

# *Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary*

7 October 2023

Dear Members of the Marian Catechist Apostolate,

The Servant of God Father John A. Hardon, S.J., placed the Marian Catechist Apostolate under the spiritual patronage of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Star of the New Evangelization. Evangelization and catechesis are, in fact, at the heart of the apparitions and message of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Following the guidance of the Virgin Mother of God, Our Lady of Guadalupe, and invoking daily her intercession, her shrine at La Crosse, Wisconsin, from its very first days, has striven, in a particular way, to be a font of evangelization and catechesis for pilgrims. Through pilgrimage, many receive the gift of faith, and the devout faithful come to an ever-deeper knowledge of Christ our Savior and to a more ardent love of Him, which is the goal of all evangelization and catechesis. Catechetical facilities, including a retreat house, have always been part of the plans for the Shrine.

In accord with the express wish of the Servant of God Father Hardon, the Shrine is the home of the Marian Catechist Apostolate. In the early stages of planning, it was thought that the Marian Catechist Apostolate Center would be located in the same structure of what will be the Saint Juan Diego Retreat House. Today, however, over 20 years after the Shrine's groundbreaking in 2001, and after hundreds of thousands of pilgrims have visited the Shrine, it has become apparent that the Catechetical Center and the Retreat House ought to be in two separate buildings, even though their respective missions are intimately intertwined. The Saint Juan Diego Retreat House, for example, will include a large conference/dining room and two smaller conference rooms which will serve the Marian Catechist Apostolate, while the Marian Catechist Bookstore already serves all pilgrims and will provide an especially important service to those who are staying at the Retreat House.

Not being able to build, at once, the Saint Juan Diego Retreat House and the Marian Catechist Apostolate Center – with the Archive of the Servant of God Father Hardon – , the work will begin with the building of the Retreat House. With the help of Our Lady of Guadalupe and her saintly messenger, Saint Juan Diego, I want to help pilgrims to the Shrine to have the fullest encounter possible with Our Lord, an encounter which will sustain them as they return to their homes, work and other activities. Therefore, in a special way, I am dedicating myself to the realization of the Retreat House to be built alongside the Shrine Church, so that pilgrims may regularly spend several days with Our Lord here, especially at the most important or critical times in their lives. As I have mentioned, the Retreat House will provide important services to the Marian Catechist Apostolate. Subsequently, God willing and providing, the work on the building of the Marian Catechist Apostolate Center can be undertaken.

I write to ask you to renew your membership in the Marian Catechist Apostolate. Enclosed you will find the membership renewal form. I encourage you to fill it out today and return the renewal form with the annual fee to the Marian Catechist International Office at the address listed on this letterhead.

In asking you to renew your membership in the Marian Catechist Apostolate, I also ask you to make a donation to help the Apostolate meet its many financial obligations. Your assistance with the daily operation of this critical apostolate of catechesis is both needed and very much appreciated.

As the Marian Catechist Apostolate becomes more known, there is the need to expand its mission. The Apostolate, for example, is expanding its service to inmates of the prison system, with several institutions around the country participating in educating these souls, bringing many into a closer relationship with Our Lord. Their testimonies are very humbling, and your generosity will greatly aid this important ministry.



As you may be aware, the Real Presence Eucharistic Education and Adoration Association – with its particular work of promoting and providing the Vatican International Exhibition of the Eucharistic Miracles of the World, first developed by Blessed Carlo Acutis, – another of the apostolates founded by the Servant of God Father Hardon, is now included in the operation of the Marian Catechist Apostolate. In asking the Marian Catechist Apostolate to carry on the apostolate of the Real Presence Association, I am carrying forward the legacy of Father Hardon into the future, as I promised to him before his death on December 30, 2000.

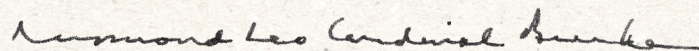
The work entrusted to us by Father Hardon can only be accomplished with the support of generous donors like you. The Marian Catechist Apostolate recently received a generous donation of \$20,000 but needs to raise \$100,000 to carry out effectively its mission which now includes the mission of the Real Presence Association. Therefore, in renewing your membership, I ask you, if possible, to make a gift toward the works of the Apostolate. If a gift is not possible, at this time, your prayer for God's blessing upon the works of the Apostolate remains most important.

I thank you, in advance, for whatever consideration you give to my request. Please allow me also to express my deepest gratitude to you for all that you do in and for the Marian Catechist Apostolate, and for the prayers faithfully offered for my intentions. I encourage you to pray the Holy Rosary as often as you can – every day, if possible, – and to participate in the Holy Mass frequently and in the Eucharistic devotions by which we come to a more profound knowledge and love of Our Lord Jesus, and of His Real Presence in the Most Blessed Sacrament. Maintaining your spiritual life in this way is the essential foundation of our following of Christ and, therefore, of our participation in great work of the Marian Catechist Apostolate.

Be assured of my daily prayers for you, for your home, and for all your labors, especially your labors in service of the Marian Catechist Apostolate.

Invoking God's blessing upon you and your family, I remain

Yours devotedly in the Sacred Heart of Jesus and  
in the Immaculate Heart of Mary,  
and in the Purest Heart of Saint Joseph



Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke  
Episcopal Moderator and International Director  
of the Marian Catechist Apostolate

