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World Apostolate of Fatima

ST. PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS ARCHDIOCESEAN DIVISION
A Canonically Approved Apostolate of the Catholic Church



AS THE FAMILY GOES, SO GOES SOCIETY

BY FR. JOHN A. GALLAS, SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

Strengthening our families is of vital importance in our time. Knowing the wiles of the devil, we know the family is under attack. Satan's lies and our first parents' cooperation with him in the Garden of Eden created a wedge between Adam, Eve, and God. This pattern is repeated throughout history. Since there is much we do not understand about the world of the demonic, we must cling ever more tightly to the teaching of the Church about the things that we do know: Satan and his demons exist; because of their free choice, they are eternally separated from and enemies of God; they exercise influence here on earth; we do not outsmart them—our only refuge is in Christ, the Victor over Satan, sin, and death. In our time, the enemy's crosshairs rest squarely on our families.

The family is a choice target because of its strategic importance. God made the complementarity of man and woman to bring about children. We are most malleable and vulnerable as children. Children flourish best when they have a permanent mother and father who are faithful to one another and to God. The stability of the love between mother and father provides security in the child's world, and nourishes children in many ways. The best context for emotional health and for handing on our Faith fully intact is a loving family. Healthy families in society are like healthy cells in the body, contributing to the well-being of the entire organism. Families dominated by the effects of sin, by wounds that seem to have no remedy, by constant fighting, by lack of leadership, need to find refuge in the grace of Christ. As a priest, I live in constant amazement at the magnitude of human suffering in families. The Heart of Christ is moved with compassion at the sight of this suffering.

To understand the situation accurately we must be honest about the root causes, one of which is the spirit of contraception and sterilization. Biology textbooks tell us that in every species, sexuality has the same purpose: procreation. But we also know that among human beings, it really has two definite purposes: procreation and bonding. The love of husband and wife is the gateway through which God creates new immortal souls in the world. It is preceded by commitment and leads to new responsibility. Everybody used to understand this, but when contraception became mainstream, the biological purpose of

human intimacy, which is at the heart of the family, was obscured, and sexuality was re-framed as not requiring commitment or responsibility. When the train was derailed, the wreck followed—concern for pregnancy vanished, and adultery and fornication became commonplace. If intimacy is not open to God's creative act, and yet results in pregnancy, abortion becomes the safety net. When sex is no longer seen as procreative, we end up with half a nation that doesn't know how to explain a concept as basic as the immorality of same-sex activity.

God offers hope to families through the teaching of the Church, and I would highlight three important points to support the health of our families. First, our happiness and hope must be in Christ—anything else is idolatry. Married couples and those preparing for marriage must always recall that it is Jesus Christ, rather than your spouse, Who is the source of grace and love. People "in love" often look to their lover for what only Christ can offer: perfect love, everlasting happiness. For priests and laity alike, the cross will always be present, even in the daily work at the heart of our vocation. God never promised that we would find fulfillment in our work! He promised that we would find fulfillment in the love of Jesus, Who gives us the virtue of hope so that we can continue to move forward toward eternity. Families that place their hope in Jesus will not be disappointed.

Second, we must steadfastly practice the Faith. It may often be difficult to pack up the kids and bring them to Confession and weekly Mass, or even to pray as a family—those practices that are the very basics of our Faith! We are so busy and too stressed out, so we are tempted to skip some of these things. But if this is the case, what can God do with us? These spiritual disciplines ensure that we are plugged in to the grace of Christ.

Third, we must teach our children well. Rather than focusing on the evils of society and becoming ever more discouraged, we must focus on teaching our children the totality of the doctrine of the Faith, and how to live it well. We must teach them to know Christ's love, particularly in the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, and to find their fulfillment and hope in Him. In this way we will lay the best foundation for the health of our families, and therefore, for society as a whole. May Our Lady of Fatima bless each of our families!



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2011 COMMUNION BREAKFAST AND ELECTIONS

BY TODD ZIESMER

The Annual Communion Breakfast and elections for the WAF Board of Trustees was held on November 19, 2011, at St. Augustine's Church in South St. Paul. The morning started with the Rosary followed by the celebration of Holy Mass by Fr. Thomas McDonough. Delegates then assembled for a delicious breakfast in the basement hall.

Todd Ziesmer served as facilitator for the elections to fill the seats being vacated by three Board members whose terms had expired. The candidates were: returning Board members Connie Schneider and Donna McAndrews, and new candidate Sue Weyandt to fill the position previously held by Eileen Tompkins. No additional nominations were presented from the floor. The delegates voted by acclamation to seat the three candidates for three-year terms. The WAF extends its gratitude to Eileen for her years of service to Our Lady as a Board member and we wish her well in all her future endeavors—she has generously offered to help us in the future in any way that she can.

President Don Fier gave an overview of WAF programs and events for the past year, and highlighted major initiatives (see the President's Message on page 6 for more details). Several Board members then gave short presentations on their primary areas of service. Annette Alfonso encouragingly reported that the number of parishes offering Five First

Saturdays devotion has increased over the last year to 39 parishes and continues to grow. With one year of experience using the new format for the Vigils of Reparation, Kathleen O'Hern reported that the program is being very well received by parishes and attendees. Connie Schneider gave a brief update for the Children of the Eucharist program and played a promotional video aired on EWTN prior to the October 7th event. Todd Ziesmer, who was re-elected to a three-year term on the National WAF Board in October, gave an update on what is happening at the national level. And Barb Ernster, Division Treasurer, gave an update on the upcoming Marian Congress and presented the annual WAF Financial Report. The Marian Congress, our apostolate's primary fundraising program, celebrated its 25th Anniversary in March 2011, and it was the most successful one in years.

The Board of Trustees held its election of officers at its Board meeting on January 10, 2012, with the following results:

President: Don Fier

Vice President: Todd Ziesmer

Secretary: Janice Hugo

Treasurer: Barb Ernster

Please keep them and all the WAF Board members in your prayers.

The Board of Trustees extends a special thank you to all of the volunteers who generously gave of their time and talent to organize and serve at the Communion Breakfast.

MEET OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER



Sue Weyandt was born and grew up in the Saint Paul area and has never left. She has been happily married to her husband Jim for 31 years and has one son who is now in his final year of college. They are parishioners at St. Peter's Church in Mendota. Sue attends daily Mass and has a special devotion to Our Blessed Mother.

What led Sue to Our Lady's apostolate was Mary's call to live, learn, and spread her Fatima Message. She feels incredibly blessed to have the opportunity to serve on the Board of Trustees for the World Apostolate of Fatima.

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY – REFUGE OF FAMILIES

BY DON FIER

It is no secret to any serious Catholic that authentic family life is under attack on many fronts in countries throughout the world. In 1981, Pope John Paul II said that we are “at a moment of history in which the family is the object of numerous forces that seek to destroy it or in some way to deform it ...” (*Familiaris consortio*, n. 3) Since then the situation has only worsened and the consequences are apparent: high divorce rates, countless broken families, birth rates below the level of survival in many countries, commonplace cohabitation among unmarried couples, same-sex relationships, rampant abortion, and the list goes on. We live in an immoral age that can rightly be described as a “culture of death.” Even the traditional and previously unquestioned definition of marriage as a lifelong commitment between one man and one woman in an enduring bond of love is often challenged. But we should not fear, for our Lady gave mankind the solution when she appeared in Fatima on June 13, 1917, with the assurance that “... my Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God.”

God instituted the family as the very fabric of which societies are formed and entrusted to it the sacred mission of cooperating with Him in the work of creation. In his 1994 *Letter to Families*, Pope John Paul II emphasized that very point by stating that “the history of mankind, the history of salvation, passes by way of the family.” (n. 23) However, the concept of family and the family home must be rightly understood—in the way in which our Creator intended. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: “The family home is rightly called ‘the domestic church,’ a community of grace and prayer, a school of human virtues and of Christian charity.” (n. 1666) As so beautifully put by Sister Lucia: “A home must be like a garden, where fresh rosebuds are opening, bringing to the world the freshness of innocence, a pure and trusting outlook on life, and the smile of innocent happy children.” (“*Calls from the Message of Fatima*, p. 163)

At the final apparition in Fatima on October 13, 1917, when the great

“Miracle of the Sun” occurred, it cannot be taken as mere coincidence that the Holy Family appeared: Our Lady alongside St. Joseph who held in his arms the baby Jesus with a gesture of blessing for today’s world. Is this not a plea to mankind, a cry urging all peoples to embrace authentic family life as modeled by the Holy Family, a call for sanctification of the family? And it is precisely the Immaculate Heart of Mary that is the *refuge of families*, the way to God for all His children.

In the natural realm, a mother’s heart is representative of love in the family. It is no exaggeration to say that children have special affection, an innate trust, in the heart of their mother. She bears them, nurtures them, and comes to their aid in every need; indeed, a mother’s heart and the heart of her child are virtually one during the first months of life. The same intimate relationship existed between the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary from the very moment of her *fiat*: “Be it done to me according to Thy word.” (Luke 1:38) Mary conceived Jesus in her Immaculate Heart before she physically conceived Him in her womb. As Sister Lucia reflects, “It was in the Immaculate Heart that the Father placed His Son, as if in the first tabernacle.” (*Calls*, p. 136)

Mary is also our mother, the one mother God willed for all of mankind in the “order of grace.” (*Lumen gentium*, n. 61) Her Immaculate Heart became united to each of us at the foot of the Cross when she became the Mother of the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ: “We draw our life from ... the Immaculate Heart of Mary.” (*Calls*, p. 136) In a homily in Poland in 1997, Pope John Paul II taught that the “greatest concern of her Immaculate Heart is the eternal salvation of all men and women.” And her heart is inseparable from the Sacred Heart of her divine Son, to Whom she continuously leads us. What further assurance do we need that the Immaculate Heart of Mary is the *refuge of families*—the means by which our Savior has chosen to lead us to Heaven?

Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for our families!



COMMITTEES & CHAIRS

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Connie Schneider
St. John, St. Paul
(651) 776-0363

Fatima Prayer Cells

Donna McAndrews
St. Patrick, Inver Grove Heights
(651) 451-7642

First Saturday Devotion

Annette Alfonso
St. Augustine, South St. Paul
(651) 454-8058

Marian Congress

Barb Ernster
St. Charles Borromeo, St. Anthony
(763) 502-0792

Newsletter Editor

Don Fier
St. Agnes, St. Paul
(651) 450-6941

Parish Representatives

Todd Ziesmer
Holy Family, St. Louis Park
(952) 404-1247

Vigils of Reparation

Kathleen O’Hern
St. Pius X, St. Paul
(651) 426-9401

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Fatima: More Relevant Today than Ever!

For the Sake of Family, our Nation, and the World

Saturday, March 3, 2012

Church of St. Joseph

1154 Seminole Avenue ♦ West St. Paul

8:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

(First Saturday devotions begin at 7:30 A.M., followed by Mass at 8:00 A.M.)

Cost \$30.00

(Includes continental breakfast and boxed lunch)

Three dynamic speakers will address the importance of Fatima today and how our response to this call for prayer and penance will bring about the conversion of people's hearts and peace in our families, nation, and world.

Our Lady gave us the Fatima peace plan.

It's up to us to *learn, live, and spread* it – here's how!



Fr. John Gallas

Spiritual Director
for the

World Apostolate of Fatima



Msgr. Charles Mangan

Spiritual Director
for the

Fatima Family Apostolate



Mr. Bill Sockey

National Pilgrim Virgin Statue Custodian
for the

World Apostolate of Fatima USA

MARIAN CONGRESS WILL FOCUS ON THE PROFOUND CALL OF FATIMA AND HOW OUR RESPONSE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD!

We are just five years away from the 100th Anniversary of the Fatima apparitions and we can be certain that Our Lady is calling us now more than ever to respond to her requests for prayer, sacrifice, and reparation for sins. As Pope Benedict XVI said during his visit to Fatima, Portugal on May 13, 2010, "We would be mistaken to think that Fatima's prophetic mission is complete."

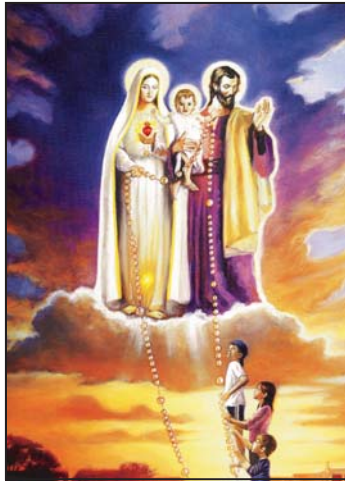
With that in mind, our 26th Annual Marian Congress will focus on renewing our commitment to learn, live, and spread the message of Fatima for the salvation of souls and peace in our world. Sister Lucia's book, *"Calls" From the Message of Fatima*, reminds us that this message was a call, in fact a series of 20 calls, starting with the message of the Angel of Peace, "My God, I believe, I adore, I hope, and I love you! I beg pardon..." When we truly embrace this *call* from Our Blessed Mother, who loves us and wants us and all people to be united with her and her Son, we will do all we can to win souls for the Kingdom of God. And when we respond by uniting our humble prayers and acts of self-denial with the prayer and sacrifice of Jesus Christ and of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in reparation, God will pour out His blessings and His grace into the hearts of the people, including our elected leaders and our brothers and sisters who have walked away from God. They will begin to seek His will and His wisdom, and our culture, our families, our nation, and our world will be changed.

Speaker Lineup

We are pleased, once again, to welcome our Spiritual Director, Fr. John Gallas, Pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul Parish in Loretto, who will give the first talk on the heart of the "call" of Fatima and why learning it is so important.

The second morning talk, given by Monsignor Charles Mangan, is entitled "Living the Fatima Message as We Strengthen our Families in the Midst of a Troubled Society: Taking a Cue

from Saint Katharine Drexel and Blessed John Paul II." Msgr. Mangan is Director of the Office of the Marian Apostolate in the Diocese of Sioux Falls, the Vicar for Consecrated Life and the Canonical Adviser to the Most Rev. Paul J. Swain, D.D., and also the Spiritual Director of the Fatima Family Apostolate, founded by the late Rev. Robert J. Fox. Monsignor has served as parochial vicar, pastor, Vice Chancellor, and Defender of the Bond. He studied Canon Law and Mariology in Rome and worked in the Vatican Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life for nearly eight years, serving under Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI.



Lastly, we welcome Mr. Bill Sockey, custodian of the National Pilgrim Virgin Statue (NPVS) program for the World Apostolate of Fatima USA. He will give an afternoon talk about the NPVS program and how it is helping to spread the message of Fatima across the nation and profoundly impacting the hearts of people who are responding to Our Lady's request for prayer and penance. (See the interview with Mr. Sockey on page 6).

Advance registration can be made in three ways: **online** at www.fatimaonline.org, with payment by check or credit card; by **phone** at 763-502-0792, with payment mailed in advance; or by **mail**, with the coupon below. Please register by March 1, 2012. Same day registration is \$35 at the door.

SCHEDULE: (Doors open at 7:00 A.M.)

7:30 A.M. – Five First Saturdays devotion

8:00 A.M. – Holy Mass

Continental breakfast served / Confession available

9:30 A.M. – First Talk by Fr. John Gallas

10:30 A.M. – Second Talk by Msgr. Charles Mangan

11:30 A.M. – Lunch / Vendors in the Great Hall

1:15 P.M. – Afternoon Talk by Mr. Bill Sockey

Renewal of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Advance Registration: \$30

Same-day registration: \$35

Cost includes continental breakfast and box lunch.

Make checks payable to **The World Apostolate of Fatima**, and send with the form below to:
Barb Ernster, 5225 Lincoln Street NE, Fridley, MN 55421 (post-marked by 2/29/12),
or call in your advance registration to 763-502-0792, or online at www.fatimaonline.org.

Name: _____ Parish: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARIAN CONGRESS

March 3, 2012

Church of St. Joseph
1154 Seminole Avenue
West St. Paul, MN 55118
Barb Ernster: 763-502-0792
(See flyer on page 4)

VIGILS OF REPARATION

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR UPDATES

February 3-4, 2012

St. Jerome Church
380 Roselawn Avenue East
Maplewood, MN 55117
Cynthia Schlunder: 651-772-2221

March 2-3, 2012

No Vigil of Reparation scheduled due to Marian Congress

April 6-7, 2012

No Vigil of Reparation scheduled due to observance of Easter Triduum

May 4-5, 2012

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church
2035 West 15th Street
Hastings, MN 55033
Mary Bloomstrand: 651-437-3591

PRAYER REQUESTS

- For the soul of our deceased member Kathy Lopez
- For the safety of Claude & Marge Medina's grandson (deployed in Afghanistan); for all those serving in our armed forces and their families
- For all WAF Board members and officers, that they will respond to God's grace in their service to Our Lady's Apostolate
- In thanksgiving for the healthy birth of a member's great grandchild
- For the success of all members of NET teams as they return from the Christmas holidays and begin the second half of their year of service
- For good health for Leslie, Celia, Dominic, and everyone else who is experiencing medical issues
- For a great resurgence in Fatima Prayer Cell participation

If you have a prayer intention that you wish to have included, please call Mary Fier at 651-450-6941.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we begin 2012 I wish everyone a happy, grace-filled New Year. In this newsletter, I'd like to briefly overview the goals and accomplishments of the WAF in 2011 and reflect on the many blessings that were granted to us.

The Board of Trustees began the year by gathering as a group in a retreat-like atmosphere at the Cathedral of St. Paul for a Morning of Recollection led by Fr. John Paul Erickson, the Archdiocesan Director of Worship. He offered two conferences on the theme: "How to be humble instruments in the hands of Our Lady so as to most efficaciously learn, live, and spread the Message of Fatima." It was a spiritually enriching morning that set the tone for our year.

The 2011 Marian Congress, with its theme "Treasures of Fatima: Graces and Mercy," marked its 25th Anniversary and was by all accounts a huge success. I think it's fair to say that well over 300 people left St. Joseph's Church in West St. Paul with a renewed zeal for prayer and penance, thanks to dynamic talks by three great speakers. This year's Congress, with its timely, family-oriented theme (see flyer on page 4), promises to be another outstanding event.

A responsibility that the WAF Board takes very seriously is its duty to be good stewards of the temporal goods entrusted to us in the form of donations and funds raised at WAF events. Toward that end, an external Finance Committee was formed to provide guidance and oversight. Three eminently qualified men—Mike Gores, Joe Kueppers, and Kurt Virnig—generously volunteered their

time to be part of the committee and have assisted us in making many improvements to our overall financial structure and accounting practices.

One structural change was made by the Board: the Rosary Processions Committee, previously under the oversight of the WAF, now resides with the Archdiocesan Office of Worship. As Fr. Erickson noted, the processions are now "truly Archdiocesan events." The WAF Board continues, however, to actively support the Rosary processions, both financially and by volunteering at the events. We were able to donate \$2,500 toward the 2011 processions as of a result of the success of our Marian Congress.

The Board made a decision in 2011 to focus on core programs that we think will most effectively advance the Fatima Message. Renewed emphasis has been placed on three basic, but powerful programs: (1) Five First Saturdays Devotion; (2) Fatima Prayer Cells; and (3) Vigils of Reparation. We've been blessed with growth in the number of parishes, individuals, and families that participate in these vital programs and are working hard to continue that momentum in 2012. Currently under consideration is inviting the National Pilgrim Virgin Statue to the Twin Cities (see page 7)—please pray for that intention.

In closing, I wish to thank you for your prayers and support. It is only through your generosity that the WAF can move forward with its mission to learn, live, and spread the Fatima Message.

In the Hearts of Jesus and Mary,
Don Fier

THE RISING ROLE OF MEN IN THE WAF

BY DONNA MCANDREWS

Back in 1980, I was asked by Marie Middlecamp and Clare Mortel to join a Fatima Prayer Cell. At the time, there were at least three groups meeting at the Church of St. Augustine. Most of the members were women; I noticed only one man, a disabled gentleman, who prayed with one of the groups.

It so happened that my first husband, Bill Jahner, was injured in a work-related accident at age 45 and was off work for

four months during the early part of 1981. None of us, at the time, had any idea that these were to be the final four months of Bill's life. Over this period, he accompanied me twice to the weekly Prayer Cell meetings.

I'll never forget the day of Bill's funeral: May 26, 1981. Those who prayed in Fatima Prayer Cells at the Church of St. Augustine—probably about twenty

(see "Role of Men" on page 7)

SEEKING SOULS WILLING TO SACRIFICE

INTERVIEW BY BARB ERNSTER

Bill Sockey, the custodian of the National Pilgrim Virgin Statue (NPVS) program for the World Apostolate of Fatima USA, believes that since the start of the traveling statue program two years ago it has already had an impact in the hearts of people. Of the more than 50,000 people who have come to see her in parishes across the country, more than half of them have signed commitments to offer their daily sufferings in reparation for sins and to pray the daily Rosary for the salvation of souls.

He is convinced it is a means by which the message of Fatima can be spread throughout the nation and begin to change hearts, and he plans to address the Marian Congress in March with a strong appeal for souls who are willing to make sacrifices.

“The most important request of Our Lady was that we take seriously the need to make reparation to God for sins. If we will do this, many souls will be saved, and we will have peace for our nation,” he said.

The Angel of Peace said: “Above all, accept and bear with submission the suffering which the Lord will send you” and “Make of everything you can a sacrifice and offer it to God as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and

in supplication for the conversion of sinners.” Mr. Sockey, recalling these words, said this is a mission that all of us can do.

America, in particular, must atone for the sin of abortion, he said, but also for the immorality in our media, on television and the Internet, for pornography, and sins that violate the teachings of the Church, including contraception. Sockey also weighed in on the state of our politics and the upcoming election.

“The reason we have bad leaders is because of sin. But if enough people are willing to make enough reparation, God will move the most hardened hearts with grace to soften and turn against evil. He will touch the hearts of our leaders so that they begin to make decisions based on His will, and for the voting public so that they begin to stand up for the truth,” he said. “As more and more American Catholics are willing to offer all their sufferings to God, the amount of reparation increases and it begins to balance the

sin, so that God’s grace becomes active in the hearts of the sinners and they begin to repent of what they are doing wrong.”

Sockey travels constantly with “Our Lady,” teaching the message of Fatima in parish after parish. He spends a month in each diocese where she is hosted, and the program is growing. The World Apostolate of Fatima board of directors is currently discerning when to host the Pilgrim Virgin statue in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, possibly as

early as May of 2012.

Sister Lucia said, “... these journeys of Our Lady’s statue are yet another facet of the apostolate of the Message which she came to earth to bring, and which is travelling all

over the world in search of people to bring them to God.” (*Calls from the Message of Fatima*) Please pray about the pending decision to host Our Lady’s statue here in St. Paul and Minneapolis.



NPVS Custodian Bill Sockey

ROLE OF MEN

(continued from page 6)

women—lined up in two columns on the steps leading to the church doors. They wore blue sashes and blue-ribboned medals of Our Lady and stood at attention while Bill’s casket was carried in and all his loved ones passed into the church.

This was completely unexpected and unbelievably comforting to me. I’ll always recall Marie Middlecamp’s words to me: “To think that beautiful man prayed with us and honored Mary!” Now, Bill had only attended twice and was not an official member, but these holy women embraced him as one of their own and showed such great respect! This touched me deeply.

Now, thirty years later, I look at the men of Fatima at our local level—young, intelligent, talented, successful men—but, most of all, good and holy men, who serve on our Board of Directors, past and present. And while it is true that most of the people praying in Fatima Prayer Cells in our Archdiocese are women, including many widows, there are more men than in the past.

Consider our annual Communion Breakfast, an event that is attended by delegates from Fatima Prayer Cells throughout the Archdiocese. At the most recent breakfast in November, of more than fifty attendees only ten were men.

Still, this number is a noteworthy increase from past years. And the number of men who are beginning to pray in Fatima Prayer Cells is rising! In recent months, four young men have joined Prayer Cells—two of the four are leaders of their cells and are encouraging others to join in prayer to honor Our Lady.

Mother Mary must be so pleased to see people worshipping her Son through her intercession. She must be smiling as she welcomes the holy men who are heeding the Fatima message of prayer and penance in ever-increasing numbers.

Thanks be to God. Our Lady of Fatima, pray for us!

WORLD APOSTOLATE OF FATIMA
Archdiocesan Division St. Paul/Minneapolis
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South St. Paul, MN 55075

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Mail to: World Apostolate of Fatima (c/o Barb Ernster)
5225 Lincoln Street NE, Fridley, MN 55421

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