

TO OPEN THE BORDERS!

Just as the primary purpose of the Pilgrim Virgin is to attract attention to the Message of Fatima and to confirm the reality of that message, so the purpose of our trip around the world with the miraculous statue is to attract attention to the message given by Our Lady at Fatima, and to confirm the reality of that message through the evidence of our own faith in escorting the statue.

The word "miraculous" is not used inadvisedly.

"Can Hardly Believe..."

It was Pius XII himself who said about the Pilgrim Virgin: "We can hardly believe what we are seeing with our eyes." This statue has been the instrument of so many marvels in so many parts of the world that no less than *seven large volumes* have been written to describe them. And these wonders have been not only in the nature of miraculous cures, of doves flying from the sky and accompanying the statue for hours and days on end without food or drink. There have also been what might be called "political miracles," beginning with the opening of the French-Spanish border in 1947 as the statue passed, up to the wonder of hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese of *all different faiths praying together* when the statue visited South Vietnam in 1974.

Border Opened

One of the marvels of these "political miracles" has been their continuation long afterwards. The border between France and Spain, which had been closed during the time of the civil war and had not been opened afterwards, has remained open ever since the Pilgrim Virgin crossed it...and the relationship between France and Spain has grown warmer and warmer to the present time. And in South Vietnam, there are now thousands of

people, most of them Buddhists, going to a shrine outside of Saigon where the Pilgrim Virgin "rested" for a day and where many miracles are claimed. Our Lady is said to have prophesied that great crowds will be coming there (naturally non-Christians) by 1980.

It would be ridiculous for us to attempt to summarize the highlights of such wonders around the world during the past 30 years in this brief statement.

Expected at Freedom Bridge

Many countries where the statue has previously visited during these past three decades have earnestly awaited a return visit and have eagerly received the announcement that the Pilgrim Virgin is now going to make a trip around the entire globe. Plans have been made in Korea to receive the statue and to have an All-Night Vigil at the Freedom Bridge. Many other countries plan receptions of this statue which Pope Pius referred to as "*The Messenger of Her Royalty*" when he instituted the Feast of the Queenship of Mary in 1954 and said that in this doctrine of Our Lady's Queenship lies "*the world's greatest hope for peace.*"

This is important to understand.

Archbishop Chi of South Vietnam exclaimed: 'It is a miracle!' as tens of thousands of Vietnamese of different faiths united in prayer for peace before the Pilgrim Virgin.

When we acknowledge the Queenship of Mary, we, in effect, make an Act of Consecration to Her. If we acknowledge Her as our Queen, we acknowledge that we are Her subjects...that we belong to Her...that God has given Her a certain dominion over us and over our world. Thus the carrying of the statue around the world has the effect of an "around-the-world Act of Consecration." It is an around-the-world act of fealty to the Queen of Peace Who at Fatima promised the triumph of Her Immaculate Heart over the evils of our time and "an era of peace to mankind."

Preparation Needed

We must therefore see in this world journey a major responsibility. Those of us who will accompany the statue are, in effect, the courtiers of the Queen of Heaven.

But also all those who are not actually accompanying the statue have a grave responsibility. This is our Queen, circling the globe, *the very Queen Who has promised to drive back the powers of evil and give us peace.* And how can She succeed unless *all of Her children* accompany Her by their prayers, and prepare Her way by little acts of sacrifice?

