

Deceased: grandmother of
John (Fisher) and James
(O-C) Smith.

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Deceased: friend of James
Flynn (St. Ed's.) Ill: Mr.
Wm. Dooley (Placement Office),
friend of Tom Carroll (Alumni).

The Pope Of Our Lady

As we make ready to fold the Marian Year into history, Pope Pius XII stands on the threshold of death. It is more than a coincidence that history will recall the two together, and bless their memory.

Father Eugenio Pacelli -- the future Pope Pius XII -- was consecrated a bishop on May 13, 1917, in the same hour that Our Lady appeared for the first time to the three children of Fatima. During her apparitions at Fatima, Our Lady said that World War I, then in progress, would end soon. But she warned that "if the offenses against God do not stop, another and worse one will begin..." Pope Pius XII was elected in March, 1939, and the Germans invaded Poland in September -- just six months later. This was the beginning of World War II, the war she had foretold.

Our Lady also said at Fatima that if her requests were not granted, Russia would "scatter her errors throughout the world, provoking wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred; the Holy Father will have much to suffer; various nations will be destroyed." All these things have come about in the reign of Pius XII. If you think no nations have been completely destroyed, consider Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania which have been swallowed by Russia.

And yet his reign has been a time of triumph. He established devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary throughout the world. In 1942, his voice came by radio to the bishops of Portugal, dedicating the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Six weeks later, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the pope repeated the consecration at St. Peter's in Rome. In 1945, he extended the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, August 22, to the Universal Church.

Doubtlessly, the actions which did most to secure for Pius XII the title, "Pope of our Lady," was his promulgation of the doctrine of Her Assumption -- on the Feast of All Saints, 1950.

Reliable sources close to the Vatican assert that the Blessed Mother gave a special sign of approval to his action in declaring this dogma -- that on four occasions in 1950, while he was walking in the Vatican gardens, he beheld the Miracle of the Sun -- a miracle similar to the one seen at Fatima by 70,000 people in 1917. This story has never been officially confirmed, or officially denied.

At Fatima, Our Lady said: "I shall come back to ask the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart." In 1929 she came back as promised, and made her request known to Lucy who was then in a convent. The girl made the request known to her superiors, but no action was taken for a long time. Then, in an apostolic letter dated July 7, 1952, Pope Pius XII made the long-awaited consecration: "Now, in a most special way, We dedicate and consecrate all peoples of Russia to the same Immaculate Heart."

And this action recalls the promise which Our Lady made at Fatima: "In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me; it will be converted, and a certain period of peace will be granted to the world."

Now gravely ill, the Holy Father deserves our prayers for giving us the Age of Mary.

Remember -- there is no more gracious gesture you could make at this time than offer a little Spiritual Bouquet to your parents for Christmas. It's an old Notre Dame custom; it's something distinctive in the best Notre Dame tradition. And there are few, if any, other things in this world they would prefer. It's a token of love. It's a gift that can't be bought by you -- with their money -- either!