MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY
Artist’s 6-foot square paintings of mysteries now grace Mother of Mercy Hall. ........................................... P3A

ST. JOHN PAUL II STATUE
The Shrine dedicated and blessed a life-sized bronze statue of St. John Paul II on Divine Mercy Sunday …. P4A

SACRED RELICS
A national tour of the relics of St. Bernadette includes a stop in Champion. .......... P5A

IMAGES OF MARY
Images of the Blessed Mother grace many places at her Shrine. ...................... P8A
"GATHER THE CHILDREN IN THIS WILD COUNTRY AND TEACH THEM WHAT THEY SHOULD KNOW..."
Our Lady of Good Help to Adele Brise, October 1859

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“We wanted someplace where people would pray in front of them. These are big pieces and you need to have a place where they will fit.”

Nancy Gezella

When she started the paintings many years ago, Gezella had no idea where they would end up. She just knew she had to keep working and trusted there would be a place for them.

“I was working on the first or second and the anonymous donor came for an icon writing class (which Gezella teaches) and saw them in process,” Gezella said. “(Eventu-ally) she seriously started saying, I want to purchase these and donate them.”

The donor and Gezella originally hoped the paintings would reside in a church, but none of those they toured “looked right,” Gezella said. “We wanted someplace where people would pray in front of them. These are big pieces and you need to have a place where they will fit.”

Eventually the donor approached Gezella, who was raised Catholic, sketched all 20 mysteries (five each for the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous mysteries). She then transferred the sketches to four canvases — each one six feet square — nailed to the walls of her backyard workshop.

“I drove my husband, Mark, crazy because I stood on a wall to paint it,” Gezella said.

Eventually the donor approached Gezella, who trained in interior and mechanical design. She now creates art — often religious icons, but also mixed media — full time.

The Mysteries of the Rosary started as an idea more than 10 years ago. Eventually, Gezella, who was raised Catholic, sketched all 20 mysteries (five each for the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous mysteries). She then transferred the sketches to four canvases — each one six feet square — nailed to the walls of her backyard workshop.

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National Shrine enhances pilgrimage experience for all

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Champion — Each year, the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help finds opportunities to improve its pilgrimage experience. The previous year, that included new stained-glass windows in Mother of Mercy Hall, improved pathways along its Rosary Walk and an enhanced Apparition Oratory.

Within this past year, the Shrine has turned its focus toward not only its outdoor and indoor infrastructure, but also toward its devotional opportunities for its pilgrims' spiritual enrichment.

The Shrine's outdoor Stations of the Cross have long been a tranquil place for prayer and reflection on the Passion of Christ. Countless pilgrims have walked along its path, not only to see the statues, but to also honor and remember loved ones through the many memorial bricks that pave the way.

The Wisconsin weather, however, has taken a toll on the Shrine's Stations of the Cross, causing many of the station statues to become worn. In addition, this area has historically been a spot for standing water due to a lack of adequate drainage. Because of all this, the Shrine began its Stations of the Cross Restoration Project to address both the infrastructure and aesthetic needs.

Since then, the station statues have been fully restored, their bases reconstructed, and their housing units have been repainted and given new copper roofs. In addition, new concrete pads will be poured for the stations to sit on and the drainage system will be upgraded.

By summer, the newly constructed bases will be ready to display the Stations of the Cross statues and, once again, welcome pilgrims who seek this pathway for peaceful prayer and devotion throughout the year.

Workers install a new life-sized bronze statue of St. John Paul II at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help on April 11. The statue was dedicated and blessed on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 24, 2022.

ST. JOHN PAUL II GROTTO

St. John Paul II has a new grotto along the Shrine's rosary walk that is dedicated in his name and legacy. Recently installed in April of this year, the Shrine chose that day (April 24, 2022) to dedicate and bless the grotto. Also present at the grotto blessing was a relic of St. Faustina Kowalska, considered "the Saint of Divine Mercy" and canonized as the first saint of the new millennium by St. John Paul II on Divine Mercy Sunday in 2000.

Shrine Confessionals

To accommodate the growing number of pilgrims seeking the sacrament of reconciliation at the Shrine, a new confessional has been built in the back of the Apparition Chapel. When visitors enter from the back of the church, they will see confessionals on either side of the doors that fit with the grotto features a life-sized bronze statue of the 1941 chapel. Additional confessionals are planned for Mother of Mercy Hall later this year.

SOLITUDE – PRAYER – GRACE

RETREATANTS’ TESTIMONIALS

“I loved the beautiful grounds and being surrounded by nature. There were so many inviting spaces to steal away with God. It was awesome!”

“I learned a lot about myself over the past 3 days. I know I have a ways to go, but I am much more aware of God’s love and forgiveness. I plan to keep praying and exploring this in my life; but I certainly am leaving with a greater sense of peace, and I know that will help make me a better man for others. This was my first visit; and I only regret that I had not found JRH sooner… I look forward to returning.”

“Many things in my life have changed since my last retreat which made a difference in the whole experience. This is “Holy Ground,” and there are a number of places that are so special to me.”

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An opportunity to visit with the saints

National tour of relics of St. Bernadette will include Shrine

BY PATRICIA KASTEN | THE COMPASS

CHAMPION — If you'd like to see relics from the life of Christ, a visit to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help might be in order. In the Apparition Oratory, you will find a large display case of 19 to 20 relics of saints. These include relics of the 12 Apostles, who walked with Jesus when he ministered on earth.

In addition, this June, relics of St. Bernadette will visit the Shrine as part of a national tour of the saint from Lourdes, France. She had visions of the Blessed Mother in 1858, just one year before Adele Brise had visions of the Queen of Heaven at Champion.

St. Bernadette’s relics will be at the Shrine Tuesday to Thursday, June 14-16. They will also be at St. Bernadette Parish in Appleton Sunday to Tuesday, June 12-14. The two stops are among only 34 churches, cathedrals and shrines that are part of the 26-diocese tour that began on Feb. 11 (the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes) and ends on July 16.

Father of Mercy John Broussard, rector at the Shrine, said there are several events planned for the visit of the relics, including a candlelight procession with a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, all-day veneration of the relics and a virtual tour of Lourdes.

New to the Shrine’s permanent collection of relics, Fr. Broussard said, are relics of St. Cecilia and St. Teresa of Avila. Also, a relic of St. Lucy is in the process of being authenticated.

Fr. Broussard said that, over the years, the Shrine has received donations of relics, including relics of St. Teresa of Kolkata and St. Faustina Kowalska. The number, though, increased in one jump. “Suddenly,” Fr. Broussard told The Compass, “I had a priest come forward with a bunch of relics that he wanted to donate to the Shrine. He provided all the paperwork with them when he donated them.”

That priest donated the relics of the 12 Apostles about a year ago, along with relics of the four evangelists: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

“So, after some research and making sure they were authentic, we decided that it would be great to display all of them,” Fr. Broussard said. “When we renovated the downstairs oratory, we decided to include a relic case, a giant sort of reliquary case, where we could put them all.”

This Pentecost (June 5) — the annual celebration of the Holy Spirit’s...
Shrine escaped devastation of Peshtigo Fire

2021 marked 150th anniversary of inferno that burned 2,400 square miles of land, killed at least 1,500 people

BY PATRICIA KASTEN | THE COMPASS

Alouez — This fall, images of fiery leaves will pair with memories of the Peshtigo Fire. It was on Oct. 8, 1871, 150 years ago, when a storm system that fueled the Great Chicago Fire also spawned the Peshtigo Fire. This series of blazes, firestorms and fire tornadoes destroyed 2,400 square miles — roughly the size of the state of Delaware — and killed 1,500 to 2,500 people.

This year, the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help, as it does each year, will mark the anniversary of this tragedy with prayer and remembrance. The Shrine and its founder, Adèle Brice, played a role in the story of the fire that night.

Adèle, of what was then known as “the Chapel” at Robinsonsville (now the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help at Champion), and Fr. Peter Pernin, a Canadian missionary priest serving as pastor at St. Mary in Peshtigo and Our Lady of Lourdes in Marinette, both lived through that night of fire.

Every year, the Shrine hosts an anniversary rosary and prayer event all night from Oct. 8 to the morning of Oct. 9. Today it is known as the “Victory Over the Fire All Night Rosary.” The commemoration begins at 7 p.m. with a remembrance service and conclusion with a candle procession around the outdoor rosary walk, all-night Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and rosaries prayer every hour. Joining participants are descendants of families who lived through that night.

While Adèle did not write about the experience, Fr. Pernin did. In a book titled “The Finger of God Was There!” not only did he journal about his own experiences, he later visited many who had taken to the water in the general confusion of the moment, cattle plunged in with them, and there with a sharp detonating sound like that of powder exploded and flew from room to room. I understood then that the air was saturated with some special gas, and I could not help thinking if this gas lighted up from mere contact with a breath of hot wind, what would it be if the fire would come in actual contact with it.”

Fr. Pernin described the scene at the river: “I saw nothing but immense volumes of flames covering the firmament, and there with a sharp detonating sound like that of powder exploded and flew from room to room. I understood then that the air was saturated with some special gas, and I could not help thinking if this gas lighted up from mere contact with a breath of hot wind, what would it be if the fire would come in actual contact with it.”

Nearly 10 miles away, in Marinette, as recorded in a special edition on Oct. 9, 1871, the Marinette Eagle reported the night scene: “At this time the direction of the wind changed rapidly blowing from several points of the compass alternately. First from the southwest, then from the west, then from the northwest, then back again to the south, during which time we were visited by a series of whirlwinds which showered cinders and sparks in every conceivable direction... From the rear of J.S. Dickey’s store in the direction of the Bay all was one broad lurid sheet of flame as far as the eye could reach.”

Fr. Pernin survived that night by staying in the river, though his eyes were damaged by the heat — leaving him blinded for a time — and he became sick from the chill of being soaked in the cold water. Many people stayed in the river that night... it was a part of the year at St. Mary Church in Peshtigo and the summer at the Peshtigo Fire Museum.

IN THE RIVER

On Oct. 11, 1871, the Marinette and Peshtigo Eagle newspaper reported what happened to some: “Crowds pushed for the bridge, but the bridge, like all else, was receiving its baptism of fire. Hundreds crowded into the river, cattle plunged in with them, and being huddled together in the general confusion of the moment, many who had taken to the water to avoid the flames were drowned. A great many were on the blazing bridge when it fell.”

FR. PERNIN’S PREPARATIONS

Back at the church, Fr. Pernin dug a trench in his garden and buried his books and “church ornaments” in it and covered them with sand.

He then returned for the tabernacle, which was in his house since the church building was to undergo interior painting that coming week. Fr. Pernin noted that the area not quickened by the flames was ruined. He recalled the tabernacle or the survival of the Peshtigo winds which showered cinders and sparks in every conceivable direction.

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Fr. Pernin managed to save the tabernacle from his Peshtigo church and carry it, while dragging his wagon to the Peshtigo River. In the jostle and bedlam, the wagon was pushed into the water and the tabernacle floated away. The next day, it was found, rest up right and dry, on a log in the river — with the sacred species safe inside. Today, the tabernacle spends part of the year at St. Mary Church in Peshtigo and the summer at the Peshtigo Fire Museum.

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Franciscan roots run deep at Shrine

BY CORRIE CAMPBELL | SPECIAL TO THE COMPASS

At the entranceway to the rosary walk behind the Apportion Chapel and Oratory of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help is the St. Francis of Assisi Grotto. Its significance and ties to the peace gardens, on which the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared 160 years ago, run deep. Those roots can be traced to Shrine visionary Adele Brise, to whom the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared in 1859 on the Shrine grounds. At the Blessed Mother’s urging, Adele dedicated her life to the care of souls and serving the religious needs of those who settled in the area.

Adele traveled on foot within a 50-mile radius of the Shrine grounds to teach the children what they needed to know for their salvation and to teach them the sign of the cross, as Mary had instructed. Though she was not part of a religious community, Adele lived a most holy and sanctified life — much like a member of a third order community, a group of laypeople committed to the rule of life of a particular religious order. It is believed that Adele and the women, often called “the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi” (whom Adele called “Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi”) followed a Franciscan way of life.

As tertiaries, these women would have made a life commitment to become members of what is now called the Secular Franciscan Order (“secular” meaning “embedded in the world”). There are now more than 15,000 Secular Franciscans in the United States and about 400,000 around the world.

Though Adele’s specific order disbanded in 1896 after her death, the Third Order of Secular Franciscans is still well established in Green Bay as St. Ann’s Fraternity under the La Verna Regional Fraternity of Secular Franciscans. Twenty-three members meet monthly in the Green Bay area. Their rule of life is “to observe the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of St. Francis of Assisi, who made Christ the inspiration and the center of his life with God and people.”

Also prominent in the group’s rule is a devotion to the Virgin Mary, humble servant of the Lord, who “was open to his every word and call. She was embraced by Francis with indescribable love and declared the protector and advocate of his family.”

“The Secular Franciscans should express their ardent love for her by imitating her complete self-giving and by praying earnestly and confidently,” states the group’s rule.

Oftentimes, there is confusion about Adele Brise being a member of a recognized religious order. That is rooted in the fact that many have often referred to her as “Sister Adele.” However, she was not a member of a religious order. She did wear a habit, and lived a very holy life, as did those who served with her in that particular form of Franciscan life.

Some of the confusion about Adele being a religious sister might also be rooted in the fact that there was a particular religious order of sisters who took up the care of the Shrine, which Adele called Our Lady of Good Help and soon became known as The Chapel at Robinsonville, to help carry out Adele’s mission. At the urging of Bishop Sebastian Messmer in 1902, the Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross in Bay Settlement continued Adele’s teaching legacy on the Shrine grounds, first continuing Adele’s boarding school, then operating a board.

Lourdes and Champion: the similarities

BY JESUIT FR. JAMES MARTIN | SPECIAL TO THE COMPASS

In 2010, the church approved (as “worthy of belief”) for the first time a Marian apparition in the United States. After a two-year investigation by Bishop David L. Ricken, he approved the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary as seen by Adele Brise in Champion, Wis., in 1859.

Bishop Ricken stated in his 2010 letter: “I declare with moral certainty and in accord with the norms of the church that the events, apparitions and locations given to Adele Brise in October of 1859 do exhibit the substance of supernatural character, and I do hereby approve these apparitions as worthy of belief (although not obligatory) by the Christian faithful.”

There are several notable similarities to the more well-known apparitions at Lourdes, France, to St. Bernadette Soubirous, besides simply the timing. (Lourdes: 1858; Champion: 1859).

In both cases:
- The women were poor but pious Catholics.
- The women were at the time outdoors, in the midst of carrying out taxing physical chores: Bernadette looking for firewood for her family; Adele Brise carrying wheat to a mill.
- The women were very poor but pious Catholics.
- The women were most likely seen as on the margins of society. Bernadette’s indigent family was living in a converted jail cell; Adele was a part of a poor immigrant population.
- The local pastor asked for an identification from the vision. Bernadette’s pastor, Abbe Peyramale asked; Brise’s pastor asked as well.
- The identification given was concise: Lourdes: “I am the Immaculate Conception”; Champion: “I am living in a Chapel.
- Mary asked for prayers for sinners.

The visionary later became associated with a religious order. Bernadette entered the Sisters of Nevers; Adele a group of Third Order Franciscans.

A chapel was erected on the spot of the apparitions, which altered the original appearance of the site. In Lourdes, the grotto was paved over and the course of the nearby Gave River is changed; in Champion, the trees in which the Virgin appeared were felled to make room for the chapel.

And the chapels later received many visitors and miracles became associated with pilgrimages to the shrines.

Reprinted courtesy of America magazine, americamagazine.org.
BY PATRICIA KASTEN | THE COMPASS

CHAMPION — When you visit the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help, you’ll notice many statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Several have historical significance to the Shrine.

The statue in the Apparition Chapel with Mary holding the Child Jesus is first seen when you enter the chapel. It dates to 1942, when the present chapel was built. Set in the chapel sanctuary, it was donated by local people under the direction of Fr. Rudolph Hodik, then pastor of Holy Trinity Parish in Casco. It was restored in 2020 by Conrad Schmitt Studios in New Berlin, Wis.

The statue was made in 1936 at DaPrato Statuary (now DaPrato Rigali Studios) in Chicago. The subject of the statue itself — the Queen of Heaven — was chosen because, when Adele Brise saw the apparition of Mary in 1859, the Blessed Mother identified herself as “the Queen of Heaven (Regina Coeli).” There are a few statues like it around the country — though not many. The molds and designs for this particular statue were destroyed in a 1968 fire at the Chicago studio.

When the Shrine’s statue underwent restoration in 2020, the staff at Conrad Schmitt took it to a nearby metrology (calibration laboratory) company in Milwaukee that also has 3D scanners. Don Warden, operations manager at the Shrine, said that, after a four-hour process, they completed a 3D scan of the statue. It has been used to make molds for replica statues that would be sold through the Shrine’s gift shop.

The official statue of Our Lady of Good Help was dedicated on April 12, 2013, by Bishop David Ricken. Bishop Ricken commissioned Gianfanco Tassara of Milwaukee to design a statue of the “Queen of Heaven” following the description of Adele Brise’s vision. This site is the only church-approved apparition of Mary in the United States. The statue is located in the Mother of Mercy Hall.

The statue in the Apparition Oratory is often photographed at the Shrine. Depicting Mary as Our Lady of Grace, the statue came from France in August of 1907. It was donated by Fr. Philip Crud, pastor at St. Joseph Parish in Champion, who had been appointed to serve the local Belgian community in 1865. Fr. Crud had directed...
Wayside shrines offer road signs of devotion
Chapels built by Belgian immigrants dot Brown, Door and Kewaunee counties

BY PATRICIA KASTEN | THE COMPASS

CHAMPION — In your travels around northeast Wisconsin’s Door County, you might see small, frame buildings that look like little farm sheds — except for the little crosses on top.

There are some two dozen of these wayside or roadside chapels dotting Door, northern Brown and Kewaunee counties. They were built by Belgian immigrants and their descendants. For example, there is Our Mother of Perpetual Help Chapel at 8681 W. Swamp Road and St. Roch Chapel on 1237 County Highway D, both open to the public. There is also a chapel (originally built in Dyckesville) that was moved to the grounds of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help in 2003.

These chapels — generally consisting of an altar, statues, a cross and a place to sit and/or kneel — were erected by families as places of prayer or in gratitude for help, such as healing from an illness. The wayside chapel that was moved to the grounds of the Shrine was restored by Tory Thiry and his family. While located on private land, the chapels were always placed so that they were near a road and accessible to all. (Some are now on private lands. For a map and addresses, visit walloonbelgiansdoorpeninsula.weebly.com/chapels-map.html.)

The chapels, in various states of repair, dot the landscape and farmlands of Door, Brown and Kewaunee counties. For example, St. Odile Chapel has its little stained-glass window over the doorway in Thiry Daems, and the Blessed Virgin Mary Chapel has its blue cross above the door in Tonet. There is St. Ghislain Chapel in Misere, standing exactly where the St. Michael Church in Misere did until the mid-1970s.

Each chapel has its own rustic charm. Some have candles to light. Others have holy water fonts. Many have guest books where you will find names from around Wisconsin, the Midwest and even overseas, like the woman from England who visited St. Odile’s chapel in 2019.

When you stop at these chapels, the local people will notice you and, should you have any questions, are glad to help. And most are willing to share some of the local stories.

Wayside or roadside chapels of a variety of types are not unique to Wisconsin and actually date to Roman and Greek times, when statues of Hermes (the Greek god of travelers), set in small shrines, would guide travelers along commonly traveled routes.

Wayside shrines can be found across Europe from Poland and Slovenia to Italy and France, Belgium and England. They range in size from single pillars, called “column shrines” and Schöpflöffel shrines (meaning “serving spoon” in German), to roofed boxes nailed to trees to more elaborate chapel-shrines. In France, you can find calvaires (stone crucifixion scenes), some dating to the eighth century, and often placed along travel routes. Many have been lost over the centuries.

Wayside shrines were often located along routes taken by pilgrims to famous shrines, placed at crossroads or major geographic sites, such as mountaintops or springs and fountains. Many of the roadside chapels in Door County are along routes leading to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help, which has been a pilgrimage site since Adele Brise’s visions in 1859.

Wayside shrines don’t always have to be a building. Even the humble bathtub shrines seen in yards from the Midwest to the U.S. East Coast, sometimes adorned with seashells, can qualify as wayside shrines. Made from a half-buried, cast iron tub, these shrines most often hold a statue of Mary, but can also hold a cross or a statue of another saint.

Another development you will see in northeast Wisconsin are rosaries — often lighted — on the sides of houses. While not technically a wayside shrine, these memorials that honor Mary nonetheless mark out places of prayer and remind us to turn toward God on all our journeys.

Sources: fisheaters.com; wikipedia.org; ncregister.com; waysideshrines.org and walloonbelgiansdoorpeninsula.weebly.com.
How the church addresses claims of Marian apparitions

Process is lengthy because witnesses must be questioned, says priest

By Carol Glatz | Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — When the bishop of Green Bay, Wis., recognized a series of Marian apparitions from 1879, it marked the first time apparitions in the United States received official approval.

That’s quite an achievement considering that more than 1,500 visions of Mary have been reported around the world, but in the past century only nine cases have received official church approval as being “worthy of belief,” said an expert in Marian apparitions.

The church has made very few judgments on apparition claims. “It’s not always possible to ascertain if they are true or false because the phenomenon is much bigger than us,” said Marianist Fr. Salvatore Perrella, assistant dean at the Pontifical Theological Faculty Mariannum and a theologian who also serves as an expert for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

“Given the enormity of the task, the Vatican’s doctrinal congregation established a set of norms in 1978 to guide the process of discernment and the investigation of reported apparitions and revelations,” Perrella said.

“The process is ‘a never-ending’ thing,” said Fr. Perrella. For example, the Green Bay apparitions received approval 151 years after the first apparition was reported, but that’s just half of the nearly 300 years it took the church to approve the apparitions of Our Lady of Laus in France, he said.

“The process is lengthy because visionaries and witnesses must be questioned and the fruits of the apparition, such as conversions, miracles and healings, must be examined,” he said.

The local bishop sets up a commission of experts, including theologians, canonists, psychologists and doctors, to help him.

According to the norms, the bishop and his commission “must determine the veracity of the facts and the mental, moral and spiritual wholeness of the visionary and his or her testimony,” he said.

Fr. Perrella said that when the bishop’s investigation is complete, he can come to one of three conclusions: he can determine the apparition to be true and worthy of belief; he can say it is not true, which leaves open the possibility for an appeal; or he can say that at the moment he doesn’t know and needs more help.

In the last scenario, the investigation is brought to the country’s bishops’ conference, Fr. Perrella said. If the body of bishops cannot come to a conclusion, then the matter is turned over to the pope who delegation the doctrinal congregation to step in and either give advice, send a commissioner and/or set up a commission to investigate.

At every step of the investigation, “the person in charge of everything is the bishop,” he said.

The alleged apparitions at Medjugorje in Bosnia-Herzegovina are an example of a situation in which the country’s bishops requested the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to intervene.

The congregation established an international commission in 2010 to investigate the claims of six young international commission in 2010 to investigate the claims of six young people who said Mary appeared to them daily beginning in 1981.

The apparitions apparently are continuing and thousands of people travel to the small town each month to meet the alleged seers and to pray.

Fr. Perrella, who is a member of the Vatican commission to study the alleged Medjugorje apparitions, told Catholic News Service the work is only just beginning.

“The pope wants a decisive conclusion made,” he said, adding that it will be a long process. The case under study “is a serious thing” that is “very complex” though not impossible to resolve, he said.

For the past 40 years, people have claimed to see apparitions of Mary at Medjugorje.

Such an extended duration of alleged apparitions in one place is no longer “something that generates suspicion,” he said. That’s because there are similar precedents, such as the apparitions of Our Lady of Laus, which lasted 54 years and received formal church recognition in 2008.

The church approaches each claim “with the maximum prudence, investigatory rigor and an invitation to live out the Gospel rather than follow the apparitions,” he said.

In fact, the church never requires the faithful to believe in the Marian apparitions, not even those recognized by the church, he said.

The Catholic Church affirms that Mary was assumed, body and soul, into heaven and that she, like Christ, defeated death and triumphs in heavenly glory with the totality of her being.

For that reason, Fr. Perrella said, Mary can appear in any form while the saints or other deceased can’t.

“My mother never comes on her own accord; she is God’s ambassador” charged with a specific message for a specific time and place, he said.

While the apparitions and messages are never the same, in general, Mary appeals for people’s conversion and seeks to assure men and women that they can depend on God’s loving mercy, he said.

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Bishop James P. Powers & the faithful of the Diocese of Superior, Wisconsin
Mysteries of the rosary depicted in paintings

FROM PAGE 3A

beautiful thing and there’s another connection to it, that you have this special rosary. I have an aunt who was a sister who taught at St. Joseph Academy (now closed in Green Bay). I got her rosary when she passed away and that was so special to me.”

As Gezella’s connection to the rosary grew, she realized that it is special to me.”

She passed away and that was so special to me.”

When it started out,” she explained, “I was thinking about the misunderstanding of the rosary — not just from non-Catholics, but even from Catholics. So that’s why I did the paintings more as images of ‘praying the Gospels,’ because I wanted people to think about that and realize that that’s what the rosary is about. It’s not about the repetitional prayers — it is about the Gospel meditations.”

Each of her 20 rosary images are linked to specific Gospel verses which are on the images. “I chose the one that worked best with the image,” she added.

Except this didn’t apply to the last two Glorious Mysteries — the Assumption and the Crowning of Our Lady, Queen of Heaven. While both are dogmas of the church, as good as I think it should be, it doesn’t matter because the Lord does what he does and sends the gifts God gave me. I do it, and then he does what he does and sends the Holy Spirit. Even if I don’t think it is as good as I think it should be, it doesn’t matter because the Lord can work with whatever. It’s all his. It’s hard to take any credit for it. OK, I did the work, but that’s all I can take credit for.”

A member of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross sells religious articles at an outdoor stand at the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help. The Bay Settlement sisters oversaw the chapel and boarding school from 1902 to 1992.

Shrine’s Franciscan roots run deep

FROM PAGE 7A

home for orphaned children with disabilities, (1923), then a pre-novitiate high school for young women entering the St. Francis of Bay Settlement community (1953) and, finally, in 1971, a house of prayer and retreat center. The ministry of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross continues today with sisters serving throughout the Green Bay diocesan community as parish leaders, educators, health caregivers, campus ministers, artists, minority and environmental advocates, social workers, literacy counselors, retreat directors, missionaries and administrators.

Today, the 160-year Franciscan tradition of sisters serving faithful service at the Shrine continues with the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, Manitowoc, offering assistance, spreading Our Lady’s Message and promoting Mary’s catechetical mission on site to pilgrims who visit. The tenets of the charism of the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity — like those of all Franciscans — include simplicity, joyful acceptance of poverty, love for the church and selfless dedication to others. As Catholic women religious, their Franciscan vocation calls them to diverse service in Catholic education, Catholic health care, and parish and community services. Serving the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help from the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity at present is Sr. Caritas Marie. Prior to Sr. Caritas Marie’s tenure at the Shrine, Sr. Mardelle Meinholz served as the shrine’s catechism coordinator and archivist.
MARIAN APPARITIONS that have received church recognition over the last three centuries.

1. LOURDES, FRANCE
1858: A beautiful little girl, who identified herself as the “Immaculate Conception,” appears to 14-year-old Bernadette Soubirous.

2. AKITA, JAPAN
1973: Mary gives Sister Agnes Katsuko Sakaguchi three messages.

3. BEAURAING, BELGIUM
1925-1930: A group of children see visions of Mary between late November and January.

4. BANHEUX, BELGIUM
1933: A young girl named Marlette Reo, who came from a poor, rural Catholic family, said Mary appeared to her on eight occasions, encouraging her to pray.

5. LAUS, FRANCE
1664-1718: A series of daily Marian apparitions lasting 54 years are experienced by young French shepherds: Denise Beaufort.

6. QUITO, ECUADOR
1938: Under the title Our Lady of Good Success, Mary appears to Spanish-born mother Mariana de Jesus Torres.

7. FATIMA, PORTUGAL
1917: Apparitions of Mary appear to Lucia dos Santos and two of her cousins on the 13th day of 10 consecutive months.

8. TUY, SPAIN
1929: Lucia dos Santos reports that Mary returned and reported her request for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart.

9. GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN
1936: Marian visions received by Adele Brise are the first in the United States to receive approval of the diocesan bishop.

10. KIBEHU, RWANDA
1980s: Mary appears at an all-girls Catholic high school in this remote village.

11. MEXICO CITY, MEXICO
1938: Mary appears to indigenous peasant N. Juan Diego near the present-day capital.

Statues of Mary are part of Shrine’s long history

FROM PAGE 8A

Adèle Brise to gather women to assist in her teaching mission. This statue is directly under the statue of Mary in the Apparition Chapel. It stands near, if not over, the reported site where Mary appeared to Adèle Brise in October of 1859.

The now-retired processional statue of Mary is displayed in the History Center. This 3-foot-high statue of Mary wears a crown and holds a scepter. Her white gown is stitched with silver thread and metal beads, forming a heart in the gown’s center. While the current statue is more than a century old, it is not the original processional statue used by Adèle Brise. That statue was irreparably damaged by fire started by a candle during a procession.

This second Marian processional statue has been permanently at the Shrine since 1908, long after Adèle Brise’s death on July 5, 1896. The processional statue wears a wig of human hair which diocesan archival records show was made in 1953. The hair was donated by Sr. Regina Le Mere, a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross. Sr. Regina died in 2018 at the age of 90.

The statue was retired in 2019, the 160th anniversary of the apparition. Warden said the statue may be part of special processions.

The now-retired processional statue of Mary was used during special events such as the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. It is displayed in the Shrine’s History Center.

For the 2020 Assumption procession, a statue of the Immaculate Heart of Mary was used. That statue currently stands in the sanctuary of the chapel in the Mother of Mercy Hall.

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Darboynative named communications director at Shrine

Faith, career come together in Champion for Chelsey Hare

BY SAM LUCERO | THE COMPASS

CHAMPION — After graduating from Kimberly High School in 2015, Chelsey Hare set herself on a gradual path to embrace her Catholic faith and make it the center of her life. The journey took a major step for Hare, 24, when she was named communications director at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help in Champion.

“Growing up, I would say my faith was very much a cultural thing,” said Hare, who was born and raised in Darboyn and attended Holy Spirit Parish with her parents, Jean and Erik Barnes, and brother Nick. “You went to church on Sunday with the family and it was actually something synonymous with Sunday brunch at my grandmother’s house.”

When she enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, things began to change, she said.

“I got a lot of questions on ‘Why are you Catholic?’” Hare told The Compass. “I really didn’t have a good answer for them and ... there was that breaking point. I could have said, ‘I don’t know and this is too hard’ or you can make the choice to say, ‘I know this is true, but why? And so I dove into it. I did a lot of research on my own.’

In addition to a lot of research on the internet, Hare said she began listening to Relevant Radio. “That was a big instrument to my faith journey, as well as Catholic Answers,” she said.

At the same time she was forming her faith at college, she began to participate in FOCUS, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students.

“Then I went to a SEEK conference in San Antonio in January 2017; That was also a big turning point,” said Hare.

SEEK is a weekend conference sponsored by FOCUS which provides young adults with opportunities to celebrate and learn more about their faith. It includes liturgies, prayer opportunities and presentations by nationally-acclaimed Catholic speakers. “FOCUS does an excellent job of bringing the faith to young adults,” said Hare. “I just love what they are doing. So much so that I actually worked for an internship (with FOCUS) in Colorado in their marketing department. The internship took place in the summer of 2018, and it was the first opportunity for Hare to realize she could seamlessly mesh her faith life and her professional life. “It was a beautiful experience and I think that when my palate for working in a church setting because, wow, you can actually love what you are doing from a professional standpoint,” she said. “Marrying the two was something I wanted to find” as a career.

“The ‘marriage’ was put on hold when Hare accepted a position with Element, a full-service advertising agency based in De Pere and Neenah, upon graduating from UW-Eau Claire in 2019 with a degree in marketing analytics.

“I worked with a variety of clients within the marketing and public relations fields,” said Hare.

Last September, she learned that the Shrine was looking for a communications director.

“I had a couple of Catholic job searches on my phone,” she said. “This one, I looked at the job requirements and thought, ‘This is everything I want to be doing.’ I just feel like, even with my experience now, I know I’m a little young, but it was everything I’ve had experience in, so it seems like a fit.”

Hare was familiar with the shrine and excited to apply for the position. She said she made visits to Champion on her own to visit and pray. “It wasn’t until college that I started...from Medjugorje

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Shrine continues to offer new projects for visitors

FROM PAGE 4A

The Shrine offers the sacrament of reconciliation daily at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

The Shepherd Project

While the Shrine is updating its grounds and devotional areas, it is also adding special spiritual opportunities for pilgrims and the faithful around the world.

Our Lady’s message to Adele was clear—to “gather the children in this land country and teach them what they need to know for their salvation.” Our church leaders, especially our bishops, are entrusted with this mission in their own communities and we, the church, have a great responsibility in praying for them as they heroically continue the good work amidst a world that is facing a shortage of peace and an increase in division and attacks.

This is what inspired the founding of the Champion Shrine’s Shepherd Project—a season of prayer for each bishop across the United States, starting from the Shrine’s location in Wisconsin and emitting outward as the year goes on.

The inaugural Shepherd Project will begin on May 1 and continue until the end of October with each day dedicated in prayer for a different Bishop around the United States.

For more information on the project and the bishops being prayed for each day, visit championshrine.org/shepherd-project.

Confraternity of Most Holy Rosary

New since the summer of 2021, the Shrine is now giving the opportunity for the faithful to enroll in its sodalitry of the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary. The Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary is an international association of the Catholic faithful that is established to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary and secure her patronage by striving to pray Rosaries each week (Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries) and to include the other members of the Confraternity in one’s intentions.

There are many spiritual benefits to joining the Confraternity, including the intercession and special protection of our Blessed Mother, a share in the prayers of countless rosary confraternity members worldwide, and opportunities for plenary indulgences. For more information on signing up, visit championshrine.org/confraternity.

An unforgettable experience

In making these continuous improvements and opportunities for prayer, it is our hope that more and more pilgrims may come to know of Champion Shrine. Our Lady’s message to Adele and the Shrine’s opportunities for spiritual enrichment, accessible to all those willing to seek it.

Hare is the director of communications at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help in Champion.

Hare looks forward to sharing Blessed Mother’s message with pilgrims

FROM PAGE 13A

to pay attention to what the Shrine offered here,” she said. “Every single time I was coming up this way, I would try to make a stop.”

One memorable visit took place in the summer of 2019, when she and her boyfriend (now husband) Jonathan made a brief pilgrimage to Champion.

“We got the chance to go down into the oratory,” she said. “It was one of the first times being there alone. Having that experience to just pray, even out loud, with Mary, feeling this peace and this affirmation that this is where I’m supposed to be in this moment, I think it put a little hunger in myself to get involved with the church.”

Chelsey and Jonathan were married Oct. 22, 2021, on the feast of St. John Paul II.

Hare said it is an exciting time to be working at the national shrine.

“I’m very excited for the opportunity to just bring people closer to the Shrine,” she said. “I think there is so much opportunity for people to become aware that this is the only approved Marian apparition site in the United States. What a unique site in the Green Bay Diocese. There are so many people who have the opportunity to learn what it is. So it’s just the simple hope for me to bring that message to every household, not only in the Green Bay Diocese, but to the world.”

Among the duties Hare will oversee include revamping the Shrine’s website and updating materials that are distributed to pilgrims.

“I’m very cognizant that the impact (of the work) that we’re doing at the Shrine is going to be built for generations upon generations,” she said. “So making sure that we have timeless materials to hand out that can be evolved over time is going to be a really cool experience to do.”

Hare said that the same joy she experienced while learning and deepening her faith in college is the joy she hopes others can feel when visiting the shrine.

“I think there is so much opportunity to share the joy of the Catholic Church and to share a brilliant future for the Catholic Church,” she said. “My personalized mission — not only working at the Shrine, but within parish life and as a Catholic — is just to bring that joy and be a witness to joy for the Catholic Church.”

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The message went on, “but you must do more, make a general confession and offer your Communion for the conversion of sinners.” Since Adele responded to the mission Our Lady entrusted to her of gathering the children and teaching, we can safely believe that she took seriously the invitation to prayer and offering her Communion for the conversion of sinners.

When returning to the pew after receiving holy Communion, what do you do? Maybe you join in singing the hymn or pause for a few moments in silent prayer, having a heart-to-heart conversation with our Savior about our fears and hopes.

It is a powerful moment of prayer, and Our Lady asks us to pray for the conversion of sinners, which begins with ourselves, our family and friends, and the rest of the world.

The next time you receive the Eucharist, fulfill Our Lady’s request and pray for the conversion of sinners. You can pray with your own words or use the prayer I wrote (seen at right) to teach people how to pray in this way. Adele attended Mass and received holy Communion. After the apparition, she offered her holy Communion for the conversion of sinners and prepared children to receive their first holy Communion in response to Our Lady’s request to “teach the children how to approach the sacraments.”

The next time you approach to receive the Eucharist, remember the words Mary spoke to Adele and use them to deepen your eucharistic devotion and prayer.

NATIONAL SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF GOOD HELP
Champion, WI

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9 am - 4 pm (Sept. - April)

MASS
Daily | 11 am
Tues. & Sat. | Additional 8:30 am Mass
Sunday | Additional 8:30 am Mass May-October

CONFESSION
Daily | 10 am & 2 pm
Saturday | 9:15 am (following Mass)

DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS
Rosary | Daily 10:30 am
Divine Mercy Chaplet | Daily at 3 pm
Adoration | Daily from 12 - 3 pm

FEATURED EVENTS

EUCHARISTIC HEALING SERVICES
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WALK TO MARY
First Saturday in May

MARIAN CONFERENCE
The weekend before Memorial Day

FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
August 15

ANNIVERSARY OF THE MIRACLE OF THE FIRE AND APPARITION
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