Apparitions of Our Blessed Mother, Mary

Apparition: 1. Unusual or unexpected sight
2. Act of becoming visible; appearance

On Sunday, October 13, 2013, Pope Francis celebrated mass in St Peter's square in honor of the anniversary of the final apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Fatima (13th of October 1917). As promised, Pope Francis consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Read the following accounts about Apparitions of our Blessed Mother, Mary and the Rosary; then answer the questions on the back side of this paper.

The month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary. The liturgical feast of Our Lady of the Rosary is celebrated annually on October 7th. It was instituted to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary in gratitude for the protection that she gives the Church in answer to the praying of the Rosary by the faithful. Legend tells us that the Rosary as a form of prayer was given to St. Dominic by Mary, the Mother of Our Lord. Mary appeared to St. Dominic in 1206 after he had been praying and doing severe penances because of his lack of success in combating the Albigensian heresy. Mary praised him for his valiant fight against the heretics and then gave him the Rosary as a mighty weapon, explained its uses and efficacy, and told him to preach it to others.

Our Lady of the Rosary – Fatima, Portugal
On Sunday May 13th 1917 Lucia Dos Santos age 9, and her cousins, Francisco and Jacinta Marto, were at a meadow with their sheep in Fatima, Portugal. They were playing when suddenly a bright shaft of light pierced the air. There, standing over the foliage of a small bush, "a lady dressed all in white, more brilliant than the sun, shedding rays of light said, Fear not! I will not harm you." "Where are you from?" the children asked. "I am from heaven" I came to ask you to come here for six consecutive months, on the thirteenth day, at this same hour. "Recite the rosary every day to obtain the peace for the world and the end of the war." On July 13, 1917, they recited the rosary with the crowd, they saw the usual reflex of light and then the Lady appeared. Lucy asked: "What do you want from me?" She answered: "That you come the 13th of the next month, that you continue to recite the Rosary every day to our Lady of the Rosary to obtain peace in the world and the end of the war, because only She will be able to aid you. "When you recite the Rosary, say at the end of each decade: Oh My Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Your Mercy." On 13 October 1917 the children, surrounded by a crowd of 70,000 persons under a torrential rain, Our Lady appeared and she opened her hands and launched a ray of light in the direction of the sun as Lucy shouted that they should look at the sun. At this point, The Miracle of the Sun happened. The rain stopped suddenly and there appeared an exceptionally bright sun but not dazzling. The sun began to turn as if projecting in each direction bands of light of each color that lit and colored the clouds, the sky, the trees, and the crowd. It stayed for some moments then it went back to its normal position, it stayed still for a small while and then it happened again. Suddenly it looked as if it stood out from the sky to fall headlong on the crowd, that was looking terrorized, they fell to their knees and begged mercy.

Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Lourdes, France
Our Lady appeared 18 times at Lourdes, in southern France, in 1858, to Bernadette Soubirous, a fourteen year old peasant girl. There came out of the interior of the grotto a golden-colored cloud, and soon afterwards, a Lady, young and beautiful --exceedingly beautiful -- came and placed herself at the entrance of the opening above the rosebush. As Bernadette prayed the rosary, the Lady passed the beads of her rosary between her fingers, but remained silent, accept to recite the Gloria's. At the 4th Apparition, shortly after Bernadette began to pray the Rosary, everyone present noticed that her face was transfigured and illuminated. At the 9th Apparition, a spring appeared there which feeds the baths at the shrine today. Many miraculous healings are reported from bathing in the waters. Bernadette was told to “pray for sinners” and ask for penitence. Bernadette's body was found to be incorrupt and placed in a coffin of gold and glass. It can be viewed to this very day in the Chapel of Saint Bernadette in Nevers, France.
The Blessed Virgin of the Miraculous Medal
In 1830 The Blessed Virgin appeared three times in the chapel of the motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, France, to Catherine Laboure, then a novice. One night, a beautiful child awoke her from her sleep, saying: "Sister Labouré, come to the chapel; the Blessed Virgin is waiting for you." The Virgin told her, "Come to the foot of the altar. Graces will be shed on all, great and little, especially upon those who seek them. At the second apparition, the Blessed Virgin told her, 'Have a medal struck upon this model. All those who wear it, when it is blessed, will receive great graces especially if they wear it round the neck. Those who repeat this prayer with devotion will be in a special manner under the protection of the Mother of God: 'O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee.' This medal is known as the Miraculous Medal. St. Catherine was canonized in 1947. Her body was found incorrupt, and attracts many pilgrims to the original shrine.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexico
On December 9, 1531, an Aztec Indian, Juan Diego, saw the Virgin Mary near Mexico City. The signs -- of the roses, of the uncle miraculously cured of a deadly illness, and especially of her beautiful image on Juan's mantle -- convinced the people there was something to be considered in Christianity. Within a short time, six million Native Mexicans had themselves baptized as Christians. She put her image on his cloak, a cloak still to be seen in the great shrine of Guadalupe. The fiber of the cloak should have disintegrated in about 30 years, but is still sound. Scientific checks find that the process of impressing the image is nothing known to science.

Our Lady of Medjugorje
In a small village in Bosnia-Hercegovina named Medjugorje, the Blessed Virgin Mary has been appearing since 1981 and giving messages to the world. Our Lady gave messages to six visionaries from the village. In her third apparition, Our Lady revealed Her identity saying, "I am the Blessed Virgin Mary." She revealed why She had come, ‘...to convert and to reconcile' the whole world. She would say Her Most important message is to call the world to peace. In Her own words She tells us, "I have come to tell the world that God exists. He is the fullness of life, and to enjoy this fullness and peace, you must return to God".

1. Write the Message from our Blessed Mother told in one on the above apparitions that speaks to your heart.

2. Mary gave the Rosary to St. Dominic as a ______________________ ____________________.

3. From the Apparition at Fatima, what is the prayer we are instructed to say at the end of the Rosary decade?

4. What is the name of the medal that the Blessed Virgin instructed St. Catherine Laboure to have made?

5. What piece of Juan Diego’s clothing is the Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe on?

6. Miraculous healings happen in Lourdes, France, when you do what:

NOTE: The Church does not require belief in any apparition or other private revelation. "The Roman Catholic Church has prudently been cautious to approve, disapprove or condemn reported apparitions." In general, studied apparitions are classed as "not worthy of belief," "not contrary to the Faith," or "worthy of belief." The message of an approved apparition cannot have any content that is contrary to the teachings of the Church.