

# YOU DID IT TO ME

International Lay Missionaries of Charity

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## MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY - CONTEMPLATIVE

" To do ordinary things with  
extraordinary love for the  
greater glory of God "



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*Laudetur Sacra Familia*

**Feast of the Annunciation 2010**

### PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND

*"All you who are thirsty, come to the water, come, without paying and without cost..."* (Is 55: 1 ff.)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Lay Missionaries of Charity (LMCs) of Italy, like many LMCs of the world, desired, yearned and dreamt for many years to visit the land of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, which for the people of Israel was the Promised Land.

This land is full of history and God experiences. This land was particularly chosen by God as his arena to meet man and woman to reveal to them his designs and plans. *"Then Yahweh would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend..."* (Ex 33: 11).

The Holy Land is the land of prophets and kings. It is where the prophets responded to God's call, lived heroic, exemplary and edifying lives. They suffered much, even to the point of losing their lives.

It is the land where the major part of the Bible – both the Old and the New Testament – was written, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit. The Bible for us is the book of all books, which is meant to help us to have an encounter in faith with God. Whether we are aware of it or not, God has created us because he loves us and so that we in turn may love him. The

Bible then is the Book of God's irresistible love for man and man's unquenchable desire to respond to him in love.

It is to this land of history, faith and love that a group of fifty LMCs went from Rome from Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March to Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2010, to visit the holy places, churches and shrines.

Moved by an ardent and unquenchable desire and nostalgia for God that we preserve in our hearts, we visited the grotto of the Annunciation at Nazareth, the nativity grotto in Bethlehem, the garden of Gethsemane, Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre Church in Jerusalem, and other related holy places of importance in the Holy Land, such as the Sea of Galilee and around.

To see Jesus, to contemplate his face, is an unquenchable desire and is also our birthright: *"Your face, O Lord, my God, do I seek. Do not hide your face from me"*.

Why do we call this land the "Holy Land"? What makes this land really holy? It is the presence of Jesus that made this land holy. It is the presence of Jesus at Nazareth – until then it was very much unknown – that made Nazareth a holy place. Because Mary and Joseph welcomed Jesus into their lives, they became important and holy. Whoever welcomes Jesus in his life and lives with him and like him, becomes holy.

It is said that an average of forty to fifty thousand pilgrims visit the Holy Land a day. Although we too were part of the huge crowd of pilgrims, we did not feel that our pilgrimage was a waste of time or money. Everyone in the group was all the more interested and tried to make maximum profit out of it.

Our pilgrimage to the Holy Land was a faith experience.

How did we organize our pilgrimage?

First of all we started our pilgrimage on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2010 with Holy Mass, celebrated in the airport Chapel in Fiumicino, Rome, at 10.15 a.m., before the check-in. It was very proper and timely that we began our pilgrimage with Jesus and for Jesus. We also entrusted our pilgrimage to the care, protection and guidance of the Holy Family and the Holy Spirit, whose servants we all are.

Our flight from Fiumicino airport, Rome by Israir was at 2.05 p.m. After about 3 hours and 25 minutes' flight we landed in Tel Aviv airport at about 6.30 p.m. (local time). As we came out of the airport we were met by Don Lucio, a Salesian priest (Sdb), who was

going to be with us to be our guide during the entire pilgrimage. The bus took us directly to Galilee Hotel in Nazareth, where we were going to spend the first three nights of our long desired pilgrimage.

### **Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2010, Nazareth.**

**Basilica of the Annunciation.** It was very appropriate to start our pilgrimage in the Holy Land with Holy Mass at 8.00 a.m. at the grotto of the Annunciation. Like Mary who kept all the humanly incomprehensible mystery bound events in her heart and pondered them over (Lk 2: 19, 51b), we too were supposed to absorb and assimilate all that we were going to see and experience. What was read and learnt in the Gospels was now coming alive as we visited and saw the places where the mysteries of our salvation and redemption took place. From now on, when we read the Gospel passages, they have a different impact on us.

**Church of St. Joseph.** Finishing the Mass we went around the Basilica with Don Lucio, our guide, who explained to us with enthusiasm the history and archaeological discoveries of the place, the ruins of the town of Nazareth in the time of Jesus, where he spent the major part of his earthly life together with Mary and Joseph. Close to the basilica of the Annunciation, which is built in two floors, there is the Church of St. Joseph. As we come closer we see a beautiful statue of the Holy Family on the outside wall, ready to welcome the pilgrims into their humble home of love, peace and joy.

In the basement of St. Joseph's Church there remains a big vacuum, where the "holy house" was before, part of which is found in Loreto, close to Ancona, Italy, near the Adriatic Sea. During the time of the Crusaders an Italian family called De Angelis managed to get this house out of Palestine, and brought it to Dalmatia and then to Loreto, where it is preserved, surrounded by a huge castle.

**The Synagogue Church.** From the Church of St. Joseph we walked to the synagogue Church, which, apparently, was the Jewish synagogue in the time of Jesus. It is here that Jesus went Saturday after Saturday for years and years. It is here, according to the Gospel of Luke, that Jesus really begins his public ministry. It is here where the first attempt on his life took place *"bringing him out of the town, to the edge of the hill on which Nazareth is*

*built, intending to throw him down the cliff. But he passed his way through their midst and went his way”* (Lk 4: 18-30), because his hour had not yet come. (cf. Jn 2: 4b)

**Mount Carmel, Haifa.** Mount Carmel appears in the Old Testament in connection with King Ahab of Samaria, whose wife Jezebel was of pagan origin and who worshipped their god Baal. Elijah, the prophet, was sent by God to make the king understand his great apostasy and the worship of false gods. We have two very interesting instances recorded in the book of Kings: Elijah’s mission to King Ahab, and his encounter with 450 gild prophets of Baal, whom he not only defeated but eventually “*took them down to Kishon and there he slaughtered them*” (cf. 1Kgs 18: 17-46).

The cave on Mount Carmel became the founding place for the Carmelite Order, which is known today as “Our Lady of Mount Carmel”.

On the way to Mount Carmel, seeing the port city of Haifa, Don Lucio, our guide, told us that Jewish people say that in Jerusalem people pray, in the city of Tel Aviv they enjoy life, and in the city of Haifa people work.

**Mount of the Transfiguration.** Soon after lunch we took off again to visit Mount Tabor, the mount of the Transfiguration mentioned in all the three Gospels (Mt 17: 1-8; Mk 9: 2-8; Lk 9: 28-36) and also in one of the letters of St. Peter (2Pt 1: 16-18). This mountain is about 588 meters high. We passed through the town of Nain, where Jesus raised the only son of a widowed mother: “*When the Lord saw her, he felt sorry for her and said to her, ‘Don’t cry’. Then he went up and touched the bier and said, ‘Young man, I tell you: get up.’ And the dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him to his mother...*” (Lk 7: 13-17)

The big bus goes only to the bottom of Mount Tabor; so we had to wait in line for minibuses to take us to the top of the mountain and back. On the top there is the basilica of the Transfiguration and the two Chapels (tents), one for Moses and one for Elijah as Peter said: “*Master it is wonderful for us to be here for we can make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah* ” (Lk 9: 33). The pilgrims who visit these holy places, sanctified by the presence of Jesus, feel the same.

**Cana in Galilee and Renewal of Marriage Covenant.** From Mount Tabor we headed toward the town of Cana in Galilee, where Jesus at Mary’s request changed water into wine at a wedding feast (Jn 2: 1-11). It was here Jesus manifested his glory and the

Christian marriage is raised to the dignity of a sacrament. There were nine couples in our group who renewed the marriage covenant; their wedding rings were blessed and they recited the prayer proper to their state of life. The couples received special blessings and many graces for themselves and for their families. *“What a joy to see a family united in love, the blessing of God rests upon it”.*

*“Evening came and morning came: the first day”*

**Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2010** *“Save us, Lord, for we are perishing”* (Mt 8: 24).

**The Sea of Galilee and our Boat Ride.** After breakfast we left the house exactly at 8.00 a.m., and went to the sea of Tiberias, whiche we reached by 9.00 a.m., and took the boat to Capernaum to have an experience of the apostles, some of whom were fishermen, who also saw some strange and unprecedented events in the sea. One was *“calming of the storm”* (Mt 8: 23-27; Mk 4: 35-41; Lk 8: 22-25) and the other was more astonishing, namely Jesus walking on the water. This was altogether new and unique for the fishermen of Galilee (cf. Mt 14: 22-33; Mk 6: 45-52; Jn 6: 16-21).

**Capernaum.** In Capernaum the pilgrims saw the ruins of the old synagogue, the archaeological excavations, the ruins of Peter’s house, the Church built above his house in the shape of a boat, etc. It was here Jesus called most of his men: Peter, Andrew, James, John, Mathew and others (Mt 4: 18-22; Mk 1: 16-20; Lk 5: 1-11; Jn 1: 35-42). Jesus also performed in this place many miracles of healings, exorcisms, etc.

**The Mount of the Beatitudes.** From the town of Capernaum we went to the Mount of the Beatitudes, where Jesus gave the new law of love – the new commandment (Mt 5: 1 ff.) It is here we celebrated the Holy Mass in the octagonal Church, representing the eight Beatitudes. The inspiring example of Mahatma Gandhi, who spent practically one hour a day reading and meditating on the Sermon on the Mount, which he tried to put into practice. It was also pointed out to us that Gandhi loved Christ and tried to follow his example in his own way.

After the Holy Mass we were led by our guide, Don Lucio, to a restaurant close by as part of the house, where we were served with “Peter’s fish” besides other items.

**Tabgha and the Primacy.** About 2.30 p.m. we were out again heading toward Tabgha, where Jesus multiplied the loaves and the fish (cf. Mt 14: 13-21). Tabgha and the

place of the primacy of Peter, which are found in the Gospel of John (21: 15-17), are close to each other. Many of our pilgrims got into the sea and wanted to have the joy of being in the same water where Jesus had been. The water still looks crystal clear.

**Jordan River and Renewal of Baptismal Promises.** We then crossed the Jordan River by bus at Bethsaida, the birthplace of three of the apostles: Peter, Andrew and Philip, and travelled on the eastern side of Lake Galilee and reached the south of the lake, where the River Jordan flows out of the lake. It is here all of us renounced sin and satan once again, recited our creed and renewed our baptismal promises. To our surprise, many big fish came to listen to our words and bear witness to our renewal ceremony. It was a wonderful experience for all.

From the river we travelled toward the hotel, passing through many mango groves, banana plantations and other tropical and subtropical fruit trees. Galilee is very fertile and green, well cultivated and well taken care of. Jesus did choose one of the best places in the world, where everything converges. Galilee is really God's garden, and the promised land of the chosen people. It is here Jesus spent most of his life together with Mary and his disciples after he began his public life.

**Mary's Well.** On our way to the hotel we stopped at Mary's well. We couldn't see much as the Orthodox Church was closed and the place was not so brightly illuminated.

**Adoration in the Grotto of the Annunciation.** After our evening meal most of us went to the grotto of the Annunciation where the Franciscan Friars conducted a very beautiful hour of adoration, animated by many young people with songs, hymns, scripture readings, and intercessory prayer in various languages. At the end of the adoration the celebrant goes around in solemn procession and gives blessing to each of the pilgrims present. The weekly Thursday adoration was and is always a wonderful spiritual experience. The songs, too, sounded very mystical, especially the two verses in Latin "Verbum caro factum est, Verbum panis factum est". Our group walked to the hotel, happily tired and spiritually refreshed by 10.00 p.m. to get ready for the third day.

*"Evening came and morning came: the second day"*

**Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2010, Journey to Judea.**

**Dead Sea and Qumran.** Finishing breakfast with our suitcases on board we began our long journey heading toward the land of Judah. Reaching the Dead Sea, many of our pilgrims went to the shore to wet their feet in the thick and sticky waters of the Dead Sea. From there we travelled back a few kilometres to Qumran, where in 1947 some shepherds discovered the so-called Dead Sea scrolls. It was a great discovery and helped to study and understand the Old Testament. It was here a community of zealous Jews lived in the late B.C.s and in the time of Christ, praying and working, observing their rules very rigorously. As we reached there they showed us a 7 minutes documentary film on Qumran as a prelude to what we were going to see.

**Jericho.** From Qumran we drove to Jericho, which is one of the oldest cities in the world (10.000 B.C.). On our way we stopped under the sycamore tree, which Zacchaeus climbed to see who Jesus was. Of course it cannot be the same tree, but it is the same kind of tree and the place where Jesus stood and asked Zacchaeus, who had climbed the tree to see Jesus (Lc 19: 1-11), to come down from the tree.

Our pilgrimage was like Zacchaeus climbing the tree with the intention of seeing Jesus and being with him. Jesus knows even the innermost desires of our hearts. Like Zacchaeus, who took the trouble to run ahead of the crowd and climb the tree just to see Jesus, we too went to the Holy Land to see and experience Jesus. Like Jesus who asked Zacchaeus to come down from the tree, he is asking us all to come down from our trees. At times we refuse to come down from our trees due to our pride.

Zacchaeus never thought that Jesus would see him. But it is Jesus who sees Zacchaeus first, even before Zacchaeus sees Jesus, and calls him by name. Jesus goes much beyond our expectations. Zacchaeus not only saw Jesus, but now he is walking and conversing with Jesus as they both walked together. Jesus' presence, his words and his love began to disturb Zacchaeus' conscience. The end result was his confession and his determination to give half of his belongings to the poor and, if he had cheated anyone, to pay back four times as much. Jesus looks at Zacchaeus with love and says very gently and very firmly: "*Today salvation has come to this house*", for he is also a true son of Abraham, which means that he too is a true child of God. Our pilgrims were meant to have the Zacchaeus experience of Jesus. Change of life and radical reorientation of one's life is the result of meeting Jesus, who came to seek and save the lost (cf. Lk 19: 1-11).

Did Jesus walk with us as we went to the nearby restaurant for lunch, and eventual free shopping according to one's taste, need and possibility? Many did buy. Some of us enjoyed in the meantime seeing the peacocks walking around.

At about 2.15 p.m. we got into the bus and went to the bottom of the mountain, where Jesus prayed and fasted for forty days and where he was tempted in every way. "*When the devil had exhausted every way of tempting Jesus he left him, to return at an opportune moment.*" (Lk 4: 13)

It may be good to know that temptation is not a sin, as we see Jesus was tempted too in every way, but he resisted the temptations and did not fall into them. "*The devil comes to us as an angel of light*" to tempt us. Imagine he even had the courage to approach the Son of God as an angel of light, with apparently good suggestions. But Jesus could easily see them as diabolical deceit. We need much grace, prayer and fasting to discern and resist temptations. Like Jesus and with him we too have to say: "*Get behind me, satan, you are an obstacle in my path.*" (Mt 16: 23) Often we become victims of temptation and fall into sin so easily! Don't we?

**Gethsemane.** We were now on our way to Jerusalem. It was very significant and meaningful that we went to the garden of Gethsemane first, where we celebrated the Holy Mass in the basilica of Jesus' agony. Our guide, Don Lucio, told us that one of the huge olive trees in the garden is over two thousand years old, as the department of botany did some tests. Even though there was a fire, the fire did not destroy the tree completely. This tree stands as a witness to the agony of Jesus and heard his cry "*Father, my father, if possible, take this cup away from me, but not my will, but yours be done*" (Lk 22: 42).

Some of our M.C. Sisters from Bethlehem and Jerusalem joined us in the celebration of the Eucharist in the basilica of the Agony of Jesus. The altar stand is in the form of a chalice and the altar stands in front of the rocky ground where Jesus threw himself and cried aloud. The three closest friends and apostles of Jesus, Peter, James and John could not resist themselves from falling asleep, even though Jesus asked them to watch with him and pray. Here Jesus seemed to become really weak and helpless. (cf. Mk 14: 32-42)

**Nativity Hotel, Bethlehem.** Together with our M.C. Sisters, Sr. Aroti M.C. and the Bethlehem community, we reached Nativity Hotel in Bethlehem, which though good and well furnished, was not the one we were supposed to be sent to. The agency in Jerusalem

did things differently, so it became evident, and so the agency in Rome was contacted. Our stay in Bethlehem instead of four nights was reduced to two, and the last two nights we were told to go to Novo Hotel in Jerusalem, which is now known as Hotel Leonardo.

This was very helpful for us as we could walk to the basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in the early hours of the morning for a visit, Holy Mass, etc. Besides, we did not have to waste time at the boarder between Israel (Jerusalem) and Bethlehem. This also facilitated us to travel to the airport in the morning of Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March for our departure for Rome.

*Evening came and morning came: the third day”.*

### **Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2010, Jerusalem**

Although we left the Nativity Hotel by 7.30 a.m., it took a considerably long time to cross the border. Besides, one of the pilgrims had forgotten to bring his passport, so it took more time to go back again to the hotel.

**Bethany.** From Bethlehem we straight away went to visit Bethany, the village where Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus lived (Jn 11: 1-44). We could see that the Franciscans really take care of all the holy places, including Bethany. Bethany is in the extreme end of the eastern side of the Mount of Olives. There is also a tomb, which is supposed to be the tomb of Lazarus. It is under the custody of the Muslims. Most of our pilgrims went to visit the tomb, although to get down to the tomb was very difficult.

It is at Bethany that Jesus revealed one of the most important dogmas of the Christian faith when he said to Martha: *“I am the resurrection, whoever believes in Me, though he dies, shall live...”* (Jn 11: 25-26). It is Martha who ran to his sister Mary and whispered: *“The master is here and he is calling for you”* (Jn 11: 28). It may be very helpful and profitable to read very prayerfully and meditatively the whole chapter eleven (11) of the Gospel of John.

When Jesus told Blessed Teresa M.C. of the kind of members he wanted her to have, he said: *“I want Indian nuns, victims of my love, who would be Mary and Martha, who would be so united to Me so as to radiate My love on souls”*. As LMCs and friends of Jesus we too are called to be so united to Jesus so that we can continue to radiate Jesus’ love - and not simply our human love – on souls. Without this closeness to Jesus our daily life cannot become an expression and an extension of an apostolate of saving souls. The

vocation of every M.C. and LMC is the same: *“to love and suffer and save souls”*. There is so much to learn, so much to discover the hidden treasures in the life of Jesus accounted in the Gospels, which become alive and clear as we visit the holy places.

**Mount of Olives and the Church of the Pater Noster.** *“Lord, teach us to pray”* (Lk 11: 1)

Leaving Bethany we went to the Church of the “Pater Noster”, where Jesus apparently taught his disciples the prayer of the Our Father (cf. Lk 11: 1 ff.), which can be found exposed on the walls of the compound in the various languages of the world. The prayer of the Our Father is known as the compendium of the Gospel. It has seven petitions, all of which are explained so beautifully in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (Nos. 2759-2865).

Like the “Shema Israel”, i.e. “Listen Israel”, which is prayed thrice a day by every devout Jew, so the Church officially prays the Lord’s Prayer three times a day, i.e. at Lauds, Vespers and in the Mass. Besides these liturgical times, the devout Christians pray the prayer of the Our Father many more times a day, especially when we pray the Holy Rosary. In the Our Father prayer we ask nothing except the accomplishment of the divine will, to love and forgive like God so as to be loved and forgiven by God.

**Dominus Flevit.** We are now on the western slop of the Mount of Olives. From the Church of the Pater Noster we walked down to the Church of Dominus Flevit (The Lord wept). In the time of Jesus from the Mount of Olives one could see the Mount Zion and the Jerusalem temple. In fact the pilgrims of Jesus’ time began to pray the psalms of Ascent (Ps 120-134) as they saw the Jerusalem temple from a distance, as they went down the Mount of Olives, crossing the Kidron valley in order to go up to the Jerusalem temple. Today’s pilgrims see the old city of Jerusalem, in which there is the imposing mosque of Omar, behind which, at some distance, we see the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, St. Anna’s Church, etc.

Jesus came from Bethphage, mounted on an ass and crossed the Mount of Olives...As he drew near and came in sight of the city, he wept over it and said, *“If only today you knew the ways of peace! But now your eyes are held from seeing...for Jerusalem did not recognize the time and the visitation of your God”* (cf. Lk 19: 41-44). The Church of the

Flevit is a simple one. Before entering the Church, right outside, there grows a bush, which has innumerable long and sharp thorns.

In the account of the Passion of our Lord we read that “*the soldiers twisted thorns into a crown and put it on his head*” (Gv 19, 2)...*Jesus then came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak, and Pilate pointed to him saying: ‘Here is the man’ – Ecce Homo*” (Gv 19, 5). Some pilgrims took branches from this thorny bush. In the Church of the Flevit we prayed the Angelus facing the old city of Jerusalem as it was midday.

We then went down the Mount of Olives. On our left side there is a very huge cemetery, and almost at the bottom of the mount, on the same left side, are the garden of Gethsemane and the Basilica where we had the Holy Mass on the day before.

**Mary’s Tomb and the Orthodox Church.** The pilgrims went to see the Orthodox Church, where there is the empty tomb of Mary. The continual flow of the pilgrims allows only just a couple of minutes to pause and pray at the empty tomb of Mary. Why is the tomb of Mary empty? Because it is one of the dogmas of our faith that the Blessed Virgin Mary, when she completed her earthly career, was assumed into heaven body and soul. This dogma was defined by the Servant of God, Pious XII on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1950, and since then we celebrate the feast on 15<sup>th</sup> August every year. This is the fourth Marian dogmas of our faith. The three others are: Mary, the Mother of God (1<sup>st</sup> January), Mary ever Virgin and the Immaculate Conception (8<sup>th</sup> December).

**Visit to Calvary.** After lunch in a restaurant in Jerusalem, we walked from Damascus Gate, through an immense crowd of all sorts of people, to the Holy Sepulchre Church. We went straight away climbing the steps to the place of Jesus’ crucifixion. It is here the Redeemer of the world gave up his spirit saying: “*Father, into your hands I commend my Spirit*”(Lk 23, 46). It is from this expiatory pulpit of the Holy Cross Jesus said words no human tongue has ever uttered: “*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing*” (Lk 23: 34). It is from this mountain of invincible love and unbounded forgiveness that Jesus told one of thieves hanging on the cross with him, who recognized Jesus’ royalty: “*Today you will be with me in Paradise*” (cf. Lk 23. 39-43). It is here we see the apparent abandonment of his Father. Jesus all the more abandoned himself to the Father and said: “*Father, into your hands I commend my spirit*” (Lk 23: 46).

Much more can be said of this holiest expiatory place. Our pilgrims, one by one, knelt down and went under the altar of the crucifixion and kissed the foot of the cross. It was here Jesus' blood drop by drop flowed down to the bottom of the rocky mountain. "*There is no greater love than this, to give one's life for one's friends*" (Jn 15: 13). St. Paul writes: "*You could hardly find anyone ready to die even for someone upright,...but Christ died for us while we were still sinners...*" (cf. Rom 5: 7).

**Upper Room.** From Golgotha (Calvary) we walked toward the upper room, where Jesus celebrated his last meal with his intimate friends, which now is our daily Mass. It was here the apostles, after their Good Friday experience, locked themselves in for fear of the Jews. It was here Jesus came and stood among them, even when the doors were closed and said: "*Peace be with you*". It was here Jesus breathed on the apostles saying: "*Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins they are forgiven...*" (cf. Jn 20: 19-23). It was here that he came after eight days and told Thomas, the apostle, to put his finger on his wounded hands and feet – making him put his hand into his pierced side; Jesus told Thomas that he should not doubt, but put his faith in the risen Lord. . It was here that Thomas made his profound act of faith saying: "*My Lord and my God*" (cf. Jn 20: 24-29).

It was in the upper room the apostles waited with our Lady for nine days and received the Holy Spirit on the tenth day. It was from this upper room the apostles set out for their mission filled with the Holy Spirit and power. So our pilgrims were overjoyed to visit the upper room, to sing the hymn: "Veni Creator Spiritus".

From the upper room we went down to see the so called tomb of David, where the group of women and men were to separate to see it.

**Mass in the Cenacle.** The group then went to see the Benedictine Church of the Dormition of Mary and the crypt. By then it was time for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist in the chapel near the upper room, which is called the Cenacle. Some of our M.C. Sisters from the Jerusalem community joined in the celebration, including Sr. Aroti M.C. and her companion, who accompanied us all day long. Don Gianni, another Salesian priest, who knew some of the pilgrims from Cagliari, concelebrated with us.

We then had to return to our Nativity Hotel in Bethlehem.

*"Evening came and morning came: the fourth day".*

**Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2010.**

**Walking Pilgrimage to the Basilica of the Nativity.** Some of the pilgrims walked from Nativity Hotel to the Basilica of the Nativity after our breakfast, and arrived there before our pilgrims travelling by bus. Our Holy Mass was at 8.00 a.m. in St. Helen's Chapel.

**The Milk Grotto.** Soon after the Holy Mass we went to visit the milk grotto, where the Holy Family might have spent some time before they fled to Egypt. Why is it called the milk grotto? Because it was here that, while our Lady was feeding the baby Jesus, a few drops of milk fell on the ground. The tradition says that the entire cave became white: The Franciscan Friars sell little packets of ground stone powder from this grotto to the pilgrims to take home. It is said that many couples, who were not having children for many years, had babies after taking this powder every night before the couple retires to bed. They are also asked to pray the third joyful mystery of the Rosary together before they fall asleep. This powder is also used for the cure of incurable illness of the body. Why not also of the mind and soul?

**Ain Karem.** The bus took us to Ain Karem, the hill country of Judea, the place of the visitation. Mary went to this place in haste from Nazareth, not less than 140 km. It was here she met her cousin Elizabeth; it was here she sang the "Magnificat". The gospel of Luke says that she stayed for three months and then she returned to her home in Nazareth. She was present when John the Baptist was born...when he was named. We also visited the Church of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. Outside the walls we can see the Cantic of Zachariah, written on big boards in different languages, like that of the "Magnificat".

Our pilgrims then returned to the Nativity Hotel for lunch, and three of us Brothers went to our M.C. Sisters' house in Bethlehem for our lunch with the Sisters.

**The Shepherds' Field.** In the afternoon we visited the shepherds' field, like an angel of the Lord went, announcing the good news of the birth of the Saviour, who is Messiah and Lord. It was here a multitude of angels sang for the first time: "*Glory to God in the highest and peace of God on earth to all people of good will*" (cf. Lk 2: 8-21).

**Nativity Grotto.** From the shepherds' field, like the shepherds we too hurried away to the Basilica of the Nativity, only to find an incredible crowd of pilgrims waiting in line to visit the Grotto of the Nativity. We too moved closer and closer in a very slow pace and

reached the grotto, where each one of us first knelt down, then went under the altar and kissed the spot.

We are meant to treasure all these things in our hearts and ponder over them, like Mary who wondered and marvelled but was not confused. St. Luke says: *“As for Mary, she treasured all these words and continually pondered them”* (2: 19).

**Shopping.** Now there was some free time for those who wanted to do some shopping. We went into one of the shops which I knew for years, and bought many religious articles, including a big crucifix for our new perpetual adoration Chapel in Rome.

We left Bethlehem for good and came to Jerusalem to a new hotel called “Hotel Leonardo” and had our evening meal.

*“Evening came and morning came: the fifth day”.*

### **Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010.**

**Walking Pilgrimage to the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre.** Some of us decided to go on a walking pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre Church. We left the hotel at 5.00 a.m. To my surprise we were about thirty walking to one of the most important holy places in the world, where we concelebrated on Mount Calvary, on the altar of our Lady of Sorrows. Our group was very happy and everyone was able to kneel down to go under the altar of the Crucifixion to kiss it.

We hastened back to the hotel to have breakfast and then leave the hotel soon to visit in and around Jerusalem.

**Two Groups.** It was our program to visit the place around where the temple of Jerusalem was built and the imposing Muslim mosque Omar. But we were told that no religious objects could be taken with us. So we were divided into two groups. One group of twenty decided not to go to such an anti-Christian place. Besides we were in need of taking with us some crucifixes, rosaries, prayer books and other religious objects.

**The Wailing Wall.** Our group went to the Wailing Wall. Here, too, ladies on one side and men on another.

Since we finished our visit to Wailing Wall very early, we decided to visit the place where Jesus was imprisoned from midnight to morning of that first Good Friday. At the sight of this unbelievably heart-renting place many cried and I saw the tears of many

falling on the ground. There were two holes, where Jesus had to put each leg. Neither could he stand properly nor could he sit. It was a punishment given to the most notorious criminals in the time of the Romans. *“He was taken away to detention and judgement. What an unthinkable fate...yet ours were the sorrows he bore, ours were the suffering he endured...Destroyed because of our sins...”* (Is 53: 1 ff.).

**Jesus’ Prison and the Church of the Ecce Homo.** On another side there is the prison cell where Barabbas was imprisoned. Of course it is in the underground.

We then proceeded to the “Ecce Homo”, “Here is the man”, on Via Dolorosa. *“Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak, and Pilate pointed out to him, saying: ‘Here is the man’* (Jn 19: 5).

**The Place of the Flagellation.** The next holy place we visited was the place of the flagellation, the place where Jesus was so cruelly flogged. Those of us who have seen Mel Gibson’s film “The Passion of the Christ” can understand something of what Jesus underwent on the night of that Holy Thursday. How could he endure so much suffering? Yes, Jesus, you could because you loved us to the very end. Yes, our vocation is also to love and suffer and to save souls.

**The Church of St. Ann and the Pool of Bethesda.** We then walked down to the Church of St. Ann and the pool of Bethesda, the House of Mercy (cf. Jn 5: 1 ff.). In the Church of St. Ann, where many pilgrims visit, sing and pray praises to Mary and the “Magnificat”, there is in the crypt the chapel where our Lady was born. We visited these holy places; and we saw the ruins of the pool of Bethesda.

Jesus met a man at the pool of Bethesda who was ill. *“Now there is in Jerusalem, by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Hebrew called Bethesda, which has five porticos...One man, was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been lying there a long time, he said to him, ‘Do you want to be healed?’ The sick man answered him, ‘I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is troubled’...Jesus said to him, ‘Get up, pick your sleeping mat and walk’. At once the man was healed, and he took his mat and started to walk...”* (Jn 5: 1-9)

There are three interesting points in this brief account given by St. John. First of all the name of the pool, Bethesda, which means House of Mercy: the merciful Saviour meets the sick man in the house of mercy. The second point is that the man in question was sick

for thirty-eight years. Still without being discouraged he hoped to be healed one day. The third point was that he was one of the poorest of the poor, as he had no one to put him into the water at the proper time.

What Jesus did then is what Jesus wants us to do now. He told Blessed Teresa, back in 1947, *“that I had absolutely no one for my very poor”*. There are plenty of people everywhere who have nobody and need to be helped.

We also see Jesus, the merciful Saviour, meets the man at the house of mercy. There is a sacrament aspect here. We have the sacrament of Baptism and the sacrament of Reconciliation, both of which are encounters with the Lord of mercy.

**The Stations of the Cross along the Via Dolorosa.** We then decided to make the Stations of the Cross. We took the Reflections from Mother Teresa’s Founding Grace document. We came to the place where generally every Friday the Franciscans, with the pilgrims, begin the stations in four different languages, at 3.00 p.m. We then took the same usual street, stopping at the traditional, assigned places where each station is marked. The Chapel of the third station was opened. The eleventh and the twelfth we did on Calvary, the thirteenth where Jesus’ body was laid and the fourteenth at Jesus’ tomb. By this time the other group was in the Basilica waiting for us.

**Visit to the Tomb.** We then joined the crowded place and stood in line to visit the Holy Sepulchre; there was enough time to pray a Rosary.

By then Don Lucio came and told us to be ready to go to “Casa Nova”, and walked and walked very fast with the group. It was where we had our lunch. After lunch we again divided into two groups.

**Visit to M.C. Sisters’ Convent in Jerusalem.** Our group went to the Basilica to look around and to pray quietly. We then went shopping, from where we decided to go and visit our M.C. Sisters, whose convent is less than a kilometre away from Calvary. The Sisters, as usual, were very happy and welcomed us with great joy serving us with some simple refreshments.

**Solemn Procession in the Basilica.** We then returned to the Basilica to join the solemn procession at 4.00 p.m. in the Basilica. There were quite a few pilgrims, besides the Franciscan Friars who do the procession every single afternoon. During the procession our

other group reached the Basilica. So all participated in the benediction which the Franciscans do at the end of the procession every day in their Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

It was five p.m. and there was an hour before our concluding thanksgiving Holy Mass. So some of our pilgrims made the sacrament of reconciliation, while others waited in silence for the hour. Some went again to visit the tomb.

**Thanksgiving Mass and LMC vows.** Then came our turn and our assigned time for the Holy Mass, as the hour has been fixed weeks before. In the Holy Land, if one wants to celebrate Holy Mass in certain altars, one has to book them through the office weeks before, even months in advance.

During our Mass two LMCs from Cagliari made their vows until Mercy Sunday 2011. One of our pilgrims decided to start her year of formation. Although the little crucifix was blessed during the Mass, there was not enough time to give it to the person at the end of the Mass. It was done the following morning at the airport in Tel Aviv, while waiting for our flight. *“I will sing forever the mercies of the Lord”* (Ps 89: 1).

Our vocation is a gift of God, which we have to guard zealously and protect from all dangers of losing it altogether or becoming slothful. To maintain our fervour let us make every effort to go for Mass and Holy Communion often, daily if possible, and show our gratitude by growing in virtue and holiness.

*“Evening came and morning came: the sixth day”.*

**Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2010.**

**Our departure for Rome.** We were told by the agency in Jerusalem that there was a change in our departure time, that instead of 10.15 a.m., our flight would leave at 7.45 a.m. So we left the hotel in Jerusalem by 3.45 a.m. But this change did not happen. So we had to wait at the airport for security check, which always is an ordeal at Tel Aviv airport. One has to be very careful how one gives the answers to their strange and sometimes even silly questions.

Our flight was considerably pleasant and tranquil. All reached their destination happily and gracefully, except the group of Adolfo Costa from Parma, who met with a small car accident, after getting off the freeway in Parma, due to heavy snowing and it

being late at night. But thanks be to God nothing happened to the persons in the car. The water did not, however, drown them, nor the fire did burn them (cf. Is 43: 1-3).

**Conclusion.** My gratitude goes to the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who created man and woman in his own image and likeness. To them he entrusted a potential earth to be recreated, making him its king and the loudspeaker of the universe. For among all creatures, human beings alone can sing praises to God. Every person is a spark of God's love.

My gratitude goes to the Holy Family: Jesus, Mary and Joseph, whose land of birth we visited. Jesus' birth, his life, death and resurrection made the places holy; persons who were closely associated with him, walked with him and worked with him became holy. For it is impossible for a piece of iron, stuck to a magnet, not to have the qualities of the magnet as long as the piece of iron is in contact with the magnet.

No other creature on earth lived and worked with Jesus as closely as Mary did, who was chosen by God the Father to be the Virgin Mother of his beloved Son. Together with the Son she worked and suffered for the redemption of the world. After our Lady, it was St. Joseph who was chosen by God to be the foster father of Jesus and the faithful and chaste spouse of the ever Virgin Mary. Jesus' closeness to them and vice-versa made them both holy

Not only did the persons who were with him become holy, but also the places where Jesus had been, such as Nazareth, Cana, Tabor, Tiberias, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, the Mount of Olives, Mount Calvary, to name a few.

My heartfelt thanks go to the pilgrims, who so generously, enthusiastically and faithfully co-operated. Without their co-operation our pilgrimage to the land of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, prophets, apostles and martyrs would not have been a success. Thank you LMCs, co-workers and my Brothers. May the good Lord reward you for your kindness and generosity. All of you are in my daily prayers and sacrifices.

There were a few who worked from behind the scene. The first person among them is Gianna Tommasi LMC. Also I thank her for the trouble she takes to put the letter into the computer and the tedious work she does to translate it into Italian. The due recompense can only come from God for her and for all.

Now, when we read the Bible, especially the Gospels, we will be able not only to understand better, but also to appreciate them much more. We must keep alive the flames of our faith awakened and rekindled by our pilgrimage by reading and meditating on the Gospels, till we make our final and definitive pilgrimage to our true and eternal land, which is the abode of the Blessed Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Holy Family, all the angels and saints. Blessed be the holy and undivided Trinity, now and forever. Amen.

*“Just as from the heavens the rain and snow come down and do not return there till they have watered the earth, making it fertile and fruitful, giving seed to him who sows and bread to him who eats, so shall my Word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me void, but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it”. (Is 55: 10-11). Amen.*

God bless you all.

**Fr. Sebastian Vazhakala M.C.**

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Dear LMC family,

May the Love of our Risen Jesus fill you with His great Joy and Love and Hope!

It gives me great pleasure to tell you that Father Sebastian's book of his letters is now available. Arranging the letters into a book, has been a labor of love for me. I am both humbled and honored to have had a hand assisting Gianna in putting our beloved founder, Father Sebastian, letters in book form. His inspired words have lifted our spirits and led us in our journey to holiness in the footsteps of our Blessed Mother Teresa. His letters are his gift to each one of us and soon to be the world.

The title says it all, The MC Train - A Spiritual Journey in the Footsteps of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta via the Letters of Father Sebastian Vazhakala M.C. In the introduction, Father takes us on that train to Darjeeling with Mother Teresa, so many years ago, as she was called to the charism that would become the Missionaries of Charity way!

There are two volumes. They stretch from the beginnings of the MC family and we meet Mother's children the sisters and the brothers and her "grandchild" the LayMCs. Father's letters call us to step out of our ordinary lives and lead them extraordinarily with great love. The words ring true "little things with great love".

Let us all pray for Father Sebastian that he will continue to bless us with his letters. As you read these letters, you will come to a greater realization of how very blessed we are to have our beloved founder among us today. I pray that with the grace of God, there will be volume three and four and more.

I have the books available now and have included with this letter an order form for you use. Please read it carefully.

You are ALL always in my every day prayers. May we grow in our love for God and for one another, Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, pray for us and be with us.

Joy and peace,

Susie Aki, LMC  
International English Vicar

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BOOK ORDER FORM:

MC TRAIN  
A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF  
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\*\*\*If you are attending the USA National Retreat in Los Angeles in May, you may send your orders (group) to me and pick up the order in Los Angeles. It will save on postal costs. I will bring a few extra copies, so if you wish to pick them up in LA, please make sure that you pre-order them.

Contact Information:

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Dear LMC Family-

Joyful Eastertide to each of you, and to all your families.

There are many thoughts that could be shared, but I have been thinking of sharing with you some simple thoughts from the heart.

Remember Mother, so often with a smile taking the fingers of her hand, and saying: "***You did it to Me.***"

Sometimes, the most profound teachings are the simplest. Once, in a particular grace, St. Teresa of Avila was given an infused knowledge of the Trinity, and as the account went, she exclaimed: "But it's so SIMPLE ! "

Recall the perfect simplicity of the words of Our Lady, at the wedding at Cana:

***"Do whatever He tells you."***

and, of Christ, "***Love one another AS I have loved you.***"

Once, at an anniversary dinner, a couple at another table overheard the conversation of my husband and I, and asked us what was the secret of a long marriage, as the couple were about to begin their lives together. Without pause I smiled at Bill and said to the couple, "***putting the other first.***" Simple truths.

Blessed Teresa wrote on the message board at the Mother House in Calcutta before her death: "***Time is coming closer when Mother also has to go to God. Then Mother will be able to help each one of you more, guide you more and obtain more graces for you. Mother.***"

Archbishop Fulton Sheen in his book St. Therese writes, and asks: "***Do you know who your two great intercessors are? There are Two. One is our Lord in heaven, as Scripture says, always making intercession for us, I think, at every Mass for example. ... What other intercessor do you have? The Holy Spirit in your soul. The Spirit of Christ is in your soul interceding for you .***"

And Archbishop Sheen continues in the passages on intercessors, of the Little Flower, St. Therese, quoting her: "I'm going to be one too, besides our Lord and the Holy Spirit and the Blessed Mother" . Therese continues:

***"This is not impossible that I should spend my time in heaven doing good upon the earth." ....***

At the Rue de Bac, in Paris, France, in request of Our Lady to Catherine Laboure for the Miraculous Medal, the description of the moments of grace are described as follows :

"There formed around the Blessed Virgin a sort of oval and on it there were these words written in golden letters:

***"O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee."*** Have a medal struck on this model the person who wear it will receive great graces; graces will be in abundance for those who have confidence." She continues: "***Some of the precious stones cast no rays.***"

*"Those stones which remained in the shadows represent the graces which people forget to ask of me."*

On the reverse side of the medal are two hearts.

*"The M and the two hearts say enough"*

Weaving all of this together, with love and a smile, think of all the good for so many souls that we as a Lay Missionary of Charity family can bring, if we are *united in heart,*

*united in prayer, and united in love.*

Keep remembering, keep asking much of God, until the river of His love spills over in every heart.

117,416 Churches in the world, 207 countries. Countless souls. with a smile, and with my prayers, Laurie Dwyer lmc

[ ps We will be praying for you at the LMC USA National, this May 27, 28,29,30 2010 Los Angeles [Montebello] California. Visit the LMC website as well [www.laymc.com](http://www.laymc.com) , we have added to it. ]

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**JMJ**

### **ON BEHALF OF THE TORONTO LMC GROUP**

Dear LMC Family,

Not long ago, as we celebrated Christmas, it was explained to a little three and a half year old girl that the Feast with gifts for relatives and friends was a party about Jesus' birthday. She replied: "But where is Jesus? I don't see Him." How one explains to a child that it is the SEARCH of a lifetime? If she would be a LMC, we could tell her to go to article 39 (1), pp. 39-40 of our Statutes and Way of Life. There she could find how to contemplate Him. She could also, during this second week of Lent, be reminded to meditate with us on *Psalm 27, 8-9*: "My heart has prompted to seek your face; I seek it, Lord; do not hide from me."

As LMCs we know that as indicated in the *Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People (No. 18:2,3)*, we are called to live as apostles both in our families and in our parishes and dioceses, as well as in our LMC Movement. So, hopefully, the following will give you a general picture of who we are, and how our group tries to live the vocation:

Our group consists of 10 professed LMCs. There are two married couples and among the other six women, one is married. Most of us have children by birth, one has children by adoption and some have grandchildren. Two are Canadian born while the others are immigrants from Indonesia, the Philippines, Malta and Italy.

Although we meet every Saturday morning at the Sisters' house ( a real privilege), the minimum required is a Day of Recollection (spent in silence – we try!) on the first Saturday of the month from 7:30 a.m. until approximately 3:00 p.m. if possible, and the second Saturday. This is when our Spiritual Director, Father James Adam, comes to celebrate Mass, to pray with us the Liturgy of the Hours before the Blessed Sacrament, to eat his breakfast with us, then to instruct us on various topics taken either from our Statutes, Mother Teresa's writings, the Church documents, the Catechism, the Holy Scriptures, etc.

From the very beginning, the first group used to meet weekly, and the custom was kept. We always start our Saturday at 7:30 a.m. with Holy Mass, followed by one hour of Eucharistic Adoration during which we pray the Liturgy of the Hours. After a simple breakfast, we continue with our meeting according to the suggested format. Sister Superior might then share with us some news and might ask to help, if needed. We then say the Rosary, join the Sisters with their mid-day prayers before leaving; others might meet with their Spiritual Directors instead. About half of our group is retired from the work force. Some have a professional background either as engineer, office clerk, health/home care worker, hospital lab technician, bookkeeper, administrative and executive assistant, library technician, etc. Moreover, each member is engaged in some kind of apostolate such as:

1. Working closely with the Parish Care Ministry, providing transportation for shopping, banking, etc. to parishioners in need. Some are seniors, others are too sick or too old to take care of themselves;
2. Volunteering on Wednesday evenings at the Sisters' convent to help with The Soup Kitchen, preparing and serving food, washing dishes and cleaning after the people are gone;
3. Procuring things for those in need; donating money to the MC Sisters for themselves and for people in need;
4. Helping children and grandchildren cope with daily life; babysitting grandchildren;
5. Every Friday, picking up and bringing to the Sisters' house day old bread and other products from a supermarket where it would otherwise be discarded;
6. Serving as Eucharistic Ministers to the sick in homes, nursing homes and hospitals; also at St. Michael's Cathedral in Toronto;
7. Caring for an elderly lady, the sick members of relatives, and from time to time, caring for a terminally ill relative away from home;
8. Making arrangements and taking care of the flowers provided to the Holy Family Church which is under the care of the Oratorian Fathers who are also the Spiritual Directors of the LMCs;
9. Volunteering at Holy Family Church as fundraisers by selling coffee and cakes, every third Sunday; counting the money collected during Mass.
10. Helping the Sisters on the numerous days of food distribution; helping to transport purchased goods and assembling packages for distribution to the poor;
11. Helping one another to grow in our vocation through prayers, the Eucharist and the Sacraments and daily "Perpetual Adoration", whenever possible.
12. Serving as a local link as described in the LMC Statutes.

Two members are sick and suffering co-workers; one is linked to a MC Brother and the other to a MC Sister. Others are waiting to be linked to a Second Self MC Brother. We have no "Come and See" candidates presently. For our formation, we use the translation of Adolfo Costa's Year I Formation Booklets and his Diary of Spiritual Life. Our members find

these quite informative, inspiring and didactic in the way of life and charism of Mother Teresa. However, we are looking forward to using the official MC Train consisting of two volumes. Since the beginning, this is how our group has evolved over the years, walking often one step at a time, trusting that God would provide what we needed and will need to continue on this journey of the LMC Movement.

On behalf of our LMC Toronto Group, I take this opportunity to thank you all for your prayers and support.

Odette C.-Duggan, Link

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Dear LMC's,

God is doing beautiful things in Akron, Ohio. Mary and I were joined as LMC's by George Williams who professed his initial vows on Divine Mercy Sunday weekend. We are now three professed LMC's in our Akron group. We are blest to have 350 co-workers working with us as we minister to the poor of Akron via our ministry called Gennesaret, Inc. (*Matthew 14:34-36*) This is the twenty-fourth year of the ministry and Mary and I are blest to have directed it from its inception.

A couple of years ago the ministry was challenged with being forced to relocate our soup kitchen due to a change in ownership of our leased building (leased for \$1/year for almost 20 years). We serve meals to about 600 poor residents in Akron – every week. There was much uncertainty regarding God's plan for the ministry, requiring much prayer. We were blessed to have had Fr. Sebastian visit Akron during this same time frame. While in Akron we showed Fr. Sebastian our current building and another building that we hoped to acquire – even though the owner was not very interested in selling it to us. Fr. Sebastian placed a miraculous medal into one of the cracks of the building we hoped to get – and he, Mary and I paused and prayed that the Lord's will be done.

Since then the building has been sold to us at \$100,000 below market value; a large local contractor has taken on the rehabilitation of it and the initial estimate of \$370,000 for rehabilitation costs is now looking like it is going to be a total of \$50,000. We should be ready to move to the new building in a matter of weeks – it's been a true miracle. Praise be to Jesus!

Blessings,

Bob & Mary Dirgo, LMC's  
Akron, Ohio

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**YOU DID IT TO ME**  
International Lay Missionaries of Charity

Volume 1 Number 1

APR 2010

JMJ

ROME

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Dear fellow LMC's:

Greetings from Akron, Ohio U.S.A. . We hope that all is well with our brother and sister LMC's and we pray the Lord's blessings upon you.

If you haven't already visited the Lay Missionaries of Charity website, it's address is <http://www.laymc.com>. It has a new look and is very inspiring. Thanks be to God and to Fr. Boniface for providing us with this beautiful LMC website.

Some of the information on the site includes an explanation of "who we are" by Fr. Sebastian, the statutes, the international LMC links, letters and much more. If you've already visited the website, check back again to see it's new look.

**Newsletter Submissions:** LMC's everywhere. - we'd like to hear from you and include a message from your local LMC family in the newsletter. It's such a blessing to hear how the Lord is working with each and every LMC group around the world and it serves to bring us all closer together. Please submit an article for the next newsletter. The next newsletter will be distributed in June. Please send your letters and articles for the newsletter by June 1<sup>st</sup> to:

Mail to: **Bob and Mary Dirgo**

1093 Foxglove Circle.  
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44223 U.S.A.

Email to: [mdirgo@hotmail.com](mailto:mdirgo@hotmail.com) OR  
[bobdirgo@hotmail.com](mailto:bobdirgo@hotmail.com)  
Telephone: 330-923-2222  
Fax: 330-208-2513

**\*\*\*National and International Links:** Could you please *copy* this newsletter and *send* it to everyone in your group. Thanks.

**\*\*\*ALL LMC's:** If you have an e-mail address, please send it to Fr. Sebastian/Gianna at [MCCbrothers@libero.it](mailto:MCCbrothers@libero.it)  
Also please send to Bob & Mary Dirgo at [bobdirgo@hotmail.com](mailto:bobdirgo@hotmail.com) so that you can receive future newsletters by email.

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