

**The Dispatch**  
COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS  
*News and Opinion in the service of Truth*

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MEMBER OF **MDDC**  
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Published twice monthly,  
1st & 3rd Thursday  
**Next Publication: May 18**

# EDITORIAL

## The reality of war comes home

Was Rob Seidel so different from any other young man that he should be remembered by so many this past Monday, Memorial Day?

Like all men he had a mother and a father, other family members, and those who considered themselves his friends. The man was good-natured, had a good sense of humor, and was likable, so he may have had more friends than many. But what brought out so many people to his funeral that the major basilica in a little town

could barely hold them all? Yes, it was the young man, but more so, it was the catastrophe of war.

Yes we remember the man, but more, we identify with this terrible thing that men engage in. This thing that takes lives of men who would seem to have so many years left to live. We remember war ... the wife and children he won't have, grandchildren, or retirement years. No, he has already retired against his parents' wishes, his friends' wishes, and

possibly even his own wishes, but not against his will.

This man did not go to war unaware of what he faced. It takes courage for a man to be willing to give up his life for a greater cause, for the many. "Humble," "selfless," "strong leader" were words used to describe his character. Fitting for a man I knew personally, if only briefly. But it is these things we remember, these things we identify with, these things that brought out so many.

The ultimate sacrifice.

We are a peaceful people in St. Joseph's valley. War has been far from us since those three terrible days in July 1863. Yet this man reminds us of what war brings - the loss, the pain, the suffering, the sacrifice. Sometimes too much to bear, yet without it comes no change, no new tomorrow, no peace.

- Raymond Buchheister  
Editor and Publisher

### OP ED

## The Da Vinci Code and "The Lady of Emmitsburg"

Dan Brown's book, "The Da Vinci Code," has moved into movie theaters. Discussion groups, pro and con, can be found in every community. Will religious groups become upset or will the issues bring them closer together? Strong admonitions exist for the faithful not to attend the movie. I could go on and on.

Not to slight the public's overwhelming interest in "The Da Vinci Code" issues, I wish, however, to discuss a local religious controversy that has dominated Emmitsburg.

The so-called Lady of Emmitsburg religious situation began in 1993, when an alleged Marian visionary, Dr. Gianna Talone-Sullivan, reported receiving messages from the Blessed Virgin Mary during weekly Thursday night prayer groups at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Emmitsburg.

On Sept. 8, 2000, the Catholic Archdiocese of Baltimore forbade Talone-Sullivan from meeting on church property. In 2003, Cardinal Keeler, Archbishop of Baltimore, issued a written decree that the alleged apparitions were

not supernatural. The Catholic Church had rendered its decision: there would be no more weekly prayer groups, no more weekly messages from the Mother of God.

But supporters have not disappeared. The local visionary's followers, known as the OLOE, "Our Lady of Emmitsburg" group, still gather. Their numbers have grown, and they recently moved to the Lynfield Complex on U.S. 15.

The messages are clear:

... This holy place in Emmitsburg, Maryland, the Center of my Immaculate Heart, will be a living realization of the Gospel ... (May 11, 2000)

... Out of all the places in the world, there is no place that is called the Center of my Immaculate Heart ... This is not just another site. Emmitsburg is the Center of my Immaculate Heart... (April 1, 2003)

... My Son has deemed this place to be the Center of my Immaculate Heart. ... (Jan. 1, 2004)

... I desire to be known as Our Lady of Emmitsburg ... here at the Center of my Immaculate Heart. ... (March 14, 2005)

Dr. Courtenay Bartholomew, author of "The Immaculate Heart of Mary and Mother Seton's Emmitsburg" (2003), and "The Last Help Before the End of Time" (2005), is an outspoken Christian believer in the Blessed Mother's coming to Emmitsburg:

... Until proven wrong, I sincerely believe that Emmitsburg and Elizabeth Seton's area will be the Center of Mary's Immaculate Heart in the United States. ... (2002)

Dr. Bartholomew appealed to Cardinal Keeler on Aug. 22, 2003, "... Mother Seton's Emmitsburg will eventually be the greatest of all Marian shrines and is a privilege which Americans should not disregard, disrespect, or deny..."

The Aug. 18, 2005 press release from local Catholic Church spiritual leaders to parishioners was quite clear:

...We the undersigned

Catholic pastors, pastoral life director, and religious leaders of the Emmitsburg area urge our people to cease the activity about which the Church has decreed 'nothing of a supernatural nature is occurring.' We the undersigned remind our people to abide by the directives of the Church. ...

Emmitsburg has many concerns, above and beyond the religious issue of The Lady of Emmitsburg. Nevertheless, I directly challenge the town, the Seton Shrine Daughters of Charity, the Mount University and Grotto, the Emmitsburg Historical Society, Frederick County Tourism Council, and anyone else who is interested, to immediately plan to acquire land located between the Basilica of the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and the Mount's National Grotto of Lourdes for the express purpose of erecting a National Perpetual Adoration Chapel/Shrine identified as, and dedicated to The Sorrowful And Immaculate Heart Of Mary, Lady Of Emmitsburg.

- Paul A. Clarke, Ed. D.  
Thurmont, Md.

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#### Correction

The admission fee for the Pennsylvania Lavender Festival at Willow Pond Farm, Fairfield, Pa., June 16-18, is \$3. Children under 12 are free. There is free parking and shuttle service.

*Editor's Note: Paul A. Clarke, Ed. D. is the author of "Emmitsburg, Maryland: Its Catholic Heritage and the Legacy of Elizabeth Ann Seton" (2004), reviewed in The Dispatch, April 7, 2005.*