



## “Where is my Galilee?”

The Gospel of the resurrection of Jesus Christ begins with the journey of the women to the tomb at dawn on the day after the Sabbath. They go to the tomb to honour the body of the Lord, but they find it open and empty. A mighty angel says to them: “Do not be afraid!” (Mt 28:5) and orders them to go and tell the disciples: “He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee” (v. 7). The women quickly depart and on the way Jesus himself meets them and says: “Do not fear; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me” (v. 10). “Do not be afraid”, “do not fear”: these are words that encourage us to open our hearts to receive the message. After the death of the Master, the disciples had scattered; their faith had been utterly shaken, everything seemed over, all their certainties had crumbled and their hopes had died. But now that message of the women, incredible as it was, came to them like a ray of light in the darkness. The news spread: Jesus is risen as he said. And then there was his command to go to Galilee; the women had heard it twice, first from the angel and then from Jesus himself: “Let them go to Galilee; there they will see me”. “Do not fear” and “go to Galilee”.

Galilee is the place where they were first called, where everything began! To return there, to return to the place where they were originally called. Jesus had walked along the shores of the lake as the fishermen were casting their nets. He had called them, and they left everything and followed him (cf. Mt 4:18-22).



To return to Galilee means to re-read everything on the basis of the cross and its victory, fearlessly: “do not be afraid”. To re-read everything – Jesus’ preaching, his miracles, the new community, the excitement and the defections, even the betrayal – to re-read everything starting from the end, which is a new beginning, from this supreme act of love.

For each of us, too, there is a “Galilee” at the origin of our journey with Jesus. “To go to Galilee” means something beautiful, it means rediscovering our baptism as a living fountainhead, drawing new energy from the sources of our faith and our Christian experience. To return to Galilee means above all to return to that blazing light with which God’s grace touched me at the start of the journey. From that flame I can light a fire for today and every day, and bring heat and light to my brothers and sisters. That flame ignites a humble joy, a joy which sorrow and distress cannot dismay, a good, gentle joy.

In the life of every Christian, after baptism there is also another “Galilee”, a more existential “Galilee”: the experience of a personal encounter with Jesus Christ who called me to follow him and to share in his mission. In this sense, returning to Galilee means treasuring in my heart the living memory of that call, when Jesus passed my way, gazed at me with mercy and asked me to follow him. To return there means reviving the memory of that moment when his eyes met mine, the moment when he made me realize that he loved me.

Today, tonight, each of us can ask: What is my Galilee? I need to remind myself, to go back and remember. Where is my Galilee? Do I remember it? Have I forgotten it? Seek and you will find it! There the Lord is waiting for you. Have I gone off on roads and paths which made me forget it? Lord, help me: tell me what my Galilee is; for you know that I want to return there to encounter you and to let myself be embraced by your mercy. Do not be afraid, do not fear, return to Galilee!

The Gospel is very clear: we need to go back there, to see Jesus risen, and to become witnesses of his resurrection. This is not to go back in time; it is not a kind of nostalgia. It is returning to our first love, in order to receive the fire which Jesus has kindled in the world and to bring that fire to all people, to the very ends of the earth. Go back to Galilee, without fear!

“Galilee of the Gentiles” (Mt 4:15; Is 8:23)! Horizon of the Risen Lord, horizon of the Church; intense desire of encounter... Let us be on our way!

***-Pope Francis***



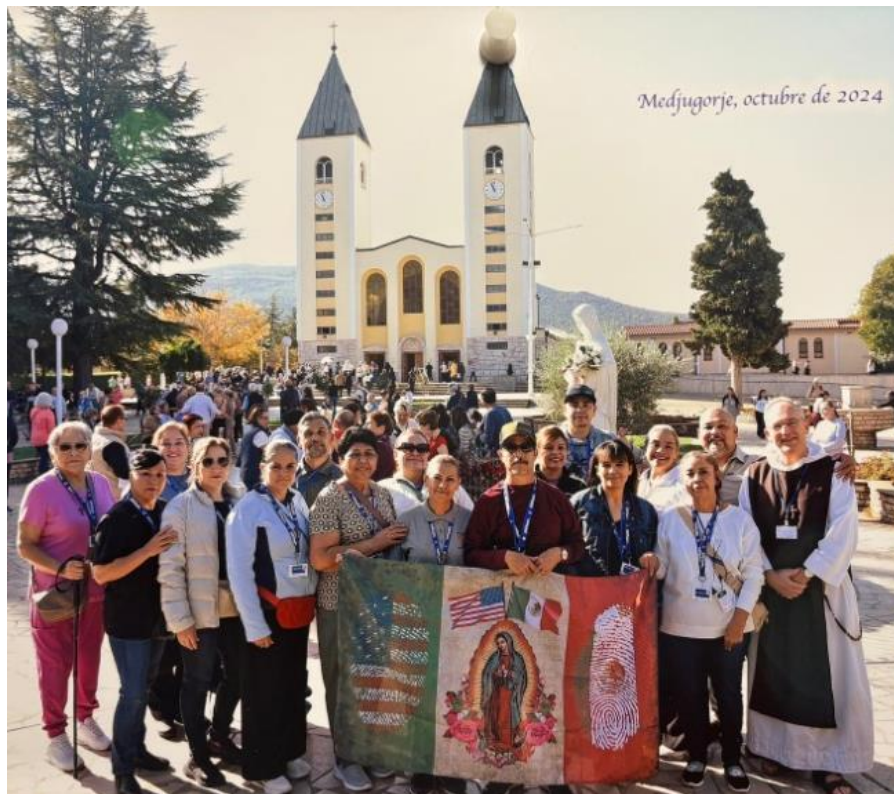
## St Catherine of Siena's Parish pilgrimage in Europe!



Who can believe it? Faithful Spanish speaking parishioners came and spoke to me in 2023 letting me know they wanted to go to the Holy Land to walk in Jesus' footsteps. Everything was organized, the flight scheduled Oct 7<sup>th</sup> 2023, our suitcases ready and on the point of driving to D.I.A ...when the tragedy hit. One year later in Oct. 2024, the same group of 17 parishioners were on the plane flying this time to... Europe and crossing for the first time the Atlantic Sea to reach the Old Continent! It was a beautiful pilgrimage towards the Eternal City, Rome, where Peter and Paul, witnessed their love for Jesus to the point of shedding their blood. The encounter with the successor of Peter was a high point of the journey as was the prayer on the tomb of the two columns of the Church.

Rome was preceded by 3 days in Lourdes to encounter the one who introduced herself to Bernadette as "the Immaculate Conception" in 1858, and followed by 3 days in Medjugorje (Bosnia-Herzegovina) to encounter the Queen of Peace who is still calling the world to conversion for the last time since ... June 24<sup>th</sup> 1981!

**-Fr. Luc-Marie Vaillant**



## McKenna and Colin Testimony



Colin, a Denver native, met the Community of the Beatitudes through Saint Catherine of Siena parish in 2020. McKenna first encountered the Beatitudes while attending Benedictine College, serving first as a summer intern in 2021 and eventually committing to a year-long internship after her college graduation. Colin and McKenna first met in 2022 while McKenna was serving with Beatitudes Missions as a missionary intern. They got to know each other more after taking a year-long commitment to the Disciples of the Lamb. They went on their first date during the Beatitudes World Youth Day pilgrimage to Lisbon, Portugal in 2023. They were engaged in January, and plan to get married in September.

**Colin:** "For me, the Community has been the principal guide in my second conversion since entering the Church in 2017. The Community has given me a template for living an expression of the faith that is both charismatic and joyful yet deeply rooted in the truth of the Church, the liturgy, and the wisdom of the saints. I experienced a spiritual home here where I could learn of the love God has for me. The Beatitudes has helped me form my vision for spirituality that I want to implement in my future marriage and family life."

**McKenna:** "For the past three and a half years, the Community has been a source of spiritual formation, mentorship, and friendship in my life. During my time as a missionary intern, I was surrounded by spiritual mentors in the Denver house and immersed in the rhythm of Community life. It was deeply transformative for me to encounter the love of God through the Community, further rooting me in my faith as I stepped into life after college. The Beatitudes showed me how to live my faith freely and authentically, teaching me how to love God and others in the unique way that God intended for me."

**Both of us:** "We both feel that we have a spiritual home at Saint Catherine's where we've been bolstered by the Disciples of the Lamb formation. Our relationship has been mentored and nurtured by many Community members, and we have a desire to do marriage prep through the Community. In different ways, we see how the Beatitudes has formed us for the sacrament of marriage, and that God has truly worked through each of the Community members to strengthen our relationship on the foundation of Jesus Christ."



## A Friend of the Lamb, Marie Possel

I became a Friend of the Lamb last September 14th.

My first encounter with the Community of the Beatitudes occurred in 2002 when I attended a Rose Petal evening at St. John the Baptist. My prayers through St. Therese's intercession were answered the following summer when my brother Larry received a kidney donation which enabled him to live another nine years. The spirituality of St. Therese and St. Teresa of Avila and the Carmelites was compelling and was a focus of my prayer life.

In August of 2005 I happened to attend a mission at St. Catherine of Siena. It seemed the Community of Beatitudes was beckoning. It was at this time that I met a lady who became a dear friend. The parish hoped to build an outside

grotto and my new friend and I were happy to submit our petitions and donations in order that this grotto dedicated to our Blessed Mother could become a reality.

Several years later, while living in downtown Denver, I began attending Mass at St. Catherine's and eventually became a parishioner. On a couple of occasions on Saturday mornings, Kelsey invited me to join in praying the morning prayers with the community. It was a beautiful experience for me.

During the pandemic, I was very moved and impressed when weekend outside Masses resumed. The ingenuity of the parish leaders allowed parishioners to once again receive Jesus in the Eucharist and I felt so very blessed. Adoration was available in the church during this time and I was able to complete a weekly Holy Hour. After the hour of Adoration, I was able to prayerfully observe the community singing Vespers. I recorded a couple of these sessions which were very consoling a year later when I faced the most difficult crisis of my life.

In 1994 I completed the St. Louis Marie de Montfort thirty-three day consecration to our Blessed Mother, the Spouse of the Holy Spirit, on the feast of the Annunciation and have renewed it several times since then. Jesus has sustained me and blessed me abundantly since then. He has also blessed me with an unexpected cross, which I willingly take up each day.

It is a privilege and an honor to have been asked to consider becoming a Friend of the Lamb.



***-Marie Possel***

## Mission in Alaska

On the 13th of December, Sister Magdalit and I flew to Juneau, Alaska to run an Advent retreat day. We had been invited by Jo, a missionary lay person in charge of the St Therese of Lisieux sanctuary. After a good flight, we arrived by night, welcomed at the airport by a big white stuffed bear, and by our host. The next day we gathered with around 20 people (a good number for the place) of all ages, in St Paul, Juneau.

The schedule of the day was pretty packed, with morning prayer and two teachings in the morning. People were very focused and prayerful which was really nice. Sr Magdalit spoke about the Virgin Mary as a model for our spiritual life and sister Deborah, on how God acts in Old and New Testament figures. We all shared a delicious lunch prepared by local women. After conversing with some retreatants we had a bit of free time.

Two other teachings were given in the afternoon; we prayed a rosary and we ended the day with a beautiful Mass, celebrated by the parish priest, a very nice former father of a family, who became a priest after his widowhood. The next day was dedicated to free time and a visit to the glacier and the shrine. The bishop who founded it, was in charge of St. Therese of Lisieux's canonization process in Rome. After St Thérèse was proclaimed a saint, he was sent to Alaska. He arrived with a first-class relic and founded this wonderful shrine.

***-Sr. Deborah***





## My stay in America

Many things happen on the road of our life. Some of them we can perceive as ordinary, others as extraordinary. It all depends on our point of view. For a businessman who regularly crosses the Atlantic between Europe and America, such a trip can appear as an ordinary thing. Once I met a relatively rich lady in France who told me that she was getting ready to go to Thailand, just to visit some commonly known places.

“For me,” she said, “visiting Thailand is like visiting a village in the neighborhood.” However, for me, going to the USA was more of a Marco Polo adventure rather than a visit to a neighboring village. Since I live in Israel, a country eternally tormented by war, this trip also borne the weight of this terrible reality. I had to face a number of problems to leave and return to this country. Despite the hassles, Divine Providence looked after me! The fact that I had to leave Frankfurt on the day of Saint Francis of Assisi made me understand that this extraordinary opportunity to go to the United States to learn some English was not my due, but a grace in no way deserved. The Lord granted me this trip for a very specific purpose: to give me a good start in a language I need for my presence in Israel.

At the end of my stay I went to preach a spiritual retreat in a Polish parish in Seattle. I am very grateful to my brothers and sisters in Denver for having welcomed me for this time of about three months. I rejoice in the privilege of having Caroline and Suzanne as my English teachers. These two excellent teachers knew how to adapt well to my very modest vocabulary and with kindness and patience they were able to carry on simple as well as long dialogues with me. I always admired people who knew how to share their knowledge in a friendly and intelligent way! In addition, they showed me Denver and gave some explanations concerning American life and institutions. So neither Halloween nor Thanksgiving Day nor even presidential elections were completely foreign events to me. I will always have a warm memory of the sacristan in the parish of Saint Catherine of Siene, who introduced me to “Mother Cabrini Shrine” and the beauty of the Denver mountain region. Finally I can say “Thank You Lord and God Bless America!”



***-Father Thomas Przeczewski***

## SEEK Conference



I was blessed to attend my second SEEK Conference this year, this time with Beatitudes Missions. It was neat for me since it was at last year's SEEK that I first met the Community of the Beatitudes! There, the Holy Spirit led Sarah Beth (Intern 23-24) and I to the same row at one of the breakout sessions. She invited me to join her and some other pilgrims from past Beatitudes Missions experiences to come pray evening prayer. I joined, and this encounter eventually led to me become an intern myself. One of the most special parts of this year's SEEK experience for me was getting to invite others to join in praying morning and evening prayer with the Community, just as I

had been invited! What a gift to see the Holy Spirit lead, creating full-circle moments like this one!

*-Joy, Beatitudes Missions Intern*



### What?

Come Holy Spirit and set our hearts on fire!

Talks, Fraternal Life, Liturgy, Adoration, Shabbat, Pentecost Vigil, services, opportunity for spiritual direction...

The perfect mix to open your heart to the fire of the Spirit and let yourself be deeply renewed!

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