



that it would fall apart as soon as it was used, but, in spite of daily use, the staircase remains in place even after more than a century. The wood is of a hard variety and is not native to New Mexico. Its origin is still a mystery.

Source: "Guadalupe current events"

### This Month's Heartfelt Matters

- We have been entrusted with so many worries and requests for conversions.
- This month we will pray especially for all these people and recommend them to st Joseph, also through our own Patron Saints – after all, they want to be invoked as well.
- Generally, we always wish to support our Lay Community spiritually.

Let us take great care of the way we live our lives – not foolishly, but wisely, quietly and confidently, after the example of st Joseph.

Thank you for bearing your spiritual share and for your spiritual contributions!

Once more I wish all of you the help and blessing of st Joseph.

With kind thoughts and regards, I remain, your

*Sister Paula*



February 2012

## Lay Community of St Joseph

### World and Spiritual Life

One need not leave the world to lead a spiritual life. One can/should try to become perfect in one's own home. For neither the professional life nor working in the family is an obstacle if one wants to serve GOD. The pathway to sanctification begins in daily life. The imitation of CHRIST leads through the world in daily routine. It is an inconspicuous way, of course. Hardly anyone will notice you unless people call you a mock saint or a bigot. Yes, it must really happen in silence to prevent a person from putting too much strain on the people around him.

Saint Joseph is an absolute, marvelous example. After all, we ask him every day to give us courage to imitate his life of virtue.

Not a single word from the mouth of st Joseph has been handed down in Holy Scripture. We read that he "did" what GOD expected him to do. He acted and then he was the quiet, silent and hidden one again. It is precisely this Saint that we all need in our time, in which there is so much windy, empty and idle talk, in which so many conferences are held, day and night – and so little is actually done! There are so many worries in our families – the

youth are drifting away from GOD and rather turn to worldly matters. Fathers and mothers are worried about their jobs and the necessary means of living. Faith in GOD is often not lived up to and not passed on. One could fill books with stories about the situation of the Church, the world and the poorest on it.

Let us go to st Joseph. Every faithful, ordinary person knows that he or she is understood by him – he knows about our lives.

### Miraculous Staircase in Santa Fe

In 1873, the sisters of the academy of “Our Lady of Light” of Loretto, in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in the southwest part of the United States of America, engaged Mexican carpenters



to construct a gothic chapel modelled upon the Sainte-Chapelle of Paris. Conceived by the architect Mouly, this structure was built in five years at a cost of \$30.000. It measured 22.50 metres (74 feet) in length, 7.50 metres (25 feet) in width and 25.50 metres (84 feet) in height. The structure was almost completed when an error or an omission was noticed: there was

no means to ascend to the choir loft which was at the back of the chapel. Several carpenters were called to the scene, but they all answered the same: on account of the height of the loft, it was impossible to build a staircase; the stairs would take up too much space in the nave. As a result, it would become necessary to make use of a ladder, or completely rebuild the loft.

In great consternation the sisters decided to entrust to st Joseph, whose feast day was drawing near, this humanly insoluble dilemma. They began a novena in his honour. On the last day of the novena, a grey-haired man leading a donkey and carrying a tool chest stopped at the Academy. He asked to speak with Mother Magdalene, the superior in charge of the convent at that time, and offered to build the stairs. Delighted, Mother Magdalene accepted his offer immediately. The construction of the stairs lasted about six months. Certain sisters who were present at the work site remarked that the mysterious worker had used only a saw, a T-square and a hammer. They remembered seeing tubs of water filled with pieces of soaking wood. When Mother Magdalene looked for the worker to pay him, he was nowhere to be found. A reward was offered; no one claimed it. Even the local lumber yard gave no proof of purchase for the wood used.

The completed work is a circular staircase of thirty-three steps consisting of two complete spirals, at 360°, without any central support. It rests above against the loft and below on the floor, where the entire weight seems to be supported. Woodpegs take the place of nails. During the course of the years, architects and builders from numerous foreign countries have inspected this architectural wonder. They all marvel to see how the stairs still remain standing. Certain people thought