

THE MAGNIFICAT

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PILGRIMAGE
The Longest Journey Begins with a Single Step

THE BASILICA OF THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF MARY, QUEEN OF THE UNIVERSE



A Message of Special Welcome

Dear Friends,

Greetings and blessings to you from the Shrine of Mary!

We are very happy to share with you the most recent edition of *The Magnificat*. It speaks of our mission... which is to provide a pilgrimage destination for God's people on a journey.

Some journeys are characterized by hope, joy and excitement. As you read through the pages of this piece, perhaps you are feeling just that: joy to be on a trip with your family for rest and renewal.

We live in a world where some journeys reflect a contrasting experience. On our Basilica's Coat of Arms such a journey is depicted in the experience of Jesus, Mary and Joseph who, in the face of grave danger, fled for their lives to Egypt.

In many parts of the world today this is precisely what is happening. We need to find ways to show compassion and to be a reflection to others of our loving Father's open arms.

Some people may come to us out of curiosity or to see what is beautiful. So, too, many travelers journey here looking to soothe a restless heart. "*You have made us for yourself, Oh Lord. Our hearts are restless until they rest in You*" – St. Augustine.

People who visit Mary, Queen of the Universe often describe how being here helps guide them back to that sacred part of themselves and rediscover their spiritual identity.

At Mary's Shrine, we welcome you each day to a beautiful liturgy, to the unique experience of the universal reality that is The Church... and perhaps to encounter a moment of peacefulness and tranquility.

I am so proud to welcome you to the Basilica.

In the love of Jesus and Mary,

J. Paul Henry

The Very Reverend Paul J. Henry, Rector



Basilica's Coat of Arms, featuring the
Depiction of the Flight into Egypt

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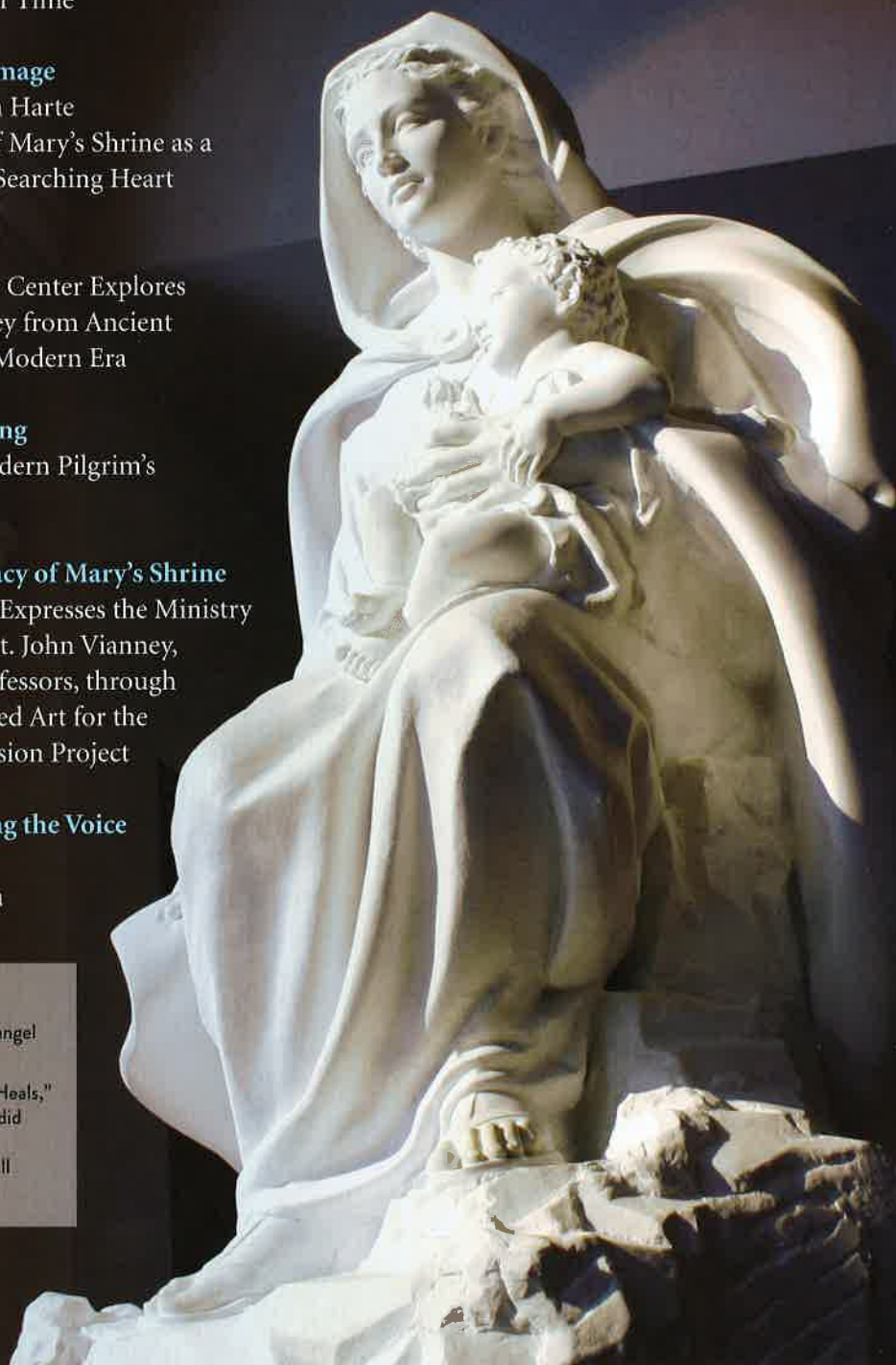
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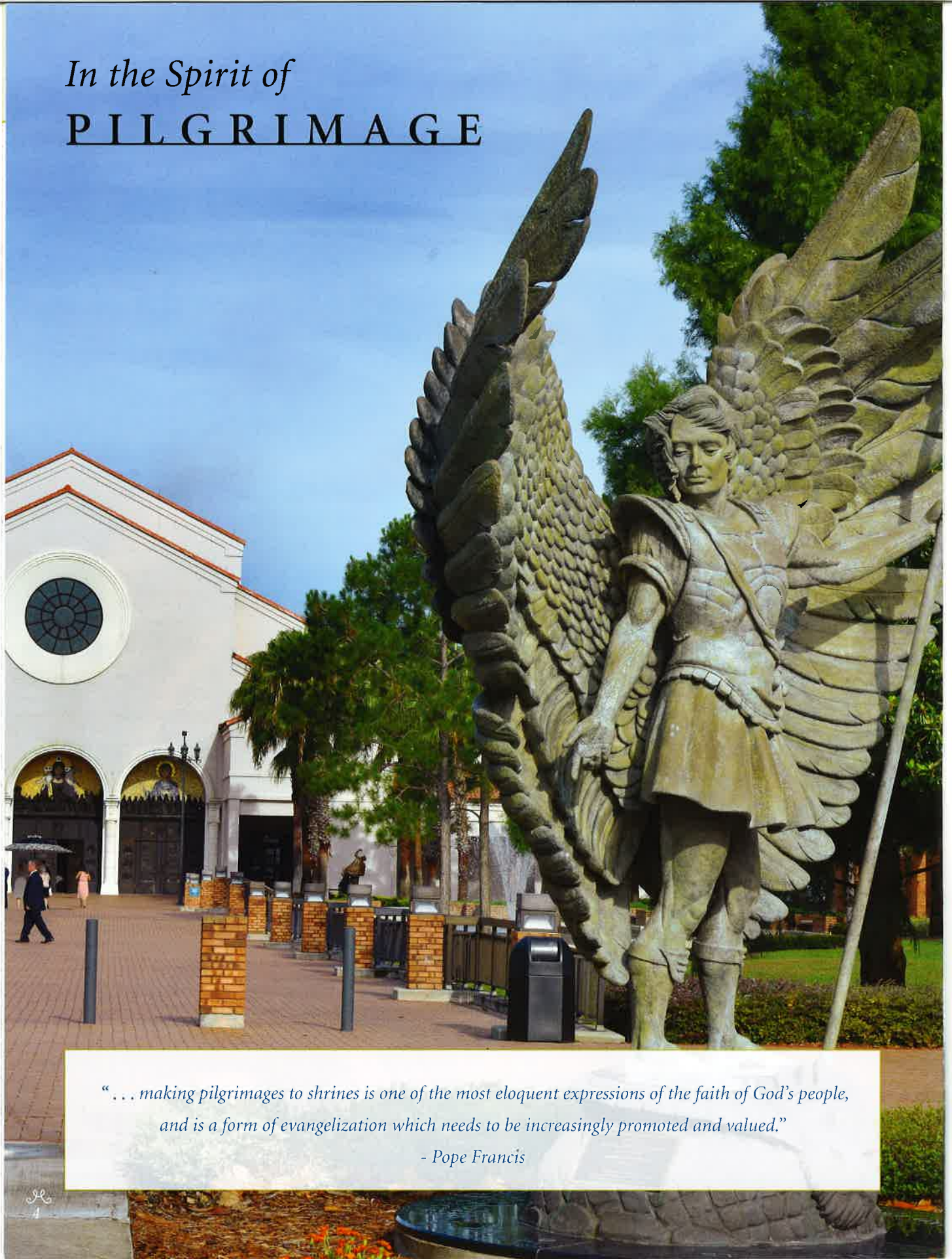
Bronze relief of St. Raphael, the Archangel
by Artida Studios

St. Raphael, whose name mean "God Heals,"
is the Patron Saint of Travelers. As he did
for Tobias on his journey from Syria to
Media, St. Raphael is the guardian of all
who are on a journey.

Mary, Queen of the Universe
by Jill Burkee



In the Spirit of
PILGRIMAGE



*“... making pilgrimages to shrines is one of the most eloquent expressions of the faith of God’s people,
and is a form of evangelization which needs to be increasingly promoted and valued.”*

- Pope Francis

*“Pilgrimages,
a sign of the condition
of the disciples of Christ in this world,
have always held an important place
in the life of Christians.*

*In the course of history,
Christians have always walked to
celebrate their faith in places
that indicate a memory of the Lord
or in sites representing important moments
in the history of the Church.*

*They have come to shrines
honoring the Mother of God and to those
that keep the example of the saints alive.
Their pilgrimage was a process of conversion,
a yearning for intimacy with God
and a trusting plea for their material needs.*

*For the Church, pilgrimages,
in all their multiple aspects,
have always been a gift of grace”*

*- St. John Paul II
(Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee, 2)*



Detail of St. Michael hand; an open invitation to the pilgrim

The wisdom of ages past teaches that “*the longest journey begins with a single step.*” And yet, for untold generations seeking communion with the holy, such journeys began not with a first step but even before, with those first stirrings of the pilgrim heart.

Over time, practice of pilgrimages were adopted by civilizations from ancient Greece and Rome to other parts of Europe, the Middle East and across the world to the pre-Colombian societies of Central and South America. As these practices spread, they were absorbed into the life of other religions where the idea of pilgrimages are embraced even to this day. Muslims, for example, are expected to complete a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their lives. Hindus might travel long distances to bathe in the sacred Ganges River and the people of modern Israel still observe *pilgrimage festivals*, sacred feasts which call them to temple for songs of praise and worship.

This, too, is a heritage of our Christian faith. Only shortly after Christ's death, in fact, there arose the custom of treading in His footsteps, visiting holy sites such as The Garden of Olives, the Hill of Crucifixion, the Resurrection Garden and others where God's grace flows in abundance. Veneration soon extended to Mary, holy Mother of Jesus, the Apostles and Saints. With the passage of time this activity came to be known as a *pilgrimage* — the wish to achieve holiness and to be a better person in the sight of God.

While some pilgrimages were made in penance for sins and others for a special blessing or favor, most were undertaken simply out of devotion.



Virtually all were courageous ventures. Even in the face of Rome's bloody attempts to stem the growth of this new faith through centuries born of the Crucifixion – times in which uncounted numbers of Christians were hunted down, tortured and martyred for their beliefs – the faithful often risked their lives, flocking to tombs of favorite Saints to venerate their sacred remains. In time, churches and shrines would begin to rise above the landscapes of Catholic Europe, some as burial places for Saints which became celebrated as places for miraculous cures.

But the perils of pilgrimage did not end with the conversion of Rome. As the most promising of journeys brought pilgrims from across Europe back to the Middle Eastern roots of Christianity itself, these undertakings could be expensive, often taking several years to complete.

These journeys, too, were dangerous, with treacherous waters to navigate and thirsty deserts to cross. A still greater threat, lined the roads where brigands and thieves waited to pounce upon helpless travelers, relieving them of their valuables and even their lives. Yet the pilgrims came, among them, Christians seeking pardon for grave transgressions who traveled barefoot, cloaked in rags and having to beg food, a trek impelled by the thought that their very soul was at stake.

The pinnacle of all pilgrimages were thought to have been the Crusades which called Christ's faithful to arms, their common purpose being to recapture territory seized by invading Turks who had overrun the Holy Land and sealed off places venerated by Christians. It took many years with staggering losses on both sides, but eventually the routes of pilgrimage were reopened.

At the same time, pathways of pilgrimage spread beyond the Holy Land, to Europe and beyond. One such site is the route of Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain which contains the relics of Saint James the Greater, who traveled there after Pentecost to evangelize the pagans of that land. And while today it is largely overshadowed by popular apparition sites such as Our Lady of Lourdes or, in the Americas, Our Lady of Guadalupe, the route still carries pilgrims through regions steeped in traditional Christian history.

Today, according to Catholic reference sources, Old World holy sites welcome travelers wishing to venerate the relics of a particular saint, or trace paths that were walked by Apostles and desert fathers. Of course, with its hundreds of ancient churches in which the relics of so many great saints are enshrined, Rome is worthy of special mention.

Yet the Americas, too, would come to be a welcoming place of pilgrimage.

Each year, millions of visitors from around the world travel to the most visited city in the United States - Orlando, Florida - and include a journey of pilgrimage to Mary's Shrine as an important part of their holiday itinerary. As a modern day addition to the pilgrimage route across the New World, The Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe, is a place of quiet solitude and reflection for all who enter "*this house of pilgrimage*," as declared in the words of then Pope John Paul II. 🌿

🌿 *The scallop shell is the symbol of a Christian pilgrim.*



This Place of Pilgrimage

*“ . . . here, too, miracles of conversion,
repentance and even the curing of
apparently terminal diseases have occurred
and are occurring to this day.”*

- Monsignor F. Joseph Harte

Orlando's Basilica of The National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe is a church raised upon many pillars. Most visible today is the soaring pillar of *Faith* itself; for it is faith that first brought us together.

Here, too, are twin pillars of *Hope* and *Generosity*, each expressed through the love of God's people who came to believe with us many years before this shrine was even a blueprint on the drawing board. A fourth pillar continues to be the warm *Hospitality* of volunteers who welcome every visitor in the name of Mary and her Divine Son.

Yet Mary's Shrine has a fifth pillar: *Pilgrimage*. For as Saint John Paul II told the world, ours is “a house of pilgrimage.” Indeed, before there was a shrine in Orlando, before tent flaps first parted to welcome tourist families each Sunday, before even these 17 acres were cleared of swamps and tangled

underbrush, there was a dream . . . an unlikely dream shared by a few of us here.

Let me take you back to Orlando in the 1970's. Disney World had opened to great success, spawning other tourist attractions nearby. Together they drew millions of visitors each year – among them, countless young Catholic families. As rector of Holy Family Parish, I witnessed the growing numbers of tourists crowding into our weekend masses. To ease the flow, we began offering services at major hotels in and around these theme parks. But there, too, our masses were soon crowded.

While those efforts might have seemed enough, we foresaw something greater: Given us was an extraordinary opportunity to welcome this world of new visitors not as passing tourists but as pilgrim hearts stepping back from a hectic, crushing world – pausing to focus on their relationship with Jesus Christ, his holy Mother and each other . . . all in the sight of God. So we dreamt of building a shrine in which they could experience their Christian faith as perhaps never before.

Could it be more than a dream, though? We were without donors, without funding. And we had only a brief moment each week to share our hopes with these many tourist families taking time from their theme park visits to maketime for the Eucharist!



Monsignor Harte attends a private audience with Pope John Paul II.
Vatican City, circa 1987

Yet we had the Mother of God, who first inspired and invigorated us. We had encouragement from Pope St. John Paul, who met with me several times at the Vatican and offered his prayers and blessings on all who would visit our new “house of pilgrimage.” It was a blessing that would help elevate this ministry to its emergent standing among the world’s great basilicas and shrines. Fittingly, as we recall his love for the Mother of God and her Rosary, we have placed a bust of this sainted pope at the entrance to our Rosary Garden.

So, too, we had people of great faith joining with us in the Eucharist. And each week before Mass, we shared our hopes with them. And they began to dream with us! They were giving generously to the birth of this holy shrine – knowing they might never return to Orlando to see what their offerings were helping to accomplish in Christ’s name!



It didn’t happen overnight. Yet, in time, their offerings became the bricks, the stained glass panels, our roof tiles — and Mary’s Shrine truly became “*the house that faith built.*” Today, our priests and volunteers give a warm welcome to all. The Rosary Garden encourages contemplation, The outdoor chapel has become a sky-lit house of prayer. Our images of the holy stir devotion. The Shrine’s sacred music and art celebrate a glorious heritage. And increasingly, the Basilica is becoming a favorite destination for pilgrims from every land!

Just as they had come to Guadalupe, Lourdes and other holy sites centuries before, now they are coming to Orlando! And just as I had witnessed during my own pilgrimages across the world, I found that same faith and fervor of Christians seeking to draw nearer to Mary, the Mother of God. She would lead them into the company of her Divine Son. She would help achieve for them a happier dwelling on earth.

As they had at Lourdes, Guadalupe and other holy shrines, they were coming here to be cured of diseases – sometimes terminal. Ready to accept whatever God wants for them, the virtue of hope leads them on. And here, too, miracles of conversion, repentance, even the curing of apparently terminal illness have occurred and are occurring to this day! In reflecting on Mary’s blessing, the encouragement of a now sainted pope and generations of the faithful who sustain us each day, making it possible for us to welcome and accommodate all who join with us for Reconciliation, the Eucharist and more, I give thanks.

Praise be to Jesus Christ! To Him be glory and honor forever!

7. *Joseph Harte*

– Monsignor F. Joseph Harte
Founding Rector of the Basilica

FOOTSTEPS of Faith

Basilica's Pilgrimage Center Explores the Christian Journey From Ancient Judea Through the Modern Era



Mary's Shrine has proven to be a popular Jubilee Year destination – a shrine where, as Pope Francis had instructed, “*anyone, young or old, rich or poor, sick or troubled . . . can receive a welcome because in each one there is a heart that seeks God.*” He prayed that people would celebrate this Jubilee of Mercy as one great pilgrimage!

For many, the experience of Mary's Shrine is itself a celebration of pilgrimage — a spiritual journey that begins with a powerfully, bronze-cast St. Michael who invites each visitor to cross over the Bridge of Peace, past the seemingly jubilant fountains, through the Holy Doors and into the timeless presence of the Blessed Mother and her Divine Son.

Yet no Basilica visit is truly complete without a stop at the Shrine's Pilgrimage Center. Here the story of Christianity's rise unfolds through interactive exhibits which encourage visitors young and old to participate, tracing the 2,000-year journey of Christ's followers.

Videos and touch-screen graphics recapture the past and give life to events that began in 33 AD with the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem. The next ten centuries of Christianity's expansion that would culminate with the *Golden Age of Pilgrimage* are also brought to life; then down time's corridors and into the light of our modern world. To travel this interactive road is to gain a larger, more lasting appreciation for the marvelous heritage that has drawn us together and for the faith that binds us still. 🕊

Help Us Continue the Pilgrim's Journey

As technology advances and the story of Christian pilgrims continue to be written throughout the ages, we count on your support to maintain and expand the mission here at Mary's Shrine in perpetuity.

Will you consider supporting the Journey of Pilgrimage brought to life in the Pilgrimage Center here at Mary's Shrine?

Benefactors who join us at a giving level of \$300 – that's just \$25 a month – or more, will receive their name or that of a loved one inscribed on our Pilgrimage Center's Commemorative Plaque located just outside the Center's entrance.

Your generous gift will ensure this special facet of the pilgrimage ministry at Mary's Shrine continues on for generations of pilgrims still to come.

Call 407-239-6600 or email memorials@mqus.org to speak to our Memorials Coordinator and make your contribution to the Pilgrimage Center at the Basilica today.

The Soul's Awakening

A Modern Pilgrim's Journey of Faith

Written by Basilica Pilgrim Marjorie M.

Four years ago I was truly a lost soul. In desperate need of a change, I decided to leave New York and move to Orlando. I walked away from a highly successful career, a long-term relationship with a man I loved, friends, family and all the trappings of a high-powered Manhattan lifestyle.

Feeling wholly unfulfilled, a fresh start seemed idyllic so I jumped at the opportunity to take a hiatus from my job while undergoing some much needed soul searching in new surroundings.

After settling in Orlando, things did not go according to plan. Along with leaving my career behind, my identity seemed to have gotten lost in the shuffle. Life as I knew it was over. I went from signing million dollar contracts and traveling around the world to making mundane decisions like which melon to choose at the market.

The bruise to my underestimated ego became unbearable. I failed to realize that moving to a new city without plans to work would make it difficult to meet people. It wasn't long before isolation took root and I descended into a deep depression. Life quickly started to spiral out of control and I began to contemplate ending it all.

As these thoughts of ending things became more prevalent I began to feel inexplicably drawn to Mary's Shrine. I had driven past the building several times and must have known it was a church, but there seemed no logical reason for my visiting. Although I was raised

Catholic, I didn't actually believe in God. I had been baptized and confirmed, but I never even understood the basics of my own faith, nor did I have a desire to learn.

Many years had passed since I set foot inside a church and it still wasn't something high on my bucket list. After leaving the Church decades earlier, I still harbored much anger and resentment towards organized religion. To make matters worse, I suffered from a crippling fear of priests stemming from childhood, which made the idea even more unlikely. I would dismiss the urge to visit Mary's Shrine, but each day the tug became stronger. This internal struggle continued for a full month until I could take it no more and finally surrendered. So real was this struggle in my mind that I actually yelled out "Okay! I'll go!!" Unbeknownst to me at the time, I was being called.

The next day I drove to the Basilica. There still did not seem to be a rational explanation for the strong compulsion to visit this place, only that I simply needed to be there. As I began to walk over the bridge from the parking lot, I was taken aback by the grounds and the majestic bronze doors before me.

Upon entering the Basilica, it was instantly clear - I was standing on sacred ground. A peaceful calm came over me that I hadn't felt in a very long time, if ever. Standing silently inside the entry way of the church, I was overcome with emotion and captivated by the etched glass doors leading into the church, the stained glass windows, paintings and incredible sculptures.



*As I approached the church, a particular statue in the courtyard entitled *The Conversion of St. Paul* drew me in. I knew nothing about St. Paul, mind you, but I was captivated by this beautiful work of art. I stood there staring at it, as I often do to this day. Only later would I understand the significance of this depiction in my own spiritual journey.*

Nothing, however, quite captured my attention like the glorious 12-foot depiction of the Crucified Christ above the altar. I knew little about the life of Jesus and less about the crucifixion, but I was spellbound by the sight of his arms outstretched. I imagined the agony he had endured, yet still did not grasp the significance of this profound act of love.

I soon found myself spending hours each afternoon sitting quietly in the church. I couldn't put my finger on why I felt so at home in the most unlikely of places. I truly felt a sense of belonging. However, after several weeks of this daily respite, it was clear that my struggle with depression continued whenever I was outside of this holy place. The moment my thoughts returned to the earlier decision I had made, I immediately felt that pull again, only this time it was to attend Sunday Mass. Again, I resisted the urge and it was several weeks before I finally relented. This was the day my life changed - Sunday, April 6, 2014.

That day, I sat quietly at Mass with pilgrims from around the world who had come to worship at Mary's Shrine. I was simply there because of a feeling I had that drew me to this place at this time. I was uncomfortable "sharing" this sacred place with so many others and briefly thought about leaving. But as Mass began, I was re-captivated by

the sculpture of the Crucified Christ suspended above the altar. I paid no attention to the priest or his words, the choir or the congregation - that is, until the Gospel was read.

The death of Lazarus (John 11) was vaguely familiar, but this day it truly gripped me. I quickly shifted my attention, and for the first time in my life I actually focused on the Gospel. For a non-believer, the idea of a man being raised four days after his death is difficult to accept. However, I found myself convinced. I simply knew this to be true.

As the reading concluded and the homily began, I started feeling strange. I began to experience sudden sensory changes and was no longer aware of the presence of others. I could see and hear only the priest and perceived him to be speaking directly to me... sharing a message that was clearly meant just for me.

A bright light began to appear from behind him which quickly grew and illuminated his outline. This light source shot a flat beam of light across to me. I felt not only warmth, but a hand touching my shoulder. And, in an instant, it was gone. I sat there stunned, my heart pounding out of my chest and my mouth hanging open. I frantically looked at the women sitting on either side of me and both were fully engrossed in the homily. I looked around at

others in my section for their reactions. Had they not, too, seen the bright light? In that moment I knew – the hand of God had touched me and He spoke to me through this priest. I was left with what I refer to as the three truths firmly planted in my head. 1) God does indeed exist; 2) It was God who delivered me to this holy place and to this particular Mass; and 3) This priest (who I'd never before seen) would become an important part of my life and from whom I was to learn a great deal about my spiritual identity.

Yes, this sounds unreal and I questioned it myself. Had I been hallucinating? Was this simply the result of a wild imagination? But these doubts were quickly laid to rest. I know this to be a true and accurate description of my experience because 1) I saw it; 2) I felt it; 3) I had a very real physical reaction; and 4) I gained very specific knowledge in the course of this occurrence.

The reality of what had happened overcame me and I immediately accepted the first two truths without question. The third item, however, was difficult to envision. Surely, my very real fear of priests would not allow me to learn anything from this man, much less accept him as a part of my life. If simply being in the presence of a priest could bring on a panic attack, how could I proceed?

As I left Mary's Shrine that day, I saw the priest greeting people on their way out. As I approached the door I very awkwardly shook his hand and told him I had enjoyed the Mass. I hesitated, half expecting him to acknowledge the incredible experience that had just taken place. He didn't, so I left in a hurry but not before realizing I had absolutely no fear of this man. It was a first for me and so the third truth was duly accepted.

My life changed dramatically that day. I developed a thirst for theological knowledge. I began to attend Mass weekly at Mary's Shrine and to study the Bible. I made an appointment to meet that priest who, I would find, was the Rector of Mary's Shrine.

His kindness, compassion and spiritual guidance have helped me to overcome the anger and fear that imprisoned me so long. Over the years, he has become a most trusted friend and mentor. It seems that God was right.

In addition to becoming a regular fixture at the Shrine, I began to offer my time as a volunteer and made lifelong friends along the way. The volunteer experience had a profound impact on me. I've found it to be far more rewarding than anything I've ever done in my career. I've learned that money and material possessions are truly insignificant in the grand scheme of things. What matters to me now is strengthening my relationship with God, loving my neighbor, forgiving those who have harmed me and living a life of service. I strive to do that every day and, though I often fall short, I am intentional about choosing joy. The gift of life is so precious and I've been blessed beyond belief. Knowing that God loves me has truly made me whole.

I finally did learn about St. Paul and realized our conversions shared some similarities. I too persecuted followers of Jesus, was blinded by the light of the Lord and ultimately became a devoted follower. Perhaps it was no coincidence that I was immediately drawn to **The Conversion of Paul** statue near the entrance to the shrine. And perhaps God chose my priest very carefully when he brought me to Father Paul Henry's Mass that Sunday morning. You see, Father Paul and his twin brother Father Peter were named after the Saints. I no longer believe in coincidence. God's plan for me is crystal clear and Mary's Shrine will always be a very special part of my journey of faith.

Thanks to the life-restoring pilgrimage God led me to embark upon at Mary's Shrine, "*This place of pilgrimage*" as St. John Paul II so rightly described it, the journey He has prepared for me is now crystal clear and I am confident in who God called me to be. 🙏

Expanding the Legacy of Mary's Shrine

Sculptor Jill Burkee Expresses the Ministry of the Basilica and St. John Vianney, Patron Saint of Confessors, through a New Work of Sacred Art for the Confessional Expansion Project

"Our intention is to create a strong connection between the Church of Ars and the Shrine in Orlando by dedicating an important work of art to a Saint who is relatively unknown but tremendously important for the spiritual life of the Church and all those who venerate him."

- Jill Burkee,

Internationally Renowned Sculptor of Artida Studios



As the work of redefining and enlarging the Confessional space within Mary's Basilica goes forward, nearing completion is the area's visual centerpiece, a statue of St. John Vianney by sculptor Jill Burkee, whose creation of the Shrine's own defining image – that of Mary as Queen of the Universe – today welcomes a world of visitors to the Basilica church.

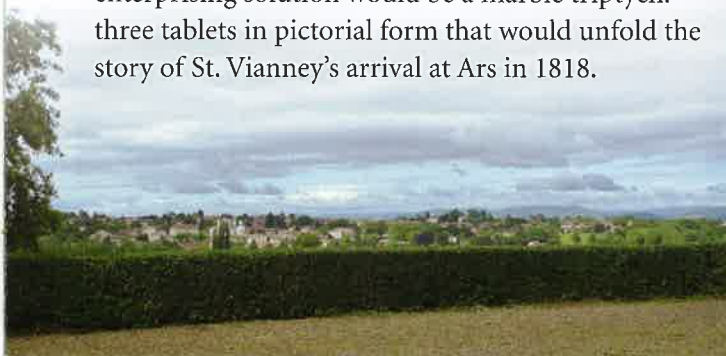
Given their commission to breathe life into this new image of St. John Vianney, *Patron of priests*, Burkee and her collaborator, Giancarlo Biagi, were confronted by a challenge both physical and artistic: The space in which the statue would be placed was long and narrow.

With such restrictions, how could the artists fashion a monumental 'moment of meditation' for those awaiting the sacrament of reconciliation? Their enterprising solution would be a marble triptych: three tablets in pictorial form that would unfold the story of St. Vianney's arrival at Ars in 1818.

Their next step was to actually spend time in Ars itself, a community in the Rhône-Alpes region of eastern France where they could learn more about this saintly man and experience how he lived and ministered – in the words of Burkee, *"to see and feel his world."* As she writes:

"It was truly inspirational, even humbling, to visit his room, how it was decorated, his shoes, his robe, his hat, his bed, the images that his eyes rested upon; the well from which he drew water, the worn stone pathways, the kitchen where he spent much of his time; the confessional, the confessional schedule clock. And we came away with a deeper understanding of this simple man whose spiritual life's mission, his greatness, was in lighting a path to Heaven for those who came to him in search of God."

Article cont'd next page




Outside of Ars the artists came across a sculpture which famously captured the young curate's arrival at his new parish. It was surrounded by rolling hills of wheat and sunflowers; a land of hard-working peasants and abundant crops; in the distance the church and town sits nestled amongst trees. They walked those same fields, imagining how people worked and prayed in this place where St. Vianney made all the difference, turning an unhappy village into a spiritual refuge – a place of pilgrimage!

Returning to the studio in Italy, Jill and Giancarlo began to sketch the triptych's central panel, which would depict the moment on St. Vianney's journey to Ars when he lost his way and asked a shepherd boy for directions to the church. Put on the right path by the young shepherd, a grateful Vianney said to him: *"Show me the way to Ars and I will show you the way to Heaven."*

On the right panel was to be another shepherd boy, this one symbolizing the figure of Christ amongst the sheep and sunflowers. Completing the triptych, on the left panel would be the image of Ars and the Church with country folk on a path, farmers harvesting the wheat and sheep with a lamb representing the Sacrificial Lamb gazing out at a world of meditating viewers.

Perhaps most fascinating is how Burkee and Biagi are turning the 'depth restriction' – that is, just how far their sculpture can protrude into the surrounding area – into an advantage. They've developed a carving technique in bas-relief that can realize a sense of profound distance. And through the use of distinct plains, isolating one from the next, they are creating an illusion of depth similar to that used in a theatre setting. *"It is something we've never seen done before,"* adds Burkee. *"The marble we chose – a warm, hazelnut-color marble from Italy — allows us to further differentiate layers in the work by the use of texture and highlighting through polishing selected scenes and areas."*

Harmoniously weaving the three panels together will be images of trees and distant hillsides that help evoke the strong spiritual life St. John Vianney shaped with his presence both yesterday and today. 

Join us in Expanding the Legacy at Mary's Shrine

Just as it did in the earliest days of its ministry, today the Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe relies on the generous gifts of its visitors, friends and benefactors.

Generosity is how we show gratitude to God for the blessings He has bestowed upon each of us.

One of the most significant ways we can give is to support life-giving projects like the Basilica's Confessional Expansion Project, which will also include an original marble triptych of the Patron Saint of Priests, St. John Vianney, as he embarked on what would become a legacy of ministry through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Each year, over 14,000 souls receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation here at Mary's Shrine and, as that number continues to grow, so does our need to expand to two rooms along with a designated seating area to accommodate the pilgrims in search of mercy and forgiveness.

Your gifts will help us ensure this project's success, ultimate completion and allow countless pilgrims the opportunity to discover grace through this Sacrament.

Contact development@mqus.org or call 407-239-6600 to speak to our Development Manager about giving opportunities to the Basilica's Confessional Expansion Project today.

Thank you for considering a contribution to this project.

Mary's Song: Raising the Voice of Sacred Music

Music at the Basilica



The Campaign for Sacred Music continues to gain steam!

Very soon an important announcement will be made about the Basilica Pipe Organ and information about a brand new, state-of-the-art sound system for the Church. These much-needed improvements to our audio-visual equipment will *drastically* improve the way liturgy and music are heard in the Basilica church.

Thank you to those who have joined us in prayer and support for this endeavor. Contact us at pipeorgan@mqus.org to learn how you can become part of the home stretch of the Fundraising portion of the *Campaign for Sacred Music*!

The Basilica Choir just completed their **fourth full-length album** entitled *Ave Maria* to be released this



October and will be available for purchase online and in the Basilica Gift Shop!

The 2016-2017 Basilica Concert Series
promises to be as spiritually and artistically rewarding as ever.

CELEBRATE LIFE ~ with the Basilica Choir and Orchestra

Friday, October 28, 2016 at 7:30pm

Music celebrating Respect Life Month, featuring

Requiem for the Innocents by composer E. Louis Canter, OEF.

Tickets \$15

CHRISTMAS WITH THE BASILICA CHOIR

Friday, December 2, 2016 at 7:30pm

An annual event of Advent and Christmas music with the ever-popular holiday music Sing-along! Festivities begin at 5:30 PM with the Annual Gift Shop Open House.

Tickets \$20

AIN'T-A THAT GOOD NEWS ~ with the Basilica Choir and Friends

Sunday, February 19, 2017 at 3:00pm

Celebrate Black History Month with an afternoon of sacred music by Duke Ellington, William Dawson, Bobby McFerrin and featuring Robert Ray's Gospel Mass

Tickets \$15

TENEBRAE SERVICE ~ with the Basilica Choir

Friday, April 7, 2017 at 7:30pm

Tenebrae, Latin for "shadows" or "darkness," is a dramatic service featuring a gradual extinguishing of candles accompanied by a series of readings and exquisitely sung choral repertoire.

All are welcome to this special liturgical service.

HANDEL'S MESSIAH ~ with the Basilica Choir and Orchestra

Sunday, May 7, 2017 at 2:30pm

Tickets \$20

***For tickets visit maryqueenoftheuniverse.org/concerts
or call 407-239-6600***



Like us on Facebook at ***Music at Mary, Queen of the Universe Shrine*** for updates from our Music Ministry!



**Basilica of the National Shrine
of Mary Queen of the Universe**
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