



The Fatima Center

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J.M.J.

May 2015
Month of the Blessed Virgin

Dear Friend of Our Lady,

On the evening of April 29, 2015 Father Nicholas Gruner passed away suddenly and unexpectedly while still at work at The Fatima Center.

Please accept my sincerest condolences. His death is a terrible loss not only for you and all Our Lady's apostolate volunteers, supporters and staff, but for the Church and for the world.

Father Gruner was a humble, pious and charitable priest who lived a simple life. He had true Catholic zeal for God's glory and honor, zeal for spreading the full Fatima Message including devotion to Our Lady's Immaculate Heart, zeal for Our Lady's Triumph, and zeal for the salvation of souls.

He was a leader, a mentor, and a friend to many.

For his funeral, a Requiem High Mass was planned, but Providence intervened and Father Gruner's Requiem High Mass was elevated to a rarely seen Pontifical High Mass.

The Pontifical High Mass, attended by about 650 people, was absolutely beautiful and can be seen on our web site, www.fatima.org.

When watching the Mass you will see a large volume of roses around the statues of the Sacred Heart, the Pilgrim Virgin statue, and the statue of Saint Joseph.

Those roses were donated by a gentleman who arrived at the funeral home late in the afternoon the day before the funeral. He is a supporter of The Fatima Center and said that the place of business he works for had ordered too many for Mother's Day and was donating them for Father. There were between 1,000 and 1,500 roses donated.

Following the Pontifical High Mass and burial on May 9 there was a light luncheon and after the luncheon family members, a few

Fatima Center staff, writers, etc. gave eulogies about Father.

The last person to give a eulogy was John Vennari, editor of *Catholic Family News* and a long-time friend of Father Gruner's and of The Fatima Center.

John compared Father's work to that of Saint Catherine of Siena. Here is what John conveyed (some, but not all, is an exact quote. Content has not been changed except to add a few comments in parenthesis):

"Saint Catherine of Sienna lived in the 1300s (14th Century). She lived through a tumultuous time in the Church - the time of the great Western Schism when the papacy had moved to Avignon, France.

"She worked with all her strength to bring the popes (that is, successive popes since the papacy in Avignon lasted for more than 60 years) back to Rome where they belonged. And she was wonderful because she would write to the popes and say (commanded), 'act like a man and do your duty'. She was very strong that way.

"After she succeeded in convincing Pope Gregory XI to move back to Rome, a new pope was elected (since Pope Gregory died not long after returning to Rome). A faction of Cardinals went back to France and they elected another pope, so there was one pope in Rome and another in Avignon.

"Saint Catherine was blamed for the problem of two popes, having been told 'at least we only had one pope in Avignon before you interfered and now we have two'.

"But she worked for the cause of restoring the confusion in the Church regarding the papacy and she died before she saw the fulfillment, which did not come for a number of decades after she died. There was even a third man claiming to be pope; the Church was in a mess with many dioceses having two bishops (one under the Pope in Rome and one under the pope in Avignon).

"In the end the work Saint Catherine started was fulfilled in 1417 when through a series of events the Church ended up with one Pope in Rome and the Western Schism came to an end.

"Even though Saint Catherine didn't live to see the fulfillment of her work, the work she started came to fruition.

"Her feast day is April 30. Father Gruner died on the vigil of her feast day at approximately 7:00 pm, but the actual

date that Saint Catherine died was April 29, the same date as Father Gruner.

"That gives me (us) hope that the work of promoting the full Fatima Message will continue, that we will continue doing the work that needs to be done, and it is a privilege to be part of it. And we thank Father Gruner for all that he has done in promoting the Fatima Message like no man has ever done before."

Evidently, the enemies of this apostolate and of the Fatima Message also think this work may continue as John expressed. The last letter I sent to our volunteers, mailed about a week before Father's death, was defending his reputation from enemies within the Church.

With the impending threat of World War III, the increasing modernist agenda of Pope Francis and others in the Church, as well as so many other problems in the world etc., many in the last two years have turned to Our Lady's Apostolate for guidance and started paying more attention to the Fatima Message.

Knowing that world and Church events would result in this happening, the enemies within the Church had stepped up their attacks with false accusations about Father's priestly status in an attempt to keep people from listening to Father Gruner and to the Fatima Message.

I assumed that the timing of my last letter was off and that there was no longer a need to defend Father's reputation since no one would bother making false verbal accusations after his death.

But I was wrong! The enemies within the Church apparently realized we intend to continue promoting the full Fatima Message while remaining true to the perennial teachings of the One True Church established by Our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore even now after Father's death, the malicious and false statements about Father continue.

Make no mistake, the Board of Directors and the staff of The Fatima Center have every intention of carrying on this soul-saving work of Our Lady's Apostolate.

It is a good sign, when the enemies of Our Lord and Our Lady feel the need to continue their attacks. It means we are on the right side and doing the will of Heaven.

So, let us continue this battle together by doing what Our Lady of Fatima asked each and every one of us to do, and by promoting Her Fatima Message, reaching out to others so they too

can do as She asked at Fatima and work toward their salvation.

Let us thank God for Father Gruner and the work he did, the example he set, the path he mapped out as a guide for us to continue following for as long as Heaven will allow.

As Father Gruner understood and set the example, it is the duty of all Catholics not only to work for our own salvation but to do battle for the salvation of other souls as well.

It is precisely what Our Lady of Fatima reminded us in Her Message when She asked every Catholic to pray the Rosary daily and offer sacrifices for sinners.

Pope Pius XII, a very Marian pope, said the number of souls saved in the world is directly dependent on the prayers and sacrifices of Catholics in the state of grace.

"Not To Worry, Be of Good Heart, Be at Peace"

Within hours of Father's death, The Fatima Center received, and still continues to receive phone calls, emails and postal mail from bishops, priests, and supporters throughout the world extending condolences and expressing sadness at such an unexpected loss and concern about the continuation of his work.

Despite our deep sadness over his loss, we have been reminded by many that Father can do more from Heaven (or Purgatory) than when here on earth.

So, in the words Father Gruner spoke often, "Not to worry, be of good heart, be at peace"!

Personally, I have never known someone so steadfast in purpose as Father Gruner. His faith in Our Lord and Our Lady was so strong that no matter what happened, no matter how bad the malicious attacks against the work of Our Lady's apostolate or against Father's reputation, he let nothing get in the way or distract him from promoting Our Lady's Fatima Message.

Together then let us put on our armor (the Brown Scapular and Our Lady's Rosary), go into battle and finish this spiritual war for the salvation of souls, the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart and the Social Reign of Christ the King!

Please keep this apostolate and the repose of Father Gruner's soul in your daily prayers and continue to help with the work of spreading the Fatima Message.

I have enclosed a memorial card with a prayer to Our Lady of Fatima on the back. This prayer was said daily by Father Gruner

after he offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The picture on the front is a painting done by a supporter and sent to Father as a gift a number of years ago.

For more copies of this memorial card, please return the enclosed reply form or call us at 1-800-845-3047.

As you know, Father spent 37 of his nearly 39 years as a priest promoting the Fatima Message and in that time he continually petitioned successive popes to do the Consecration of Russia as requested by Heaven.

He looked for and utilized many different means of reaching the popes and appealing to them for this request.

In 2008, Father wrote and published the booklet, *Only Way to World Peace*, which he referred to as the Consecration booklet.

He worked hard and long on that booklet, which he intended as a special issue of *The Fatima Crusader* dedicated specifically to that part of Our Lady's Message pertaining to the Consecration of Russia to Her Immaculate Heart.

Enclosed is a copy of this booklet which I hope you will take time to read and refresh your memory of why getting this done is so important. As we have established in the past, much of what Father Gruner and The Fatima Center published in years past, has become even more significant years later in the present time.

I believe you will find that is the case with this booklet, *Only Way to World Peace* or the Consecration booklet.

For more copies to pass on to others, please return the enclosed reply form or call us at 1-800-845-3047.

In the Sacred and Immaculate Hearts,


Joanna Swords

P.S. We are planning to have the Pontifical High Mass available for our supporters on DVD for those who do not have the Internet. Watch for the availability of the DVD in the mail from The Fatima Center in the coming months.

P.P.S. The Fatima Center is still continuing with plans for the conference in Washington, DC, September 22-24, 2015 during the time that Pope Francis will be in Washington addressing Congress.