



# Napa's Black Madonna

BY JOSEPH PRONECHEN

**A**s the wildfires devoured acreage in Northern California and were greedily heading for the Omlin home in Napa, the family came through unharmed in what they consider to be miraculous fashion.

Surrounded by raging flames, Drs. Kenny and Ninveh Omlin, their two infant children and Kenny's parents and brother escaped with only minutes to spare. And they credit the Blessed Mother, the Rosary and St. Joseph for their safety.

Ninveh gave the Register a vivid timeline of harrowing events. About 10pm Oct. 8, as 2-week-old Jonah and 20-month-old Noah were sleeping peacefully and everyone else in the household was settling in for the night, the phone rang.

"No one calls around 10-ish unless something is wrong," Ninveh said.

side, the couple could see no evidence of Atlas, as this wildfire was called, so they didn't think much of it.

Then came a second call. Still, all the Omlins could see from their bedroom window was an orange glow in the sky.

## Fleeing the Flames

Hours later, Ninveh recalled, "Looking out the window, Kenny turned to me and said, 'We've got to go.'" Immediately, Ninveh added, "He got his wedding ring, and I got mine."

She concentrated on getting the children in her car while Kenny ran to the in-law unit, where his parents, Karl and Kathy, and his brother, also named Karl, live. He aided his elderly parents and his brother, who has Down syndrome, out of the residence. It was 3am.

With the children safely in their car seats, Ninveh ran back into the house.

"I grabbed my pink rosary, which I

they drove to the property's gates — and beheld the inferno. "It really was scary to see a fire rage that way," Ninveh said. "It was out of this world — shocking."

As Kathy was praying the Rosary, Ninveh called her mother, Shimeran: "Mom, please pray." Shimeran started praying, and people began messaging that they, too, were praying. "What a support system it was to have that," Ninveh said.

But the electronic gate wouldn't open — the electricity had gone out.

Providentially, a month before, a repairman showed Kenny how to manually unlock and crank the gates open. "Everybody was praying the Rosary," Kenny said, as he opened the gates.

The next stop was to get to the house of the family's nanny, who had first alerted them. It was 4am. "Kenny's mom was sitting there and still had the rosary beads in her hands," Ninveh said. "Her lips were moving, praying."