



## Soldiers of Christ

Newsletter of the  
Isolated Franciscan Tertiaries  
of the OFM Province of the  
Immaculate Conception

MAY 2024

Sandy Baden, TOF, Editor

Vol. 4, Issue 5

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### THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

Feast day: May 12, 2024



**“So then the Lord Jesus, after he spoke to them, was taken into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God. But they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word through accompany signs.” (Mark 16: 19-20)**

*In the village of Bethany at the traditional site of the ascension of the “Mount of Olives,” our Lord ascended into heaven to sit at the right hand of God. Sometimes it seems this feast day is neglected a little in its importance, but it signifies the glory of our Lord when His stay on earth is over. Our Lord Jesus Christ, body and soul, returns to the Father.*

*We, here on earth, are left to marvel at His resurrection and ascension into heaven. Our Lord is gone physically, but remains with us in spirit, showing us His triumph over our sin He had taken upon Himself. He is with us in the Holy Eucharist, he gives us grace in His presence, in His love, in His joy, and with the forgiveness of our sins.*

*How can we live up to this magnificence of our Lord’s ascension into heaven? We give our glory to God in our prayer, remain obedient to the holy Catholic Church, and to our station in life as Tertiaries. We thank our Lord for his suffering and passion on the cross. As we journey through our life, we carry our own cross towards perfection, and will follow our Lord Jesus Christ into heaven on the last day.*

*The Apostles now have a mission, but first must wait for the holy Spirit as Jesus had promised. “Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Mt. 28: 16-20)*

Sandy Baden, TOF 1

**SOLEMNITY OF PENTECOST**  
**Feast Day: May 19, 2024**



We commemorate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles as they were gathered in prayer with Mary, the Mother of God. **“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came down from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2: 1-4)**

On a Sunday, the 50th day of Easter, is the beginning of the Church’s mission to the world and is the birthday of the Church. It is the day we wear **red** to remind us of the fiery tongues which rested on the heads of the Apostles, and the Blessed Mother as they received the Holy Spirit.

Thinking about a mighty wind that filled the house. Would that not bring panic as to what was happening at that moment? Imagine the emotion if you had been there with the Apostles. God had entered in the form of the Holy Spirit to bring gifts of grace, wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. Joy fills our hearts and lights the soul on fire for the love of God. Let us be joyful on this coming day of Pentecost and keep our hearts on fire for the love of God and our holy Catholic Church.

**Sandy Baden, TOF**



**POPE BENEDICT XVI, “MARIAN THOUGHTS”**  
**THE UPPER ROOM**

*In the Upper Room the Apostles did not know what awaited them. They were afraid and worried about their own future. Then continued to marvel about their own future. They continued to marvel at the death and Resurrection of Jesus and were in anguish at being left on their own after His Ascension into heaven. Mary, “she who believed in the fulfillment of the Lord’s words,” (cf. Lk 1:45), assiduous in prayer alongside the Apostles, taught perseverance in the faith.*

*By her own attitude she convinced them that the Holy Spirit, in His wisdom, knew well the path on which He was leading them, and that consequently they could place their confidence in God, giving themselves to Him unreservedly, with their talents, their limitations, and their future.*

**Address, May 26, 2006**

**THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**  
**May 31, 2024**



**“During those days Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, Elizabeth filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, “Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at that moment of the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy, Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.” (Luke 1:39-45)**

**Picture bought in Italy...(Faith Christian Center)**

*The thought that comes to some of you may be, this looks like the same article in the May issue of the Soldiers of Christ Newsletter, May 2022. The picture above bears repeating and the bible verse in Scripture will not change. However, we will take this article in a different direction than 2022.*

*The beauty of the picture above is striking and says so many things of the visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and her cousin Elizabeth. The joy and wonder of our Lord when John the Baptist is sanctified in Elizabeth’s womb. What a moment to capture in our hearts and to know the fulfillment of Scripture had happened.*

*The Blessed Mother teaches us of her obedience to God and her charity to Elizabeth which brings us to understand how we should take these things into our own hearts. Both the Blessed Virgin Mary and Elizabeth were obedient to our Lord and Mary’s overwhelming charity to help Elizabeth in her old age without hesitation. The meeting itself had to happen to sanctify John the Baptist in the womb, the forerunner to Christ.*

*Mary, being as young as she was, must have learned many things from Elizabeth as they shared their joy in the Lord. As Mary greets Elizabeth we are given one of the most revealing prayers to be shared through every generation, The Canticle of Mary.” We pray the Canticle almost every night when we pray evening prayer of the Office and repeat the Magnificent, (Lk 1: 46-55)*

*The Magnificat is considered as one of the most earliest Marian hymns, which can be recited or sung. Elizabeth praises Mary for her charity, at their greeting, and Mary responds with the Cantic of Mary. Our Blessed Mother gives praise to God from the depth of her heart for all the great things our Lord has done for her. Mary declares, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord..." In her silence in the gospels, she emanates the glory of God and praises Him for His goodness. In Mary's humility she recognizes our Lord as her savior because, "He has looked with favor on His lowly servant," as she carries Him in her womb.*

*Mary gives us an insight to the depth of her faith and how blessed she is in God's love, and she rejoices in praise and thanksgiving knowing she will be called blessed in every generation. Mary then recites the many things God has done throughout the ages as she was well versed in the Scriptures.*

*The Blessed Virgin Mary rejoices in our Lord in her prayer, praising and magnifying the glory of God that was given to her as the Mother of God. We glorify the Lord as we repeat the song of Mary, and with Mary magnify our lowliness before our Lord. Praise, honor, glory, and obedience to God and the Holy Catholic Church, should be our prayer along with Mary as we pray the Magnificat. Let us always honor Mary as the Mother of God and pray for her intercession through her Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Sandy Baden, TOF*

### **CANTICLE OF MARY (Luke 1:46-55)**

***My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my savior for he has  
looked with favor on his lowly servant.***

***From this day all generations will call me  
blessed: the almighty has done great things  
for me, and holy is his Name.***

***He has mercy on those who fear him in every  
generation.***

***He has shown the strength of his arm, he has  
scattered the proud in their conceit.***

***He has cast down the mighty from their  
thrones, and has lifted up the lowly.***

***He has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich he has sent away empty.***

***He has come to the help of his  
servant Israel for he has  
remembered his promise of  
mercy, the promise he made to  
our fathers, and Abraham and  
his children for ever.***

***Glory to the Father and to the  
Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it  
was in the beginning, is now,  
and will be for ever. Amen.***

## ST. LOUIS IX MEN'S TOF PRAYER GROUP



*We are forming a men's prayer group within our Tertiary community.*

*The St. Louis IX TOF Men's Prayer Group, named after St. Louis IX, a Franciscan Tertiary and co-Patron Saint of the Third Order of St. Francis, will meet via Zoom on the last Tuesday of each month at 8:00 PM Eastern Time. We will recite Compline using the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary and will be praying in Latin, the tongue of Holy Mother Church. This will be a great opportunity for many of us to become familiar with the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary, one of the Offices given to us by Pope Leo XIII, while at the same time learning to pray in Latin. Our first prayer session will be on May 28, 2024.*

*For any questions, or to be included in the zoom invite, please contact Miguel Mahan, TOF. His email address is available in our Roster.*

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### AFTER MEAL PRAYER BY: SANDY DEWAAL

*We sing praise  
To You, Oh Lord  
In Thanksgiving  
For this meal.  
May the world always  
Have seed, for those in need.  
May water flow, as does  
Your saving Blood.  
Through Jesus Christ Our Lord,  
In union with the Holy Spirit.*

*Amen*



## GETTING TO KNOW OUR NOVICES Sandy DeWaal



*I am Sandy DeWaal a cradle Catholic, born in Green Bay Wisconsin, and attended Catholic grade school. Until I started high school, I had no friends or relatives that were not Catholic. I sang in three choirs, one for girls, mixed, and Latin—for funerals. The church and school were both Franciscan. I went to Mass six days a week and remember, when I was eight years old, looking up at the stained glass windows wishing I could go to Mass seven days a week. (Saturday Mass did not exist back then.)*

*My grandmother, Elizabeth, lived next door and she was my Catholic inspiration. She walked down the railroad tracks to attend 5:15 AM Mass six days a week (yes, Wisconsin winters also.) Then she came home and said the rosary every day and we all had to be quiet. They were very poor with no indoor plumbing, no hot water, and only a wood burning stove for heat. With all of that they were very happy with gardens, orchards, grape vines and flowers, and was the original farm in the area. Both my grandmother and grandfather died in 1966 and 1968.*

*After High school I attended NWTTC in nursing. I was employed for forty-five years, three hospitals, all Franciscan run, and one clinic for thirty-five years. Met and married my husband Arie. He was the only one of the four children, born in the US, after the family arrived from the Netherlands. He was the kindest, gentlest man I had ever met. We raised our two sons in Madison, Wisconsin, while Arie worked as an Environmental Scientist for over forty years. St. Francis of Assisi smiled.*

*While I was teaching CCD, Christopher was in the first grade communion class, and Derek who was five years old wanted to be in heaven. It was that year the Holy Spirit descended upon me again—it was like wild fire. I started my constant volunteering and reaching out to those in need, praying, and reading the Bible, which continues today.*

*I had a midnight question from God 1 1/2 years ago, “Are you happy? What would make you happy? My immediate answer was, “I want to join a religious order that feels like I do.” After speaking with Pepe, then Ericka, and after looking into eleven different orders. I realized that the way I lived my Catholic life was always Franciscan.*

*Arie and I retired on the same day and moved back to the Green Bay Area. One year later we took over for my mothers end of life care, which lasted two years. Two weeks before she died, Arie was diagnosed with stage four colon cancer, which had spread to his lymph nodes, liver, and*



*lungs. He lasted two years with chemo, mid COVID, in our home It was a beautiful journey.*

*My favorite saints are St. Francis of Assisi, St. Clare, St. Augustine, St. Bonaventure, and St. Terese of Avila. Wish I could have been there to the Visit of the Magi, Sermon the Mount, Baptism of Christ, and Pentecost. I love St. Francis of Assisi for his humility, love of the cross, and his love of the Holy Eucharist.*

*Surprise: The strong feeling and admiration I have for my instructors and peers. I have learned so much and have grown so much due to all of you.*

### **GETTING TO KNOW OUR NOVICES** **FR. RICKERT**



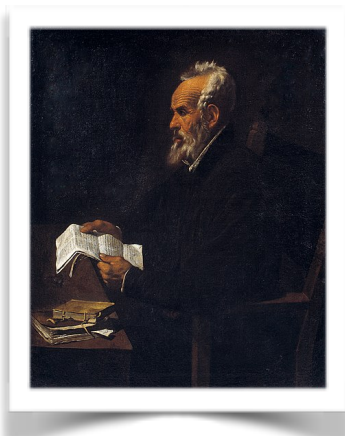
*I am from a Catholic family on both sides, my parents (now deceased) practiced the faith regularly, and I have also all my life. I went to St. Joseph's Catholic School in Ellinwood, Kansas, from the first through eighth grade. I was greatly blessed to be taught by faithful nuns, Sisters of the Precious Blood. We also had very good priests, but Fr. James Kelly, in particular, had a great impact on me and definitely inspired me to look into becoming a priest. I went to the very good public high school in my home town and then to the University of Dallas, a Catholic, Liberal-arts university, where I majored in Mathematics and Classics. By the time I finished there, I felt sure that I should pursue further studies in Mathematics, and thanks be to God and the angels and saints, I received a Ph.D. in Mathematics from Vanderbilt University.*

*Fast forwarding some years, I found myself working in downtown Dallas. I began attending Mass in Spanish at the Cathedral Guadalupe, and that had a very major impact on me. This re-energized my faith and brought me into direct contact with Latin Catholicism, for which I am deeply grateful. Not long after I started to attend the Latin Mass on Saturday mornings, I reconsidered the idea of applying into the seminary, and finally told God if I were accepted, I would go. I was ordained for the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter in 2010.*

*I am especially impressed by the importance of the practice of charity I see in Franciscans. Certain other orders are more academically or liturgically inclined, which understandably, have a natural appeal towards Traditionalists. Yet, my experiences*

*inside and outside of the confessional make it clear that there is a lot of anxiety and hurting in the world. People need understanding, compassion, and encouragement so not to give into despair. I also believe that it is necessary to live, by the grace of God, in accordance with the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit, and it seems to me that the Franciscan life strives to do so as well.*

*St. Padre Pio has been a favorite saint of mine for a long time, going back to my days before the seminary. A couple of years ago I discovered BL. Ramon Llull, TOSF, a fascinating figure from the 1300s in Spain. I am interested in a number of things that he was, and I think my learning about him and his life was to keep step for me to look into the Franciscan Third Order also. Although not a canonized saint, I was greatly impressed by Fr. Valentine Young, OFM, may he rest in peace, when I got to know him. He was a true son of St. Francis of Assisi.*



**Ramon Llull, TOSF**, (1232-1316) was a figure in the field of Philosophy during the Middle Ages. He was a philosopher, theologian, poet, missionary, a Christian apologist, and former Knight from the Kingdom of Majorca. He was Venerated in the Roman Catholic Church and Beatified by Pope Pius IX in 1847. His feast is June 30th.

#### **QUOTES FROM RAMON LLULL:**

***“Without producing, no man can love, nor can he understand or remember, nor have the power of feeling and being.”***

***“Death has no terrors for a sincere servant of Christ who if laboring to bring souls to a knowledge of the truth.”***

**Fr. Valentine Young, OFM** (1931-2020) organist, dedicated to the Latin Mass, and sacred music. He was invested in the Franciscan Order in 1947 and was ordained a priest in 1956. Celebrated the Latin Mass in the 1990s in various communities and became a part-time teacher in 2011. He celebrated the Latin Mass at parishes in Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati up until days before his death in 2020.





## GETTING TO KNOW OUR NOVICES

John Gust



*I am John Gust and was raised in Cloquet, MN in the Diocese of Duluth. I currently reside in Rollingsstone, MN in the Diocese of Winona-Rochester. Both my parents are strong Catholics. We went to Mass on Sundays and holy days, and rarely missed. My mother often talked to me about Marian apparitions and I grew to love and trust the Blessed Virgin Mary. We would also pray the Novena of Divine Mercy every year as well.*

*I have always felt solid in my Catholic faith, though I practiced it more or less fervently over the years. Finally, in college I held fast to the anchor of the faith and vowed to never let go. It dawned on me during my first Faith Traditions class at St. Mary's University that there were such people who studied the faith for a living besides priests and religious, and I felt a strong call to study theology. It was a catalyst for me and the flame of faith was kindled bright and continues to burn strong.*

*I simply found that I needed a way to follow. I had been floundering in my spiritual life and wanted to live virtue more heroically and have accountability to a deeper prayer life. I needed direction and a way to be bound to Christ. Looking around at the world I also felt a deep desire to offer penance and sacrifice for souls in a world fallen far from the Lord's grace. My dear friend, Brian, had invited me to discern the Franciscan way of life. I found that most of my Saint heroes, whom I implored for intercession, were indeed Franciscans and this pointed to a natural love of this way of imitating Jesus. And of course, the beards!*

*I have chosen St. Anthony of Padua as my patron and I have several others who inspire me as well: St. Francis and St. Clare, of course, St. Padre Pio and St. Maximilian Kolbe to name a few. St. Francis of Assisi I learned to know, and through the study of his life has truly helped me build a kinship with him.*

*In the picture above is Fr. Jason Kern and myself. The ceremony into the Novitiate was on March 12, 2024.*

**Pax et bonum,  
John Gust**

**St. Anthony of Padua  
1195-1231**

***“The life of the body is the soul, the life of the soul is Christ.”***



## ONGOING ZOOM MONTHLY GATHERING ON MAY 2ND

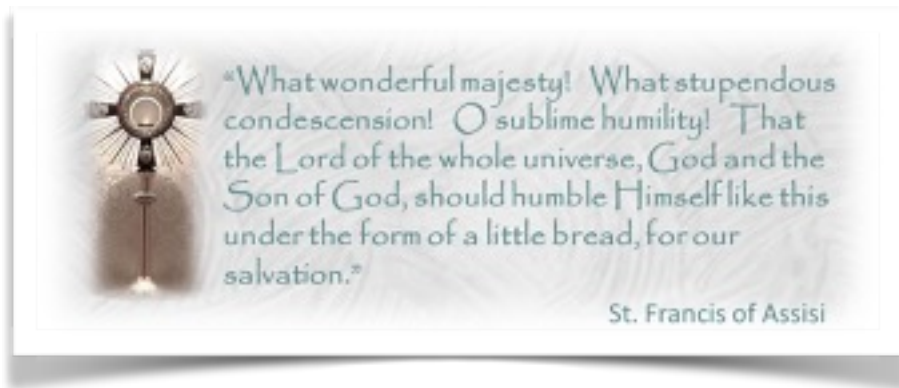
*Our discussion for May will be Article 72. Comments from each person should be short, no more than three minutes so everyone will have a chance to share.*

### ARTICLE 72:

*They shall take the greatest care to make life within the family pleasant and happy, even when means are limited. The furnishings of the house shall mirror the Franciscan spirit as far as possible. The Crucifix, so dear to our holy Father Francis, shall occupy the principal place in the living rooms and bedrooms. Home life shall be sanctified each day by morning and evening prayers, and by grace before and after meals. The following practices are strongly recommended: the reading of the New Testament or of the life of some saint; the recitation of the rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary or of the Franciscan Crown; and the consecration of the family to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, annually renewed.*



*Painting of St. Francis, by Sandy Baden, TOF*



## ***EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION ISOLATED TERTIARIES SCHEDULE***

***MONDAY***

***Judith Inglesby, TOF***

***TUESDAY***

***Linda Menser, TOF***

***WEDNESDAY***

***Luis Guzman, TOF  
Judith Inglesby, TOF  
Paul & Mary Tag, TOF***

***THURSDAY***

***Sandy Baden, TOF  
Bob Zupanek***

***FRIDAY***

***Linda Menser, TOF  
Pepe Ventosa, TOF  
Sandy DeWaal***

***SATURDAY***

***Ericka Witover, TOF  
Peter Emau, TOF  
Miguel Mahan, TOF***

***SUNDAY***

***Linda Menser, TOF***

*Please include prayer for the intentions of our Pope, bishops, and priests. Also pray for the community of Friars of the Immaculate Conception Province, for the increase in religious vocations in their community and for all the members of the Isolated Tertiaries Community.*

**ADMONITION XXVII—PART 5  
VIRTUE AND VICE**

*(Study on the Admonitions of St. Francis of Assisi, Lothar Hardick, OFM by:  
Sandy Baden, TOF)*

*Where there is the fear of God to Guard the Dwelling (Lk 11:21) there no enemy  
can enter.*



*As Lothar Hardick, OFM states, “the fear of the Lord is the last in the list of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.” (Is. 11:2-3) So what does this really mean as it is the glory of all the gifts. The fear of God is understood differently from being afraid of God. If it were being afraid or frightened of God, He would be unapproachable.*

*However, we love God and are obedient “Soldiers of Christ” as we respect Him with a desire to please. In Proverbs 1:7 it states, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.” Our obedience would “Guard the Dwelling,” keep us from the evil one, and our*

*faith could not be shaken. We fear the evil one, which means we will remain in our hearts to trust God alone and keep his commandments.*

*The reason the evil one cannot enter is because we fear the Lord and our faith keeps us in obedience to God’s will. If we fall, we have the sacrament of reconciliation to lift us up, by the grace of God. By obtaining God’s mercy and love, as confession has blotted out our sin, then love has renewed our trust in our Lord Jesus Christ in humble piety.*

*When thinking of God in his majesty and greatness, Our Blessed Mother comes to mind when she stated to Elizabeth, “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior...”..”He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation...” The most beautiful song of praise. Mary, the Mother of God, is the model for us all in our prayer to offer praise and honor to her son, our Lord Jesus Christ.*

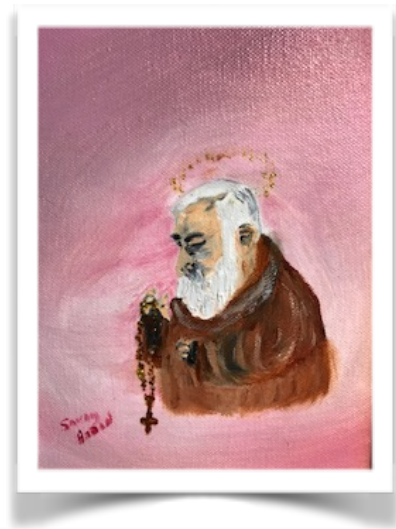


*In our prayer should come love and obedience. Without love in our hearts for our Lord Jesus Christ we would be lost in our spiritual lives and fear of God would not be present. However, as Tertiaries we have nothing to fear as God is with us always and in our obedience we have the **“Fear of God to Guard the Dwelling.”** Lothar Hardick, OFM, talks about the evil one, “The enemy who besieges us hear and tries to enter in order to destroy everything that is valuable and alive...”*

**Saint Padre Pio:** spoke about the evil one as he states:

*“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength...”*

*“Our enemy, who is committed to our harm, wants to convince you otherwise, but spurn him in the name of Jesus and laugh at him. This is the best remedy for beating him into retreat. He becomes emboldened by our weakness, but when someone confronts him with a weapon in hand he becomes a coward.”*



*(The Rosary)*

**Saint Padre Pio and Spiritual Advice:**

*“May Mary fill your heart with the flower and fragrance of ever-fresh virtues, and place her maternal hand on your head. Always keep close to our heavenly Mother, because she is the sea that must be crossed, in order to reach the shores of eternal splendor in the kingdom of Dawn.”*

*Take courage. Don't be frightened and don't stop halfway on your road. Go forward all the time with fresh courage. You have nothing to fear... Jesus will be the helmsman that will steer your little spiritual ship and Mary will be the anchor.*

## Save the Date

**MAY 2:** *IT ZOOM GATHERING: 7:00 PM Eastern Time; 4:00 PM Pacific Time.  
(You can sign in 15 minutes earlier before the meeting begins)  
Discussion on Article 72*

**MAY 9:** **THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD:** Celebrated Sunday May 12  
**(MOTHER'S DAY)**

*IT NOVITIATE FORMATION GROUP 2: 7:00 PM Eastern Time.  
(You can sign in 15 minutes earlier before the meeting begins)*

**MAY 16:** *IT NOVITIATE FORMATION GROUP 3: 7:00 PM Eastern Time.  
(You can sign in 15 minutes earlier before the meeting begins)*

**MAY 19:** **PENTECOST SUNDAY**

**MAY 28:** **ST. LOUIS IX MEN'S TOF PRAYER GROUP ZOOM MEETING:**  
**8:00 PM Eastern Time. First meeting...**  
*(You can sign in 15 minutes earlier before the meeting begins)*

**MAY 29:** **THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

