

# Preserve, Restore and Grow

*for the Greater Glory of God  
and the Salvation of Souls!*



NATIONAL SHRINE GROTTO  
MOUNT ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY  
1958-2018

# Letter from the Director

Mount Saint Mary's Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes is a National and Marian Shrine to which 400,000 pilgrims flock every year. This number continues to grow annually. It is in the state of Maryland, which has a long Catholic and Marian tradition in the United States. It is in the diocese of Baltimore, the first diocese of America. And it is in a great, prosperous country that has, as its Patroness, the Immaculate Conception.

This year, we are celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Grotto becoming a national shrine. Certainly for more than 60 years, Mary's comforting assistance has been available to you, me and hundreds of thousands of visitors. However, now more than ever, our families need the Mother of God. While reflecting on this anniversary, we recognize it is our mission to continue to grow awareness of Our Lady especially for our loved ones who are searching for peace of soul, healing and consolation during times of affliction.



# *Preserve, Restore and Grow...*

Therefore, we have embarked on a vision to preserve the serenity of these holy grounds and to nurture them as a place of prayer and consolation through restoration and growth.

I am grateful for your generosity and pray that you consider continuing to support this mission especially during these next few years. We invite you to become a special part of this endeavor. Please contact me so I may share with you more details.

Please pray for an increase in devotion to Mary. That pilgrims may continue to find healing, peace, hope, and love in this holy place!

Your sister in Christ,

Lori Stewart, Director  
MBA, Class 2011



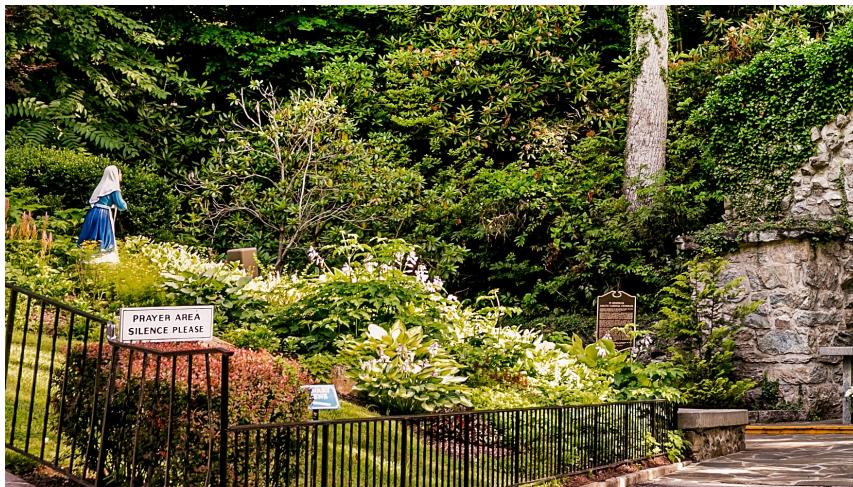
*for the Greater Glory of God...*

## Letter from the Chaplain

Fr. Ted Trinko and I arrived September 1, 2017 to Emmitsburg and, in a way, it seems that we arrived yesterday on account of how quickly the time has passed. But, on the other hand, it seems that we have already been here for years on account of what we have experienced and the graces we have received. We give thanks first of all to God and to Our Lady but also to Archbishop Lori, not only for allowing us to found our IVE Monastery “Mount St. Mary’s” in his archdiocese, but also for entrusting to us the chaplaincy of the National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes. *Deo Gratias!*

A few months ago, after having heard from Lori Stewart, National Shrine Grotto Director, regarding a restoration plan including different renovations on the holy grounds, I had the idea to recommend that she think and pray about doing something MORE...

Jesus said, “Francis Go Repair My House... Go, Rebuild My Church”. Although St. Francis understood these words in a very literal way and began the work of physically repairing the



# *...and the Salvation of Souls!*

structure of a small chapel, the Lord certainly had more in mind than utilizing Francis' building skills!

Like St. Francis of Assisi, we understand that JESUS (AND MARY) is calling us to Preserve, Restore, and Grow the Grotto. Primarily in a SPIRITUAL SENSE and then in a MATERIAL SENSE.

Who could deny that Mount Saint Mary's Grotto presents us with a great responsibility and a great challenge to do incredible things for the Greater Glory of God and the Salvation of Souls?

In the following pages, you will find more about our vision and you are most welcome to have part on it!

In Christ and Mary,

Fr. Daniel Mentesana, IVE  
Chaplain



# *Reasoning for a Future Vision*

It is not a coincidence that the National Shrine Grotto is located on a mountain and not in a valley, with the beautiful and gorgeous name of Mount St. Mary's. This mount reminds us of other mountains, such as the Mount of the Beatitudes, where Christ left us a summary of His teachings for the Christian life; Mount Tabor, where Jesus Christ was transfigured; Mount of Olives, where Christ sweat blood for us and was consoled by angels; and Mount Calvary, where Christ shed his Most Precious Blood for us.

Another important element to have in mind is that Mount St. Mary's Grotto is located on the CAMPUS of a 200 year-old **University** (with 2000 students enrolled) and **Seminary** (150 seminarians) that enjoys great academic prestige as well as a deeply rooted Catholic tradition in the United States. Mount St. Mary's has been the **cradle** of many American professionals, pastors, and bishops. It is also a place where great saints have lived, such as **St. Elizabeth Ann Seton** (first canonized, American Saint – foundress and patroness of the parochial



school system) and **Blessed Stanley Rother** (first beatified American priest and martyr).

It seems that, in order to understand better the mission of Mount St. Mary's and, as we said earlier, our "**responsibility and challenge,**" we cannot forget the **historic circumstances** in which we are living in this third millennium; especially with this being a first-world country. In this day and age, although there are many bright spots, there are not a few shadows that hang over our era. The principle reason for this is that man has forgotten and rejected God and the Natural Law. As Pope St. John Paul II said, it is a true **culture of death.** However, we know that Divine Providence, "disposes everything for the good of those God has chosen" and "where sin abounds, grace abounds more exceedingly". We are certain that in the end, the Immaculate Heart of Mary will triumph. Now, to do that, God and Our Lady call us to play our part. As St. Augustine said, "He who created you without you, will not save you without you." Moreover, it is appropriate to call to



# *Our Mission Today for Tomorrow*



mind the insistent requests and calls to conversion and reparation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. These calls were confirmed on different occasions by the Popes, as well as through revelations to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, the shepherd children of Fatima, and St. Faustina's visions of the Divine Mercy.

With what has been said, we cannot do otherwise than conclude by repeating that Mount St. Mary's presents us with a responsibility and challenge. Mount St. Mary's has been, is, and will continue to be:

- a **cradle** of greatness,
- a **lightning rod** that will hold back the divine wrath,
- a **magnet** that will attract graces from God,
- a **light** placed on a hill to illuminate,
- a **garden** that serves to console God,
- an **oasis** that calms the thirst and fatigue of the unfortunate; but, above all,
- Mount St. Mary's is a **heart** that beats in unison with the hearts of Jesus and Mary, who want to give life to their children.

With all these elements, would it be unusual that, in the plan of Divine Providence, Mount St. Mary's is called to be the **heart** of America? Whatever Our Lord in his Goodness and Wisdom has in mind for Mount St. Mary's, we (as the good Christians that we ought to be) believe that everything said up to here is ONE reason more to continue undertaking great things,

especially, with a great spirit. That is to say, with **magnanimity** and a great **confidence** in Divine Providence. ALL for the greater glory of God and for the salvation of souls.

Now then, how could all these previously mentioned beautiful ideas be realized concretely? That is, how can Mount St. Mary's be a cradle, a lightning rod, a magnet, a garden, an oasis, a heart? Certainly, this will be something long term and will require the help of many: consecrated souls and laity alike.

Based on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops regulation and Code of Canon Law (cc. 1230-1234) requirements for national shrines (worship, pilgrimage, evangelization, and reconciliation), **we can enumerate a long-term, comprehensive plan based on the following motivations:**



# *Motivations of our Future Vision*

Mount St. Mary's University is the governing owner of the National Shrine Grotto since its inception in 1806 when Father John Dubois, founder of Mount St. Mary's, built a church on the hill in the location where the bell tower of our Blessed Mother stands 120' tall. The Archdiocese of Baltimore prayerfully supports our efforts to uphold and nurture these holy grounds as a place of prayer and consolation through restoration and growth.

The development of the National Shrine Grotto began in the early 1960's by our beloved Monsignor Hugh Phillips. Since then, shrines and gardens have been added throughout the grounds; but nothing has been greatly renovated or restored except the sacristy, in spring 2014.

For many years, you have told us of the challenges. We have been listening and now we are developing a vision of solutions. These **motivations of our future vision** provide focused, detailed plans using God-given resources.



The hundreds of thousands of pilgrims who come every year to the National Shrine Grotto, knowingly or unknowingly attracted by Mary our Mother, should take away much more than a nice time in a beautiful place, some blessed water from the National Shrine Grotto, and a souvenir from the visitor center (this is what happens with many of them). We believe that it is the desire of the Most Holy Virgin Mary that all of them, along with her maternal affection, can participate and take away the fruits of that **blood and water** that flow from the heart of Christ (source of mercy) and then can bring others that flame of love that illuminates and burns.

For all of this we would need to enlarge and increase the current facilities, trusting that God will provide all that is necessary.



# Motivation 1: Pilgrimage

Increase **parking and handicap spaces** to meet the needs of the hundreds of thousands of existing pilgrims to the National Shrine Grotto and plan space for future visitor growth.

Make a new catechetical **pathway** to the Grotto cave which would present, with artistic representations: monuments and statues, the principle truths of our faith (such as the pillars of Catholic Doctrine, dogmas, etc.)

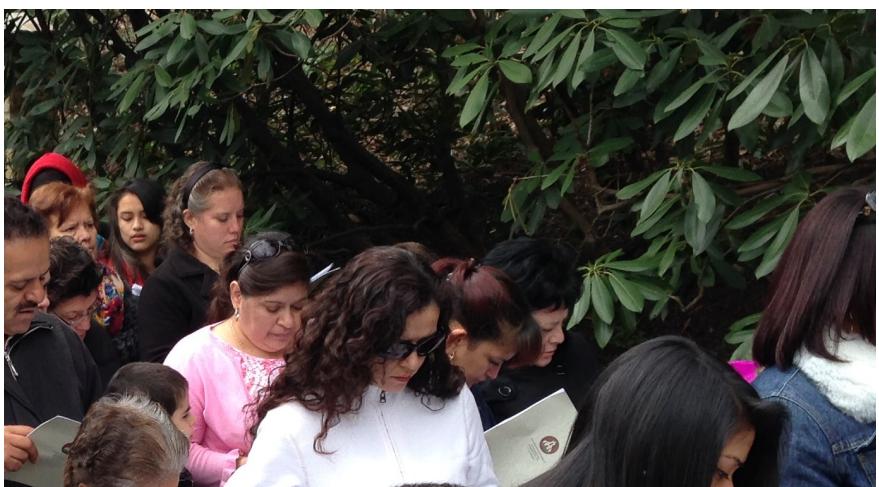
Construct a **dining location** where pilgrims would be able to relax and have some refreshments. We had thought that it could be designed in such a way so as to capture the familial intimacy sure to have been the atmosphere in the **Home of the Holy Family of Nazareth** and maybe to be known by this name as well. Who better than St. Joseph (spouse and father), Mary (virgin, spouse, and mother), and Jesus (the Divine Infant), could remind us about the values of life and family. Who could speak to us more eloquently than they about a household (**HOGAR** = material and spiritual fire) in which the whole family comes together?



## Motivation 2: Worship

Promote a greater and better worship of the Holy **Eucharist**. To do so, promote the four ends of every sacrifice (adoration, thanksgiving, **reparation**, and petition) in the Holy Mass, Holy Communion, and **Perpetual Adoration**. In the United States, there are 70 national shrines, 30 of them are Marian shrines, but none are recognized as Marian and Eucharistic as other great shrines in the world have been. For example, Lourdes in France, Fatima in Portugal, Loreto and Pompeii in Italy. We do well to remember that the Most Holy **Eucharist** is in the most precious fruit of the Virgin Mary, and vice-versa, the Virgin Mary is the first and most precious fruit of The Eucharist; The Heart of Jesus and Mary.

Convert the existing St. Mary's Chapel into a **Eucharistic Center**, a spiritual formation center to include a conference room for a spacious place for talks, conferences, retreats, etc., a museum to educate pilgrims of the wonderful graces of the Church such as the Shroud of Turin, Eucharistic Miracles and St. John Paul II's teachings.



Build a **new Church** (larger, nobler and in a better location) united to the Miller Family Visitors Center to meet the weekly, demanding need of worship space for the thousands of pilgrims who visit especially on weekends. Our current chapel, St. Mary's Chapel, seats approximately 350 people. The National Shrine Grotto celebrates Mass and offers the Holy Eucharist for an average of 500 people and more each week...

## Motivation 3: Evangelization

Encourage a greater and better devotion to the **Most Blessed Virgin Mary**. To do so, promote the consecration according to St. Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort.

Promote particular **Days of Prayer** for the following intentions: for the conversion of sinners and peace in the world; for priests and vocations; for the culture of life and families; for the poor and the sick; for children and youth; (for the unity of all Christians) etc.



Offer to the pilgrims brief **talks and presentations** with different multimedia about fundamental truths of our faith, methods of prayer according to the great Christian spirituality, reading of the Bible, etc. This could all be conducted in what is the current chapel which would be adapted for this purpose. In a second floor, a space for permanent exhibits (such as the Holy Shroud of Turin, Eucharistic miracles and others) could be arranged.

Offer **retreats and Spiritual Exercises** which are faithful to the perennial method of St. Ignatius of Loyola, as the Church indicates.

## Motivation 4: Reconciliation

Offer to pilgrims, along with **Mass** and **Confessions**, the chance to **pray** the rosary, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, the Stations of the Cross, and more. Educate the pilgrims on the means of deepening their prayer lives by catechizing them on the teachings of the Church. Include established methods of prayer such as lectio divina, meditation, and contemplation. Explore the communion of saints through the study of their lives particularly local saints.



# St. Joseph



To conclude, it is worth remembering that the house of the Holy Family in Nazareth was originally the house of St. Joseph to which Mary was taken after the Incarnation... **To St. Joseph, as Head of the Family, we entrust this project.**

This vision of future growth is not meant to be anything more than that: an idea of something which we believe could be done to give more glory to God and do more good for souls.

## Pray With Us to St. Joseph

St. Joseph, foster father of Jesus and chaste spouse of Mary, you passed your life in perfect fulfillment of duty. You supported the Holy Family of Nazareth with the work of your hands. Kindly protect the National Shrine Grotto pilgrims. You know our aspirations, our hardships, our hopes; and we turn to you to use our God-given resources to preserve, restore and grow these grounds for the benefit of the Church. You too have known trial and labor. But even amid the worries of material life, your soul was filled with deep peace and sang out in the true joy through intimacy with the Son of God entrusted to you, and with Mary, His tender Mother. Amen.

# *Ways to Give*

## **Prayer**

Our motivations and vision **must be grounded in prayer** so that we progress with a constant awareness of God's will for the National Shrine Grotto.

In prayer, we seek God's voice and allow God's word to penetrate our fear and resistance, so that we can hear what God wants us to know.

Please join us in prayer for the growth and restoration of the National Shrine Grotto so these holy grounds may be able to beat in unison with the hearts of Jesus and Mary, who want to give life to their children.

## **Volunteering**

You may think an hour or two of your time is not worth giving to Our Lady's shrine; however, a seemingly small act of generosity can grow into something far beyond what we could ever ask or imagine (see Eph. 3:20).

## **Pledging**

You may make a pledge and pay in monthly installments. A monthly reminder will be sent for the duration of your pledge period unless you are fulfilling your pledge via automatic credit card deductions.

## **One-time Gift**

An outright gift can be made at any time during the appeal.

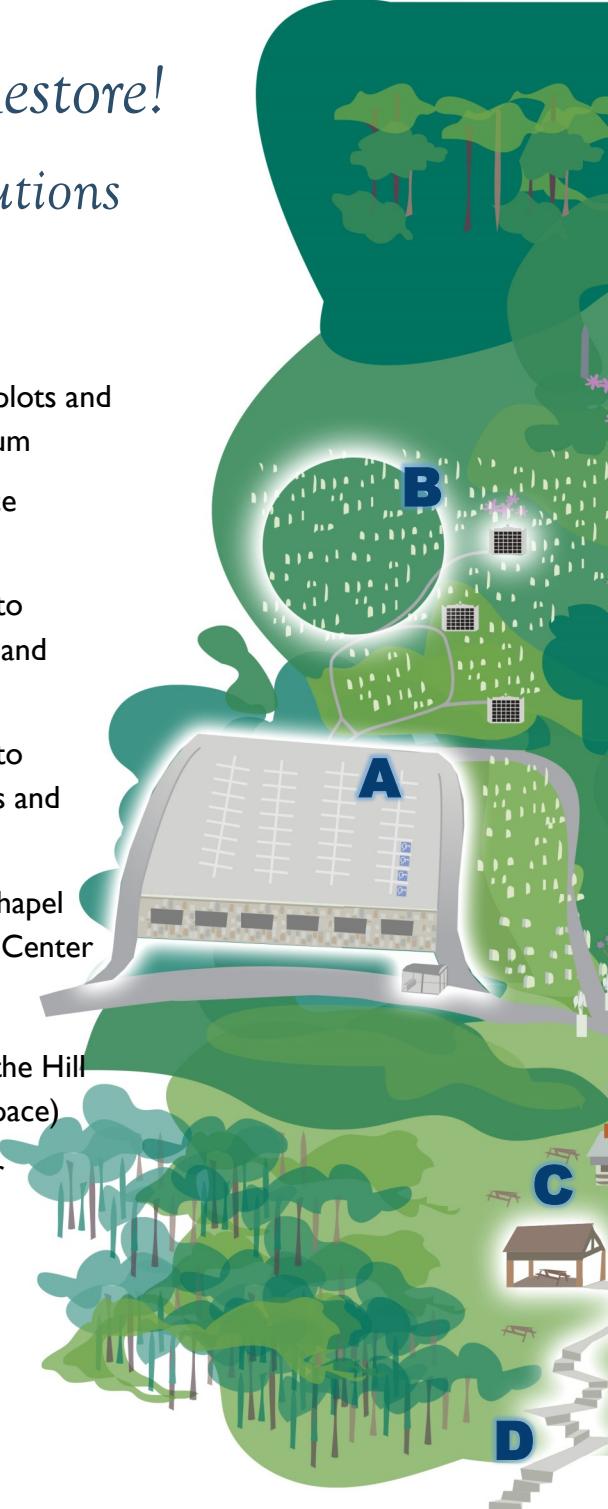
## **Online Giving**

To make an online gift or pledge, please visit our online donation page at [www.nsgrotto.org/grow-and-restore.html](http://www.nsgrotto.org/grow-and-restore.html)

# *Grow and Restore!*

## *A Map of Solutions*

- A. Additional parking  
(space, garage)
- B. Additional cemetery plots and  
cremation columbarium
- C. Additional picnic space  
(pavilion)
- D. Establish easy access to  
Seminary (with stairs and  
landings)
- E. Establish easy access to  
University (with stairs and  
landings)
- F. Convert St. Mary's Chapel  
into Spiritual Retreat Center
- G. Additional pathway
- H. Erect the Chapel on the Hill  
(additional worship space)
- I. Restore amphitheater
- J. Additional Grotto  
Cave seating
- K. Additional Grotto  
Cave candles





National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes, April 2018 | these plans are aspirational and lay out a vision for the future.



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