

# **Note from the Administrator**

20 September 2020

Dear Parishioners,

### Benedicamus Domino!

On the feast of the Nativity of our Lady, I composed and sent a letter to the President of the United States, Donald J. Trump. This letter was inspired by the recent occasion of the Republican National Convention in which the President had a musical celebration that began with the Ave Maria. In this letter, I asked President Trump, as leader of our nation, to consecrate the United States of America to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Further, I asked him to do so on 7 October in honor of the victory of Lepanto – a victory won through our Lady's intercession. Even more, I asked him to do so here at the National Shrine of Saint Alphonsus Liguori, owing to the reality that Baltimore is the first Diocese in the United States to call upon our Lady's patronage. This letter has been sent through many different channels and I am grateful to a variety of different people who have helped me behind the scenes to get this letter to Mr. Trump.

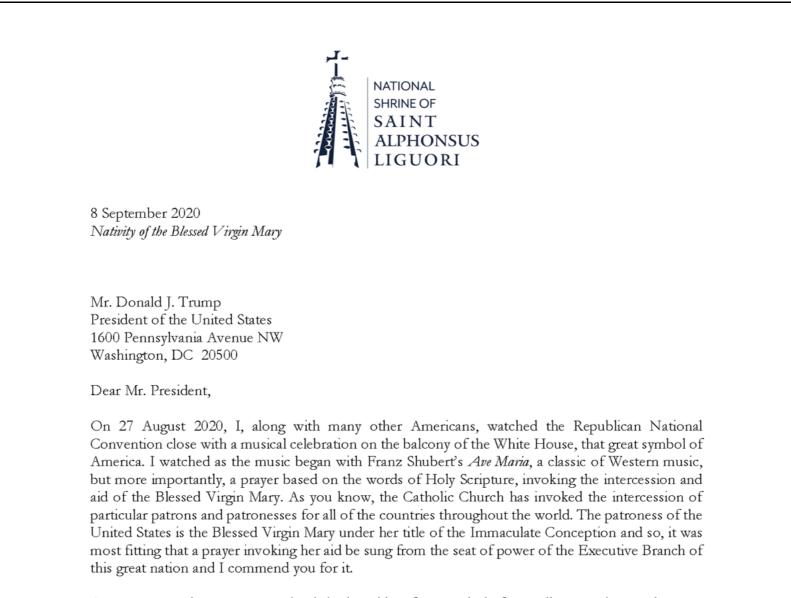
As of now, the President has not responded to my letter. I write to tell you all of this for two reasons. First, the news of my letter has begun to gain attention outside of the parish. It is only fitting, that you, my parishioners, learn of this from me. Secondly, I tell you this so that you may join your prayers and sacrifices to mine for the will of God to be done in this. My request of the President is a bold one, to be sure, but the Lord invites us to such acts of faith and trust in His Divine Will. In light of recent events in our nation, an act of consecration to the Blessed Mother seems more and more important, entrusting ourselves and our nation to Her powerful intercession.

Finally, it is important for us to thank Father Kiefer. It was his bold vision for this parish that inspired and gave me the courage to write the letter and to invite the President to consecrate the nation. Many times, he spoke to us as a parish of our need to pray for our national leaders and of his hope that one day, the political leaders of our nation would consecrate this country to our Lady. May that day become a reality soon.

Now, we pray, wait, and trust in the plan of Almighty God who orders all things. May He look kindly upon this small effort and bless it, if it be pleasing to Him.

Saint Alphonsus Liguori, pray for us! Saint John Neumann, pray for us! Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos, pray for us!

-Father Bozant, FSSP



As you are acutely aware, our nation is in the midst of a great deal of turmoil, uncertainty, and unrest.

The instigator of all division among the human race is none other than the great Enemy of our souls and Prince of Darkness. We find in the words of Saint Paul that the great battle in this life is fought in the spiritual realm, among "principalities and powers," not primarily flesh and blood (Ephesians 6:12). Being a man of faith, you know that Sacred Scripture records the great promise of Almighty God that His light cannot be mastered by the darkness (cf. John 1:5). Additionally, no sooner did man fall in the third chapter of Genesis than God Himself promised the remedy to this darkness: His Son, the seed of a woman, sent to crush the head of that infernal serpent (cf. Genesis 3:15). It is this same woman spoken of again in the Book of Revelation that is engaged in fierce battle with the serpent who seeks to devour her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Revelation 12:1-5). Thus, Almighty God has given us the gift of this woman to aid us in our battle against the great Enemy; He has given us His mother with those solemn and august words spoken from the Cross, "Behold thy mother" (John 19:27).

Mr. President, you have been given the authority to govern this nation from Almighty God, for all authority comes from Him (cf. Romans 13:1). As a result, you, and all leaders of this world, are engaged in a battle between good and evil, light and darkness. This battle should not be fought alone. On 27 August, you invoked the aid of the same woman of Genesis and Revelation to assist you in your role of governance. I beg you to call upon her again. I ask you to consecrate this great nation to the Blessed

Virgin Mary, so that those words, Ave Maria, first pronounced by the Archangel Gabriel those many centuries ago, sparking the hope of God's promise, may resound from coast to coast, so that you may invoke the protection of the great Mother of God; so that you may call down the blessings of God's grace upon this nation, which has been a light of hope to so many throughout the world and must continue to be in these dark times.

I am inviting you, Mr. President, to come to Baltimore, Maryland, to the National Shrine of Saint Alphonsus Liguori in the heart of the city to consecrate the United States of America to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Baltimore is the first Catholic Diocese in the United States - the first American Diocese to invoke our Lady's help. Our National Shrine is a magnificent testament to the American dream, built by Bavarian immigrants to this country in the mid-1800s. Affectionately known as Baltimore's Powerhouse of Prayer and a place where saints have prayed, the National Shrine has called both Saint John Neumann and Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos its pastors. It was Blessed Seelos who was famed for having ridden his horse up to the White House to meet with President Lincoln, unannounced, to secure the freedom of his Redemptorist novices from the draft into the Union Army during the Civil War.

Even more, I invite you to come to the National Shrine in Baltimore on the 7th of October, a day commemorating the great victory of the Battle of Lepanto. By 1453, the Turks had conquered most of Europe. In 1571, three Catholic powers (Genoa, Spain, and the Papal States) formed the Holy League and its fleets set sail to confront the Turks on the west coast of Greece on 7 October 1517, though they were vastly outnumbered. Pope Saint Pius V called for the soldiers, as well as all the faithful throughout Europe, to invoke the aid of Our Lady by praying the Rosary. Some accounts say that the Pope was granted a miraculous vision of the Holy League's stunning victory. Without a doubt, the Pope understood the significance of the day's events when he was eventually informed that all but 13 of the nearly 300 Turkish ships had been captured or sunk. She is honored by two titles as a result of that day: Our Lady of the Rosary and Our Lady of Victory. Come to Baltimore and consecrate the United States to the Blessed Virgin Mary on 7 October, asking her once again to bring the light of victory to the darkness that gathers.

Mr. President, I am praying for you with great fervor. Each month, our faithful gather for prayer and Holy Mass and pray for the leaders of our nation. Know of my continued prayers for you and of the prayers of my faithful. May the grace of Almighty God ever enlighten you, strengthen you, and guide you in your governance of this great nation and may our Lady intercede for you and for the American people.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Jan M. Bergant, FSSP

Father Ian M. Bozant, FSSP Administrator National Shrine of Saint Alphonsus Liguori

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#### COMING UP AT THE SHRINE:



## COMMEMORATION OF ALL SOULS DAY

JOIN US FOR A VERY SPECIAL HIGH MASS offered for your intentions here at the Shrine. The Mass setting will be Tomás Luis de Victoria's hauntingly beautiful Missa pro Defunctis for four voices. Visit our website to find out how you can hear the Mass live - either in person or online - and to enroll your intentions now.

> A love marked by remembrance and prayer is shown toward the departed by the faithful who were most dear to them. ...We should not think that anything reaches the dead whom we care for, except what we solemnly ask for them by the sacrifice of the altar or by prayer or alsmsgiving. -Saint Augustine

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