

Rourke's divine Intervention

Mickey Rourke has found salvation, says Steve Garbarino in *Maxim*. "When people come up to me and say, 'You're back,'" the 56-year-old actor says, "I say, 'Brother, you don't know where I've been.'" After memorable appearances in such '80s classics as *Diner* and *The Pope of Greenwich Village*, Rourke self-destructed. He got arrested for various misdemeanors, and tried his hand as a professional boxer, with repeated beatings leaving his once-handsome face unrecognizable. Soon, he was broke. The bottom came in 1998, when he began contemplating suicide. Rourke sought guidance from a priest, who urged him to appeal to St. Jude. Rourke wrote a note of reconciliation to his ex-wife, actress Carré Otis, tucked it behind a wooden sculpture of the saint at the church, and lit a prayer candle. Today, Rourke speaks of "turning the other cheek" and keeps a statue of the Virgin Mary in his living room. "I let my past destroy me. I was walking around my adult life with my fists clenched, pointing the finger at everyone but me. But I finally opened my hands and said, Wow! This is a lot easier than walking around with smoke coming out of my ass."