



WEEKLY LETTER FROM MONSIGNOR KEN

September 7, 2025

This Monday, September 8 is the Blessed Mother's birthday! Appropriately, and providentially, this weekend we have our beautiful display of Marian apparitions from around the world. While all have Church acceptance, not all have been given "official" approval. The process to do so has changed over the years. In the earlier years of the Church, up to the 1500's, reported apparitions underwent an approval process conducted by local clergy. These apparitions are now considered "traditionally approved."

After the Council of Trent, there was a more intense policy. It began with the local bishop and could go all the way up to the Vatican. Here are five factors that were to be considered: 1. There couldn't be any factual errors in what Mary has reportedly said or requested.; 2. The person who received the vision had to be in good psychological health, balanced, honest, sincere, and respectful of Church authority.; 3. There couldn't be anything about the vision that went against Church doctrine.; 4. The person claiming to have seen Mary couldn't be trying to benefit financially from the visions. 5. The vision has produced healthy spiritual fruits. In summary, you could say that all the appearances of the Blessed Mother seek to increase devotion and prayer, encourage conversion and strengthen our faith.

I hope you are able to take some time to visit our amazing display. It will give you a spiritual shot in the arm. There are, of course, the more famous apparitions—Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Lourdes, and Our Lady of Fatima. However, among all the appearances of the Blessed Mother, do you know the one that is the only approved site right here in America? It took place in 1859 in Wisconsin to a young Belgian girl, Adele Brise. There is now the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in New Franken, Wisconsin. In that appearance, Mary asked, as she often does, for prayers for the conversion of sinners. In response to the Blessed Mother, Adele responded with words that we can and should make our own: "What more can I do dear Lady?"

Then, Mary asked Adele to educate children in the Faith and prepare them for the Sacraments. Sounds like a timely and important message? Her words were: "Gather the children in this wild country and teach them what they should know for salvation." Adele wasn't sure how she could do this. Mary continued: "Teach them their catechism. How to sign themselves with the sign of the Cross, and how to approach the sacraments. That is what I wish you to do. Go and fear nothing. I will help you."

Considering that message of the Blessed Mother, and really all of the apparitions, we aren't given anything new, but a reminder to return to the basics. The problem is we don't, imagining that there must be some other more dramatic and creative answer. Mary is repeatedly sent by her Son to show us the way that He has given us. As the saying goes, "Listen to your Mother!"

"His mother said to the servers, 'Do whatever He tells you.' (John 2:5)