminary in Miami and I could not be happier with my decision to enter. As Seminarists for the Diocese, we are each given an assignment over the summer to give us the opportunity to grasp a larger vision of the diocese which we are working to one day minister to. I was blessed with getting a new assignment for the diocese, working in the tourism ministry.

The tourism ministry is a unique aspect of the Orlando Diocese's ministry. The inclusion of a large airport, cruise ship port, and countless attractions in the area including the Disney and Universal parks gives Orlando a special responsibility to make sure the spiritual needs of both the visitors and

employees of these venues are fulfilled. For my assignment, to learn about the tourism ministry, Fr. Ed McCarthy was kind enough to create a place for me at the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe. The Shrine was created specifically to cater to the tourists of Orlando and is the perfect place for me to learn about the ministry.

The Shrine provides myriad ways in which visitors can experience their faith and I have been given the opportunity to learn and work in all of them. To start, the Shrine is blessed with the presence of Fr. Ed McCarthy, Fr. Gerber, and Fr. Dowd. These three priests each have their own style and personality which they bring to their teaching of God's word and supply a good census of approaches for me to learn from while I serve at each of the Masses. The Shrine also

provides a place of beauty, unparalleled in the area, in which visitors can gain a sense of peace in which to worship. Through learning about the stories told in the Magnificat windows, to the beautiful sculptures, altar and tabernacle, to the natural beauty of the rosary garden, the time spanning religious art in the museum, or the architecture of the Shrine itself, I have not only gotten to experience these works myself, but also to facilitate the experiences of others seeing the reflections of their faith in art. Finally, in working in the gift shop, I have had a chance to work with many of the volunteers as well as interact with the visitors from around the world and help each find religious items which hold special meaning to them.

*Continues on 4 pages ahead.*



COMMEMORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

***To be Forever Remembered in the Life of  
this Holy Apostolate, this 'House of Pilgrimage'***

Mary, Queen of the Universe Shrine provides a wide range of opportunities for Christ's faithful to be remembered, in perpetuity, within this holy apostolate designated by Pope John Paul II as: *"a house of pilgrimage."*

Through commemorative gifts, donors can forever link their name with the life and ministry of Mary's Shrine –

or perpetuate the memory of friends and loved ones within these sacred spaces.

Ranging upwards from \$50 to more than \$500,000, such gifts afford donors a certificate of recognition, individually inscribed on parchment stock, then set in a portfolio frame. Higher-level gifts may be further recognized by a named Hymnal, engraved brick, marble plaque

or bronze inscription—permanently mounted and prominently displayed at the Shrine.

A uniquely enriching way to honor births, marriages and similar milestone events in the life of family and friends, Shrine commemoratives can also afford a marvelous spiritual remembrance for loved ones called home to God.



**MOTHER & CHILD PLAQUE**

**\$1,000**

Honoring the bond that joins mother and child, family and friends, the Shrine's Mother & Child Outdoor Chapel commemoratives—each a green marble plaque hand-engraved in gold leaf—are testament to a love that endures.

**COMMEMORATIVE PEW SEAT**

**\$ 900**

To be remembered within the Shrine Church is a special tribute; and donors dedicating a pew seat will have their name, or that of a loved one, inscribed on an individual brass plate mounted on the polished wood of a Shrine pew.

**SHRINE TREE**

**\$ 800**

In dedicating one of the Shrine's majestic oaks, date palms, magnolias, or other stately trees, you will be helping to shape the spiritual landscape of Mary's Shrine – while establishing for family or friend, a "living memorial" that will gain identity, in perpetuity, by an inscribed bronze plaque at the tree's base.

**BRONZE DOOR COMMEMORATIVE**

**\$ 500**

The Shrine's bronze doors renew the great tradition of magnificently crafted Church portals, and donors who select this richly historical commemorative option will see their names cast in bronze, and set permanently into one of the new entrance doors at Mary's Church.



**FOOTSTEPS OF FAITH**

**\$ 300**

Footsteps of Faith donors are opening doors to the new Interactive Theatre — a place where millions of visitors will explore Christianity's storied history and traditions. Each of these generous patrons is honored with a handsome certificate and their names are listed on a special plaque inside the Theatre entrance.

**SHRINE CHURCH HYMNAL**

**\$ 300**

To dedicate a Shrine Hymnal is to inscribe your name or that of a loved one, in perpetuity, among the songs of praise and thanksgiving by which God is glorified. And each hymnal opens upon a bookplate, inscribed with the name of the Shrine donor who has generously made possible this "gift of praise and thanksgiving."

**ROSARY GARDEN BRICK**

**\$ 250**

With brick tiles forming decades of beads, the Shrine's unique Rosary Garden walkway takes the shape of a rosary, complete with a centerpiece and cross. Donors are honored, in perpetuity – their names etched into a brick that is then set permanently into the walkway itself.

**ROOF TILE MEMORIAL**

**\$ 50**

To provide a roof for Mary's Church remains the most affordable of the Shrine's named gift options; and Roof Tile donors receive a special, framed certificate that attests to their own personal role in helping to complete this major, new center for Christian worship, life and culture.

