

# DON BOSCO'S MADONNA

MUMBAI

FEBRUARY 2008

VOL. 9 NO. 10

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***"Today the Child Jesus  
who is presented in the  
temple is alive so that  
we may cooperate with him  
in the work of Salvation."  
(Benedict XVI - 2-2-2007)***

**Cover:** *Reproduction of the original  
picture of the Infant Jesus of Prague*



## From The Editor's Desk

*If I Only Took the Time!*

I was shutting my office and leaving for my evening prayer when a lad came in. He was dressed in jeans, sneakers and a T-shirt. He had no special features that I can remember him by. 'Father, may I see you for a moment?' He said timidly. I told him to hang on, I would be back soon. As I was leaving I told him help himself to the magazines on the settee, till I got back.

I was barely gone for a half hour but when I got back I found the lights still on, the magazines left there but not the boy. He had gone! How could not figure out where? I asked the night watchman if he had seen the lad (I described him) and the watchman said he had left about a quarter of an hour earlier. Not thinking much of it, I came back to my desk and continued working.

It was close to midnight when a gentle knock drew my attention to the door. I looked up and saw this middle-aged gentleman dressed in casuals and looking rather shaken. He asked if I was 'Father Ian' and when I said I was, asked if his son had come to see me earlier that evening...and when I described him he said: 'yes, that was him.' An hour and a half earlier he had gone to the top of his 22 storeyed building and jumped down. I felt numb with shock. The wind had got out of me. My hands got clammy and my throat was caught up. I had just missed him by half an hour and I would never see him again!

To this day I keep asking myself: why couldn't I have waited and listened to him? What did he have to say? What was it that was troubling him...? There are so many questions that still keep flooding my mind even though the event took place more than 15 years ago. I still feel a sense of regret at not making the time to listen to him.

I will never understand what goes on inside the mind of anyone and more especially of a youngster unless I take the time. Will you make the time to listen to him or her? Do you think it will help?

On occasions like these, when people are in pain, time is never on our side. All we can do is to take each moment, grasping it desperately so as to listen to a hurting youngster, a nervous teenager or a distraught neighbour or relative.

This is not a story to catch your eye. It really happened to me and to this day how I wish it had never taken place. There is no use regretting the lost opportunity. For now I strive to take each approaching moment and cherish each individual who walks into my life and asks for my time. Who knows? I might never see that individual again.

In our fast-paced world sweeping us along in its momentum, we whizz past even our kids whom we lovingly tuck in each night because we have no time to see them awake. God forbid that it should take some harsh reality to compel us to put the brakes to our overspeeding lives before it is too late. Take the time now! This is the only moment you have to say: 'I love you!' – You will never regret it!

*Fr. Ian Douulton sdb*

## 2. THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE

*Fr. Erasto Fernandez, sss*

**F**ew are those who would not be familiar with this story gleaned from Aesop's Fables. However, as often happens nowadays, these ancient stories can be given several modern-day twists depending on the inventiveness of the story-teller. And so it goes with this story too! After losing the first race to the slow and steady Tortoise, the Hare learnt the lesson never to presume on his strengths nor to take things for granted. Having repented of his foolishness and armed with a new determination, he challenged the Tortoise to another race. The sporting Tortoise was ever ready and so happily agreed. This time the Hare made no mistake: no mid-journey naps or diversions! He won the race hands down, leaving the Tortoise way behind, almost at the starting point itself!

### **A New Twist**

Cogitating now on what should be his next step, the crafty Hare came up with a great insight. Rushing over to the abode of the triumphant Tortoise, he suggested still another race. So, at the appointed signal they set off – but this time the Hare carried the Tortoise on his back and sped off till they reached the river bank. Here they changed places as the Hare climbed onto the back of the Tortoise who effortlessly slipped into the water and swam across, ferrying the Hare speedily and safely. On the other side of the river, the roles were once again reversed and in the twinkling of an eye the duo reached the finishing line together. The lesson they both learnt was that when people collaborate instead of competing with one another, they achieve a

lot more with a lot less expenditure of time, energy and effort.

### **Collaboration versus Competition**

This insight of the two friends may seem ill-suited to the highly charged competitive scenario in which most of us live today. Yet, what the two friends learnt isn't so different from what most social and behavioural scientists tell us today. The internationally acclaimed Stephen Covey in his bestseller "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" advocates precisely this principle – he terms it 'The Win-Win Principle.' He contrasts it with the other available options, viz. Lose-Lose in which both parties ensure that the other also loses, Win-Lose in which one wins at the expense of the other – inevitably leading to a later Lose-Win when the loser retaliates, and the Win only, in which a person is concerned about his own profit alone, not consciously or necessarily working to cause the other to lose. He also suggests a modification of the win-win by adding a 'no-deal' option implying that the two parties would continue to negotiate until they can reach a true 'win-win' for both (win-win-or-no-deal). He goes on to show how especially in business enterprises, such an attitude and approach pays rich dividends.

### **Basic Foundations**

However, for such a philosophy of life to prevail, some further background considerations would be necessary. The first is the "Abundance Mentality" because of which one realizes that there is plenty around for all, enough and with a lot to spare. So, there

is no need to beat the other into the dust for anyone to gain what one seeks. If one believes that the rewards are meager and limited it would really be challenging and difficult to share them with others. In the 'rewards' considered, we must include not just monetary gains, but also name, fame, appreciation, promotion and the like, anything, in fact, that makes life worth living. Actually, if we stop to consider the situation realistically, all of God's essential gifts, like air, water, food and others too are available in abundance. What artificially creates a scarcity among people is human greed and a selfish disregard for the good of the other.

Secondly, the readiness to collaborate with others comes from a deep conviction that our lives lie secure in the hands of a loving Father. He will not allow even a hair of our heads to fall without his permission. So it cannot happen that he will allow us to suffer any harm especially when our intentions are clearly to practice the kind of love that he himself recommends. We might suffer a temporary or minor set back, but never a fatal deprivation of something important and vital for life. In fact, St. Paul assures us that for those who love God, everything somehow comes together for their good. Again we have the words of Jesus: 'Whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple - truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward' (Mt. 10:42). So we cannot imagine that when we strenuously work to benefit our neighbour as much as we ourselves want to be benefited, (a real win-win) we could ever come to any real harm, or offend God in any way.

## Eucharist Transforms

Against this background we see how the Eucharist celebrated with faith and love, meaning and involvement brings about a transformation of mentality among people. We are reminded first of all that whatever we have been blessed with is but a sheer gift from the Lord. Even the rewards we gain as a result of our own hard toil and labour ultimately are a gift from the Almighty. Now, these gifts are never given for one's personal benefit *alone*: they are always meant to be shared. Thus the choice of nation of Israel as God's Chosen People was not a privilege for themselves alone. It was an attribute to be lived and made 'palatable' for all, so that seeing their example others would be drawn into a similar Covenant with the Father. The more we share our gifts the more beneficial they become for us too. This is brought out forcefully in the first of the "we" petitions in the Lord's Prayer. The *bread* that we ask from the Father is qualified by the adjective 'epiousios' generally translated as 'daily.' This word can be rendered differently, but more important than the translation is the fact that the word is found only once in the entire Bible and that too, in the Lord's Prayer only, qualifying bread.

The fact that it appears for the first time in this place simply means that it is a new word - specifically coined by the early Christians to bring out the speciality of the 'bread' they were referring to. Since they had to coin a new word, this further means that no existing word was good enough to bring out this special meaning - all of which indicates that the bread referred to was something special indeed! The fact that the word does not occur

again in the Bible seems to indicate that no other reality shares this same specific specialty with the bread – what then could this very special, characteristically Christian bread be, if not the Eucharist?

### **Bread is Life**

Further, since bread is the one element that is present at every Jewish meal, it was often taken to stand for the entire meal – a part for the whole, as in ‘how many hands do you have in this factory?’ This really means: ‘How many men do you employ in this factory?’ And since food sustains life, bread was also taken to represent everything that makes human life more meaningful and pleasurable here on earth. Thus, *bread* stood for air, water, love, sympathy, forgiveness and a whole lot of other human necessities.

Now, what would the extraordinary specialty of the Eucharistic bread consist of? Certainly not the fact that in it we have the entire Christ present for us, body, blood, soul and divinity! Because, this is not the way the early Christians referred to the Eucharist. This kind of thinking is more characteristic of the Middle Ages. What the first century Christians saw as special of the Eucharist is that it is ‘bread that is broken’ – to be shared with the hungry and needy. This is what made it distinctively Christian – for a Christian is, by definition, one who lives not for himself but for others. At Eucharist, he gathers with his fellow-Christians to join Jesus in breaking of himself for the life of the world (Do this as a memorial of me!). So, when the Christian celebrates Eucharist meaningfully each

week, will this not inculcate in him the attitude of sharing – even the little that he has to live on (like the widow who dropped the two coins into the Temple treasury)? The Christian does not worry about what he will have to eat or how he would clothe himself or with what he will provide for the future – for the Father has care of all his needs and will not allow even a hair of his head to drop without his knowing it. So, without a thought for the morrow, the Christian is ready to share all that he has with his needy neighbour (like the man in the parable whose friend arrived from a journey and he had nothing to set before him – so he borrowed three loaves of bread from his neighbour).

### **Peace and Harmony**

With this kind of an Eucharistic attitude of sharing fostered day in and day out, a Christian can be ever ready to share all his resources with his neighbour and work out with him a win-win answer to almost every situation. Now while this sounds idealistic and unrealizable in practice, yet the effort and thrust remain – wherever and whenever possible, the dedicated Christian works out situations the way the Hare and the Tortoise did in their last race. The result is that all benefit and God’s kingdom of peace, fellowship, justice and love reigns supreme among all. And even if this does not happen to the fullest possible measure at the present moment, yet the Christian pursues this path with confidence knowing that the Risen Lord has overcome all sin and self-centredness and that one day his triumph will be fully visible to all. □

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*“Marana tha – Come, Lord Jesus, come!”*



**A MULTIFACETED PERSONALITY**

*Br. Savio D'Mello sdb*

*Youth Coordinator, Madhya Pradesh & Chattisgarh*

**B**r. Savio D'Mello is a multifaceted personality who flourishes in any setting: vocation promotion, technical training, education, missions, social work or youth animation. Today he is the ICYM co-ordinator for the central region spanning the 15 dioceses of Madhya Pradesh, Chattis Garh and Udaipur diocese of Rajasthan.

**This is his unique vocation story...**

If I am a Salesian brother today, I owe it all to Don Bosco Lonavla, where I received my training and life orientation to find my God-given vocation. Actually I landed in Lonavla accidentally in 1970. When I say *accidentally*, I really mean it.

As years went by I had the opportunity of meeting many Salesian brothers whose simple and dedicated life made a deep impression in my mind and heart. Some time later Providence gave me Br. P.M. Thomas as my principal. He was very strict and demanding but he came across to me as a true Salesian, interested in the well being and the formation of aspirants. When it was time for me to make a decision after my SSC, I was undecided, but by this time I was a truly a fan of Don Bosco; I had read many short stories on his life. I paraded up and down in front of the rector's office waiting for my turn to tell him of my decision and when the door opened I made up my mind: *'Monk or no monk, I will be with Don Bosco.'* This decision was very much influenced by my 'Role Model' Br. P.M. Thomas.



Initially I did not know what that YES really meant, but as years went by I began to realize what it means.

As I see it, a religious brother's vocation is much more challenging than that of a priest. In our modern terminology we can say that 'the priesthood is much more popular than the brotherhood, especially in a congregation of Priests and Brothers, like ours. A lay person out in the world does not understand this vocation and hence is less appreciative of it. People are often tempted to compare the two vocations. In such a situation a brother could suffer a crisis and someone with ulterior motives could easily be discouraged and end up not even appreciating his own vocation.

As for me, I thank God and Mary, my loving Mother for the grace of perseverance they have showered on me. In spite of my infidelities they have been with me in times of great trials and temptations. □

*If you feel the call to be a Don Bosco Priest or Brother, we could help: **Contact us at [frbrian@rediffmail.com](mailto:frbrian@rediffmail.com)***



# THE SMILE OF GOD'S PRESENCE

by Sr. Francis Rose

***Through looking at Christ in these sick and suffering people, we begin to have some faint idea of the measure of his love.***

**A**s we look at the problems of the world today we may tend to be discouraged. There doesn't seem to be much place for God in a world overwhelmed by problems of warfare, unemployment, pollution, overcrowded cities, robberies, violence, drug addiction, and even some new forms of sickness which are not yet amenable to cure.

Yet it is in this world that Christ's call rings out strongly and clearly, urging us to listen to his Word, to seek him, to imitate him and to follow him in our love and concern for one another. It is especially in our care for the sick that the world should see how we Christians love, not just one another, but everyone.

## **Jesus' Love For The Sick**

The healing stories of the Gospel make us aware of Christ's great desire to be with those who were sick and reach out to the outcasts of society. He seems to have reserved a special love for those who were abandoned because of their illness. His response to the leper who implored him, 'Sir, if you want to, you can cure me,' reveals his extraordinary compassion: 'Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him and said, "Of course I want to. Be cured".'

How do we learn to recognize

the face of Christ in those who are sick? The first step, I believe, is a burning *desire* to do so. If we search for him we must surely find him. The marks of suffering in our sick are the marks of their identification with Jesus.

St Paul's deepest experience is of suffering with Christ. He doesn't mean merely a feeling that Christ is close and understands, or that he helps a fellow sufferer. He means much more. He means that Christ suffers my sufferings *with me* and *in me*. Christ's sufferings and mine are one. Christ is the suffering servant whose service is his suffering. If we look for him, it must be among the sick and suffering.

## **Jesus Is With The Sick**

Christ wanted to identify himself with everything in our human experience and in our human condition, except sin. In the garden of Gethsemane and on the Cross, Christ assumed all our ills – even our fear of suffering and of death – in his own human sensibility. So, when we come to experience pain and fear at times of sickness, we know that he has been through it before us, that he is with us. In and through our sickness, we are more closely identified with him.

Christ passed through the



think of Maeve, a beautiful young woman in her early thirties. She is still very beautiful, but a brain tumour has endeavoured to ravage the beauty of her body. There is pain in her face, her limbs no longer move, she is totally dependent on her carers. But sometimes when Maeve is asked how she feels, she points her thumb or lifts a finger to say all is well; and a beautiful smile spreads over her face, a smile radiant

humiliation of the Cross to the glory of the Resurrection. Now that he is in glory, the limbs that were bruised and 'the wounds of the nails shine with resplendence. If we could see through Christ's eyes, that is what we would see in the bodies of the sick today. The marks of suffering in the sick are their marks of oneness with Jesus. Already, these marks are radiant with the glory of Resurrection. For Resurrection is not just a future hope, it is also a present reality.

with love and peace, a smile that speaks of God's presence.

### **An Old Lady's Story**

Jean Vanier in his book, *Be Not Afraid*, mentions a lovely incident of discovering Christ in a sick old lady. 'I think of an old black lady of eighty who lived alone in a broken down area of Cleveland. She was sick: she had been vomiting all day. I went to see her and she said: "Man, I have been walking with him for forty years, for forty years I have been walking with him." And it was true. Her eyes were bright, something flowed from her face. While I was staring at her, amazed at her beauty, she burst out laughing. "You know," she said, "He must see God in me".'

### **Hidden Face Of Jesus**

The glory of Christ was normally hidden during his earthly life. However, there was a glimpse of it when he was transfigured on Tabor. The face of Jesus is also hidden in our sick: behind the look of pain or anxiety is the glory of God, 'the glory on the face of Christ' (2 Cor: 4-6).

Sometimes, too, we get a glimpse of the beauty and loveliness of Christ in the sick we care for. I

Most of us are familiar with the story of St Francis of Assisi and the leper. How the debonair young man passed the leper with horror, flinging him a golden coin; then suddenly he turned



back, wounded, as it were, by grace; he threw himself down from his horse and embraced the poor man. From then onwards Francis became poor, he became homeless, he attended lepers until he died.

### **Not Content With Distant Pity**

What had happened? Francis had seen Christ in the leper and because he had recognized Christ he could not content himself with giving money and distant pity. He had to become like him, he had to suffer with him and he had to serve him in his suffering people.

Recently, I watched a beautiful young nurse bend over and console a man who was desperately ill. He was frail and wasted as a result of his sickness. And yet as this young girl gazed on him and helped him in his final hours, it would seem that she saw in his face, the face of Christ. She would probably be reluctant to say this, but her gaze and limpid blue eyes were revealing.

So it is Christ whom we look on today in the accident and emergency rooms, in the hospital wards, in drop-in centres, in the wounded and the elderly. Through looking at Christ in these sick and suffering people, we begin to have some faint idea of the measure of his love.

It was love that caused him to come on earth as man, to be rejected, to allow himself to be taken as a criminal and to die on the Cross. And he did this for you and for me. If I can come to realize how much Christ loves me, with all my wayward sinfulness, I will begin to see more clearly the face of Christ in those who are sick. □

## walking with the Church

### **Cremation, Prayer, The Good Old Days**

**Q.** *Could you please tell me the Church's position on cremation. Also is there a preferred position on the storing of ashes. Is it allowable to spread the ashes in a favourite place?*

**A.** Catholics may be cremated is the answer to the first part of your question. In other words cremation is an acceptable form of the final disposition of the human body. There are special prayers in the 'Order of Christian burial' for the final ceremony before the body is sent for cremation.

Our civil law does not stipulate what needs to happen to cremated remains. They can be buried or given to families, who, frankly can legally do anything they want with them.

But the Catholic Church's teaching on the disposition of the ashes is very clear: "The cremated remains of a body should be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they come. This includes the use of a worthy vessel to contain the ashes, the manner in which they are carried, the care and attention to appropriate placement and final disposition. The cremated remains should be



buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium (a special mausoleum for cremated remains only). The practice of scattering cremated remains on the sea, from the air, or on the ground, or keeping cremated remains in the home of a relative or friend of the deceased, are not the reverent disposition that the church requires.” (*Order of Christian Funerals* 417)

**Q.** *I suffer from depression and I find prayer difficult. I did not find church going very satisfactory. Could you give me some advice on how to pray more successfully?* **John**

**A.** John, from your letter I can see you have suffered a great deal. First of all I would like to assure you that all your searching for God, all your efforts to resume attendance at mass and all your work to help your widowed mother are forms of prayer. You are much closer to God than you ever realized. When you pray you do not have to use many words or indeed any words at all. Just sit or kneel quietly at home or whenever you have a free moment, make an act of faith in God’s presence. Give Him time and the opportunity to work on you and He will do the rest. Peace be with you. You are in our prayers.

**Q.** *Were the old times better times? More and more recently I am beginning to think so. We weren’t as well off as we are now, but people were better, there was a better sense of community, families were more united, there was less crime. Am I right in thinking like this?* **Kathleen**

**A.** The above are the principal points in your letter Kathleen. There are many elderly people who think like you. Many who pine for the better times of the past or, if you like the ‘good old days’. Were they better times? Who can tell! Maybe they were. But romanticizing the past can often be an exercise in self-deception. Summers were not necessarily all sunshine. Our memories can be highly selective. We remember the good times and forget or hide or bury the bad or unpleasant. Time is a great healer and not so good events in our lives are healed and forgotten about. So looking back on the past we may see only the nice things. But history tells us that life in every age previous to ours was not easy. It was short. War, disease and poverty were the constant lot of previous generations. Because of our selective memories and from what we know of the hardship and suffering of previous generations I think we might logically infer that everything in our own youth could not have been rosy or better. When we meet the Lord I feel sure He will enlighten us all. Meanwhile let us look forward with hope and pray to the Lord to be with us as we journey on our way to our final destiny ‘where they will be no more tears, no more sorrow.’ □

# Witnesses in & for Our Times



## FR. FRANZ STOCK 1904 - 1948

*by compiled by Ian Doulton sdb*

**D**uring the German occupation, the residents of Rue Lhomond in Paris' 5<sup>th</sup> arrondissement noticed a black silhouette that, several times a week from 1941 - 1944, would glide on his bicycle through the deserted streets of the capital, a saddlebag full to bursting firmly fixed to the carrier. After riding fifteen kilometers, he would arrive at Fresnes Prison, the largest in the Paris region, its 1,500 cells crowded with 5,000 prisoners taken by the Germans. He was careful to avoid drawing attention to the famous saddlebag, filled with an eclectic assortment of objects: books, clothing, bread, chocolate, toothbrushes, paper, pens, and many other things. This cyclist in a cassock was Father Franz the chaplain assigned to visit prisons. He was the guardian angel for about 11,000 French prisoners.

Franz Stock was born on September 21, 1904, in Neheim, Westphalia (western Germany) the eldest of nine children. For Franz his love for his native land and for the Church were one. At the age of twelve, he revealed his desire to become a priest.



### Ministry in Paris

In 1928, Franz pursued his theological studies at the Catholic Institute of Paris and on March 12, 1932 he was ordained a priest in Paderborn. When Hitler came to power, Father Stock gladly accepted the offer of Cardinal Verdier, archbishop of Paris to become the pastor of the German Catholic parish in Paris. He was a very good painter and so on his

arrival at 21-23 Lhomond, in the Latin Quarter he himself decorated the chapel with frescoes.

Soon Father Stock's situation in Paris became uncomfortable as the German authorities reproached him for his lack of enthusiasm for their regime and the French insinuated that he was working for the Gestapo. All he wanted was to be a priest and maintain respect and esteem for the humiliated French. In November 1940, Father Stock accepted the position of chaplain for Fresnes Prison. From April 1941 on, he also visited the two other prisons requisitioned by the Germans in Paris: Cherche-Midi and La Sante. This ministry would soon become most of his life. The German command did not want a French priest for this ministry; therefore, Father Stock was the best choice, with his perfect knowledge of the language. In fact, he would be virtually alone taking care of thousands of prisoners. He refused to wear a uniform (which would nevertheless have made his role easier with the troops), understanding that a priest dressed as a soldier would lose all credibility with the prisoners. His diary, found after his death, allows us to follow his activity. He scrupulously put down in writing all he did to minister to the prisoners and all the information he was able to convey, so as to bring some consolation to their families.

### **The Only Friend**

As a German, Father Stock was often poorly received by the prisoners, but thanks to his exquisite charity Franz proved that he was not playing a double

game. At the risk of his life, he continually broke the rule of the "triple punishment" that hung over many of the prisoners: no contact with families, no mail or reading materials, no packages. He got books for them, especially religious books. He consoled them and cared for their moral and, when he could, physical wounds. Chocolate, very rare during the war, was the most valued commodity, and Father Stock passed out dozens of kilos of it. He passed messages back and forth between the prisoners and their families. For the Jewish prisoners, he got around discriminatory regulations. The chaplain was often the only friend in this hostile universe.

Many prisoners were sent to concentration camps after their trials, but many left the prison only for their executions. The first prisoner he prepared for death was Jacques Bonsergent, an engineer shot "as an example" in December 1940, because he had covered up an insignificant act of resistance. The chaplain stayed with him until the end and returned shattered. He never got used to these grim ceremonies, which nevertheless were repeated several times a week for three and a half years.

### **"God exists!"**

Father Stock often intervened to save a prisoner who had been put on the list of hostages to be shot. One day he struggled the entire day to reach Berlin on the telephone. In the end, he saved the life of a prisoner, who fell into his arms shouting: "God exists!"

Franz Stock welcomed families into his home on Rue Lhomond with the greatest discretion. When

he could, he gave the closest relatives a souvenir of the deceased. An eyewitness commented, "I think Father Stock demonstrated great courage, great compassion, great love."

Father Stock's journal registers 863 executions from January 28, 1942 on, of which he attended 701. In all, he aided 1,300 to 1,500 people in their final moments. In December 1941, he wrote, "This week alone, I prepared seventy-two men for death, assisted them at the final moment and buried them."

### **Prisoner in His Turn**

On August 11, 1944, Franz would have been able to still leave Paris as the Allies approached. Thanks to the ingenuity of seminarian-prisoners and the generous assistance of the Trappist monastery of Bricquebec, which offered vestments and sacred vessels a tent-chapel was made available. Now Franz and the other prisoner-priests offered Masses in different places in the camp, confessions were heard, catechism taught...them. The "Barbed-Wire Seminary" began on April 30, 1945, in a decrepit bunker in Orleans, amidst enormous difficulties: hunger, overcrowding, and a spirit of vengeance on the part of certain guards. Fortunately, the religious authorities rallied in support of the seminary. The following August, the seminary was moved to Coudray. 949 seminarians, of whom 630 would become priests, studied at Coudray until May 1947. On September 18, 1945, the apostolic nuncio, Bishop Angelo Roncalli, the future Pope John XXIII, visited the Barbed-Wire

Seminary. He met Father Stock and embraced him; for him, "Abbe Franz Stock is not a name, it is a program!" The nuncio would return three times, never empty-handed, and would perform several ordinations at Coudray.

Franz Stock got the University of Fribourg to recognize the theological studies done in Coudray. Radiant with his interior life and his charity, Franz Stock nevertheless struggled against sadness and the memories that haunted him. Painting was a great help to him. He made a fresco in the Seminary chapel representing the Virgin of Sorrows and Saint John. Several witnesses were convinced that Jesus Christ often physically appeared to Father Stock after the consecration during his Mass. Franz sometimes alluded to this in veiled terms. In May-June 1947, the German prisoners were freed, the Seminary was disbanded and Father Stock returned to Rue Lhomond in Paris.

On February 22, 1948, Franz Stock suffered an attack of suffocation brought on by a pulmonary edema. Taken to the hospital, he who had so often kept others company during their final moments, died there alone on the 24th, at the age of 43. Before a handful of people, Bishop Roncalli presided at his funeral, followed by burial at Thiais Cemetery in the section reserved for prisoners of war. In 1963 his body would be solemnly transferred to the church that encompasses the Barbed-Wire Seminary's first chapel, in Rechevres, close to Chartres. There are many groups promoting his cause for beatification. □

# IN A CHEERFUL MOOD

## Verbal Communication

First Student: "Our economics professor talks to himself. Does yours?"

Second Student: "Yes, but he doesn't know it. He thinks we're listening."

## Fatal Cuisine

A tourist entered a restaurant in China, and ordered a dinner. He was served a large plate of stew, which he enjoyed immensely. When paying his bill, he jokingly referred to the stew.

"I hope you didn't kill a dog to make it," he said laughingly. The Chinaman looked horrified. "Oh! no sir, we no killee dog," he said. "We find him dead!"

## Cold Facts

Teacher: "Name a liquid that does not freeze."

Jack: "Hot water, sir!"

## The Spirit of Life

Two soldiers were carrying a stretcher with a wounded man on it.

Bill: "I say, Joe, how did you manage to keep him alive?"

Joe: "Brandy!"

Bill: "What! Don't you know that the doctor said you were not to give brandy to any of the wounded?"

Joe: "I didn't! I promised him some!"

## The Tip of the Tongue

Two students were just going into the classroom for an examination is English literature.

"Great Scott!" said one, "I've forgotten who wrote Ivanhoe!"

"That's easy," replied the other, "I'll

tell you that if you'll tell me who the Dickens wrote 'A tale of two cities.'"

## Flying Maths

"If there were four flies on the desk, Eleanor, and I killed one, how many would there be left?"

"One," promptly replied Eleanor. "The dead one."

## Perfect Tact

A customer sat down at a table in a smart restaurant and tied a napkin around his neck. The scandalized manager called a waiter and instructed him. "Try and make him understand as tactfully as possible that that's not done."

Said the thoughtful waiter to the customer: "Pardon me, sir. Shave or haircut, sir?"

## For the Long Haul

Scotsman (at a riding academy): "I wish to rent a horse."

Groom: "How long?"

Scotsman: "The longest you've got laddie. There be five of us going."

## Scars of the Trade

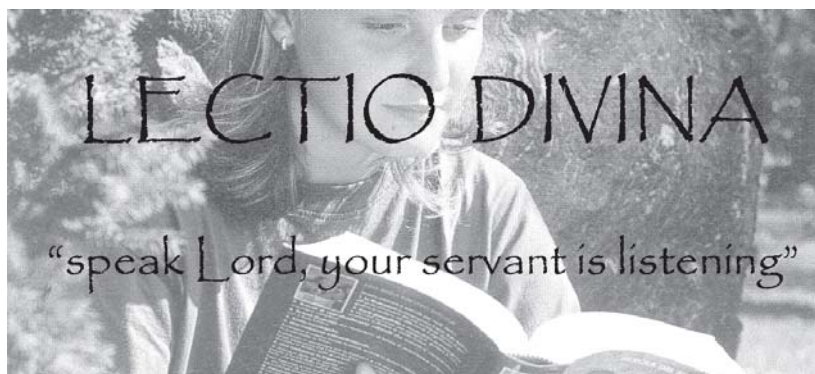
Barber: "Haven't I shaved you before, sir?"

Customer: "No, I got that scar in France."

## Secret of Longevity

There's a theory around that if a fellow doesn't smoke, drink, overeat, or go with girls, he'll live a lot longer. The trouble is, we won't know for sure until somebody tries it. □





## ***The Our Father Who Art in Heaven***

*by Roberta Fora*

**T**he Heavens: A place mysterious and infinite, the marvelous work of the God's creative power.

“When I see the heavens the work of your hands, the moon and the stars which you arranged, what is man that you should keep

him in mind, mortal man that you care for him?” (*Psalm 8*). Just to gaze at the dawn sky painted in the stupendous colors of the morning. It takes your breath away. Marvel at a sunset that is so fascinating, enveloping you in serenity and peace. The pastel blue of a sunny day in mountains,



the darkness bedecked with stars at the end of a peaceful day or the grayish threatening storm clouds that eventually lose themselves in the immensity of the sea.

How many and varied are the emotions that fill us as we contemplate the marvels of the heavens!

It is wonderful at this point to contemplate you, O God. You created everything with immense love and you have made your abode in the heavens. But what is even more consoling is the realization that it is all true! You are in the heavens, but in your omnipotence you are in our midst.

“And I tell you more: whenever two of you on earth agree about anything you pray for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For, where two or three come together in my name, I am there with you” (*Mt 18, 20*).

I believe that if we Christians are convinced of this presence, a lot of things would change.

To know that we can count on Him at every moment is really a great consolation in helping us to

live very serenely. It enables us to trust that we will be able to overcome most of the obstacles in life.

On the other hand we are alone and abandoned when everything around us is negative, as if we were living in a moment of crisis.

Obviously we do not fail to give our children this comforting and reassuring presence. The praise that springs from our hearts as we contemplate the marvelous heavens can be a typical example for our children but even recalling God's marvelous presence in the course of our lives helps us to handle the various moments of our day.

Thank you, Lord, for your presence with us and for the sun that illumines the heavens. You are the light that brightens our humble existence.

As each day passes, help us to remember that you are in heaven, but that you are also present whenever any of your creatures invokes you, seeking you with sincere faith and earnestly desiring to encounter you so that we may one day live with you for all eternity. □

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## BENEDICT XVI

### *on the Our Father*

"God's fatherhood is more real than human fatherhood, because he is the ultimate source of our being; because he has thought and willed us from all eternity; because he gives us our true paternal home, which is eternal. And if earthly fatherhood divides, heavenly fatherhood unites. Heaven, then, means that other divine summit from which we all come and to which we are all meant to return. The fatherhood that is "in heaven" points us toward the greater "we" that transcends all boundaries, breaks down all walls, and creates peace."

*(Jesus of Nazareth, pg. 141-142)*

**B**oundless in time and space, he loves us. Shall we set limits to our 'Love?' Those words of St Bernard express a challenge and open up a vision of God who reveals a love without limits.

### **I Will Not Forget You**

During the centuries of waiting for the promised Redeemer, God's people were constantly being reassured that there would never be a moment in which his boundless love would be missing. 'I have loved you with an everlasting love' (*Jer 31:3*). Even if the incredible should happen and a mother should forget her child, 'even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have graven you on the palms of my hands' (*Is 49: 15-16*).

That love transcends time, and also space. Through every stretch of the road they traveled, through every experience of peril, fatigue, or hunger, his loving presence sustained and protected them. 'When the goodness and kindness of God our Saviour appeared' (*Tit 3:4*), he made visible and tangible the inexhaustible riches of his love.

How many proofs of his love did Jesus compress into three short years of his public ministry! Limitless love is infinitely available. Each day of his was a crowded hour. In the early morning, after a night of prayer on the mountain, he was back into the midst of the multitudes.

On into the late night hours he gave himself to them. He saw the multitudes coming towards him, like a great tidal wave, the flotsam and jetsam of human pain and trouble; they found a heart open to heal them all. No space in a troubled heart that his healing love did not enter and restore. How many suffering bodies and broken spirits did his hands not touch!

### **Outstretched Hand**

His footfall halted in the presence of all variety of human needs.

*Halts by me that footfall;*

*Is my gloom, after all*

*Shade of his hand*

*outstretched caressingly.*

*- Francis Thompson*

In page after page of the Gospels we find the record of his outstretched hand. In quick succession, in a life unprogrammed, we find examples of his boundless availability.

While teaching in the synagogue Jesus reached out to heal a man with an unclean spirit. Learning of the illness of Simon's mother-in-law 'he took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her' (*Mk 1:30*). 'That same evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons...and he healed many who were suffering from various diseases' (*Mk 1: 32, 34*).

When the father of a sick child burst through the crowds to plead

## BOUNDLESS LOVE

Maloney

with him, 'My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live', his response was immediate (*Mk 5:24*). His hand reached out caressingly. 'Taking her by the hand, he said to her...Little girl, I say to you, arise' (*Mk 5:41*).

Whenever a cry from the heart reached him, he never waited till tomorrow. He entered immediately into the now of peoples' lives and crises.

### Untiring Search

He presented himself as the Good Shepherd, always ready to take the road, however long or perilous, until the lost sheep was found. The same shoulders that carried the sheep bore the whole human family to Calvary. How powerfully the psalm expresses the marvel of that love, boundless in time and space, revealed on the Cross. 'As far as the east is from the west so far does he remove our sins' (*Ps 102: 12*). His arms remain ever extended, to remind us of his mercy from generation to generation. They caressingly enfold the guilty globe.

The drama of Jesus is reenacted in every human history. How often, as in the Gospel, he has responded immediately to our panic cry, 'Come quickly', to ease the crises and hurts of daily living! How often has he stretched out his hand, and bent down to lift us up, all broken and defeated as we were! When we had reached the limits of endurance his limitless love rescued us.

### Elizabeth of the Trinity

The love that touched the heart of St Bernard, and made his life a song of love, evoked a like response from the heart of a young girl from the same region of France. Eight hundred years after Bernard, Elizabeth of the Trinity was entranced by the thought of the limitless love of Jesus. A phrase of St Paul caught her attention. 'How rich God is in mercy, with what an excess of love he loves us' (*Eph 2:4*).

The idea of the 'excess of love' became the theme that directed the whole course of her life. She said: 'There is a word of Paul that is like a summary of my existence that could be written over each moment of my life - 'because of his excessive love.' Yes, all these rivers of grace - they arise from his having loved me all too much.'

### Ready to Give

Both Bernard and Elizabeth stood back in amazement before the marvel of the Lord who loves to excess; and both were inspired to devote their whole lives to a total self-giving, in an effort to make an ever more generous response to his excessive love.

Our world is bent on having rather than giving. Those shining examples of superabundant giving can help us. Shall we set limits? The challenge is great, but not beyond us. His love expands hearts that are ready to give. □

# A Touch of Death

by Tom Henderson

## **The story so far:**

Father Redmond and his niece Sara Nelson, the romantic novelist, are attending a local Literary Weekend at which Sara is to present the prizes in a short story competition. Father Redmond has a reputation as a detective and at the opening ceremony he speaks with John Ross, a leading murder/mystery writer, who tells him he has a sensational idea for his next novel which is sure to be a best-seller and has invited his publisher to the weekend to show it to him. He also remarks, jokingly, that the idea would be almost worth killing for.

As they speak, the hotel manager, Vincent Moore, asks Sara Nelson to autograph her latest novel. He also asks John Ross to autograph his. Soon afterwards Ross collapses and dies.

Father Redmond is troubled by Ross's earlier remark and begins to wonder if Ross was, in fact, murdered. Later, he speaks with Ross's wife, Mary, and learns that her husband had had a heart condition. His doctor, Peter Knowles, confirms this and thinks that Ross's heart attack was brought on by the excitement of his new storyline.

Still troubled, Father Redmond meets Michael Bradley, another murder/mystery writer who specialises in stories involving death by poisoning. Father Redmond asks if a particular poison could induce heart attack, and Bradley becomes angry, feeling that he is suspected of poisoning Ross.

The following day Ross's publisher, Moran Tessington, reveals that John Ross would have had detailed notes on his planned novel and that it would be possible for another writer to complete the novel with these notes. Now thinking that someone is planning to steal Ross's idea and pass it off as their own, Father Redmond sees Mrs Ross and Michael Bradley in deep conversation. Sara Nelson and Father Redmond drive Mary Ross to her home and learn that she has given her husband's idea to Moran Tessington for his opinion and also that her husband's key to his house is missing and so are the copy of his idea and detailed chapter notes.

Father Redmond and Sara Nelson arrived back at the hotel after driving Mary Ross to her home and were met by Sara's publisher, Moran Tessington. Tessington looked perplexed as they all sat down in the lounge. 'Mrs Ross kindly gave me the outline of John's new idea,' he said. 'Frankly, I'm extremely disappointed.'

Father Redmond glanced at him sharply. 'Disappointed?' he echoed. 'Yes. John had been going on so much about it, but it's really very mundane. There is nothing original in it and I can't understand why he thought it was sensational.'

Father Redmond became submerged in thought. Tessington was shaking his head sadly. 'I

can't do anything with it. I was hoping I would find someone else to write the novel and dedicate it to John Ross; but this would be no tribute to his ability.'

'Did Mrs Ross give you the copy and chapter notes?' Sara wondered.

'No,' Tessington replied. 'Why do you ask?'

'They were not at his home,' Sara told him. He looked surprised.

'Really? I wonder where they could be? Not that it matters much - this storyline will never find its way into print. I can't believe John wrote it at all...'

They were joined by Vincent Moore, the hotel manager, who wanted to arrange Sara's presentation of the prizes in the short story competition the following afternoon. 'It's such a shame John Ross won't be here,' Moore said.

'I believe the winning story was a murder mystery.'

'That's right,' Sara said 'The winner can't attend, so we'll just have to send him on his cheque!'

Father Redmond, who appeared to have fallen asleep, now leaned forward to address Moran Tessington. 'You say you can't believe that John Ross wrote that outline? Is it possible that he didn't?' Tessington stared at him blankly. 'Well, it was written on his typewriter and in his usual layout.' The priest sat back and considered this. Tessington was staring at him with a worried frown.

Michael Bradley happened to come along, but was clearly ill at ease with Father Redmond. He chatted with Moran Tessington while Sara finalised the details with Vincent Moore. Bradley

didn't appear surprised to learn that John Ross's new idea was not as good as it had been expected to be. 'He was slipping,' he announced. 'His last novel had several flaws and I think he was running out of material.'

'I'm afraid I wouldn't agree,' Father Redmond chimed in. 'In my opinion John Ross improved with each novel.' Bradley cast him a caustic glance. 'Well, everyone is entitled to their opinion,' he said sourly. 'Of course not everyone understands the working of this genre as well as someone actually involved in it.'

Sara quickly intervened to prevent another scene with her uncle and Michael Bradley. She spotted Peter Knowles across the room and led Father Redmond in that direction. The doctor greeted them warmly and thanked Sara for driving Mary Ross home, as he had arranged to, but had been called away. Father Redmond asked if an autopsy had been carried out on John Ross to determine the exact cause of death. Knowles looked at him askance. 'John died from cardiac arrest,' he stated. 'He had a serious heart condition.' He turned to Sara. 'I'm looking forward to hearing the winning story tomorrow. I entered one myself.'

'I didn't know you wrote?' Sara said.

'I've just started,' he confessed. 'There is a Creative Writing class locally and I joined a few weeks ago.'

Father Redmond looked at him with interest and was then distracted by a woman who had mistaken him for another elderly priest who wrote short stories set



in West Cork. With some difficulty he persuaded the woman that he was not who she thought he was and when he swung back to Sara, Knowles was gone.

'So the doctor has taken up writing,' Sara mused. 'I wonder what type of stories he puts together and what he entered for the competition? The winning author can't attend and no one seems to know who he is...'

Father Redmond looked tired and said he would retire to his room. Sara decided to stay on and speak with some friends who also wrote romantic fiction. 'If I don't I'll be getting nasty letters!' she joked. Father Redmond donned a pondering expression. 'I wonder,' he murmured half to himself. 'Yes, indeed, I wonder...' He bid her goodnight and left.

Sara mingled with her friends and had a good time. Later, feeling tipsy, she climbed the stairs to her room. Before going in she looked in on Father Redmond and was taken aback to see he wasn't in his bed. A little alarmed, she hurried back downstairs to ask at the desk if he had been seen wandering about. She met Vincent Moore and relayed her fears to him. 'He said he was

going to bed,' she told him. 'Where could he have got to?' The manager launched a search of the hotel, but there was no sign of the missing priest. Now very alarmed, Sara paced up and down the lobby and awaited news.

Her relief was considerable when she saw Vincent Moore arrive with Father Redmond in tow. She hurried to them. 'Where have you been?' The priest's smile dismissed her worry. 'Oh, I met a former parishioner who works here in the kitchen. I was quite staggered at the number of glasses which arrived from the lounge to be washed. People really do drink too much.' Sara looked at Moore and raised her eyes to heaven. Moore smiled.

'So you want an early morning call, Father?' Father Redmond nodded. 'Yes, there are a number of things I wish to do.' Moore left them and Sara fixed her uncle with a puzzled look. 'Why do you want an early morning call? Are you saying an early Mass?' He shook his head. 'No, I need to find something. I need to put my mind at rest on a certain matter.' He awarded her a warm smile. 'Shall we turn in now? Somehow I think that tomorrow is going to be a very long day...' □ *To be continued*

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### ***The Face and the Mask - Two Classes of People***

**I**n the world there are two classes of people: those who are respected for what they are, and those who are only respected for the positions they hold or the titles they possess.

*The first are already complete persons. They gain nothing from positions and titles, nor do they lose anything when they leave positions of importance. The day they die they leave an emptiness in the world. Their going leaves a void. People of integrity and completeness - they are missed.*

*The others are like a clothes stand which serves no purpose unless there are coats or overcoats hanging on it. They only exist and stand out when they are appointed to positions of rank or importance in human society. One might say they wear a mask. They return to being nobodies or to a sort of non existence the day they lose their rank or their titles.*

**Jose Luis Martin Descalzo**

# *Don Bosco: The Times, The Man, The Facts*

## **DON BOSCO'S MEMORY**

*by Natale Cerrato (T/A:ID)*

**A** lot has been written about Don Bosco's prodigious memory, and there are many facts to substantiate it. There were even occasions of forgetfulness and subsequent errors in the "Memoirs" that he wrote. As he grew older he seemed to have made some "lapses of the pen," as they were called. That was material that was not intended for printing. Here we shall refer to some facts regarding his exceptional and uncommon memory.

### **As a Youngster**

Don Bosco himself narrated what happened to him in November 1829 (a year that he changed to 1826). The reason for the mistaken date was the Jubilees in those years were not very far apart. The ordinary Jubilee in the year 1825-26 was announced by Pope Leo XII and the extraordinary Jubilee in 1829 was



announced by Pope Pius VII when it was extended to the whole world. On that occasion there were missions held throughout Christendom.

John went to listen to the preachers. While coming out of the church one evening he met Fr. John Calosso walking down the same road. He was the chaplain of Morialdo and he began to question John

- Listen, if you can tell me four words from today's sermon I'll give you four soldi.

- Do you want me to tell you something from the first sermon or from the second sermon?

- Whatever you wish, just four words are enough. It does not matter, either from the first or the second sermon. Which sermon do you know better, the first or the second?

- Right, the necessity of being a





friend of God and not delaying one's own conversion.

– And what did the preacher say?

Then without difficulty John launched into the introduction and then he developed the three points. In short he repeated the whole sermon! Fr. Calosso remained dumbstruck and at the end he said:

– What's your name?

– My name is Johnny Bosco.

– Would you like to study?

– Oh yes, very much. (cf. *Memoirs of the Oratory*, p. 33-35)

Fr. Calosso was the first priest who became Don Bosco's benefactor. In fact, he wanted to tell the youngster's mother immediately:

– Did you know that your son has a prodigious memory?

John dreamt of becoming a priest one day and the good Fr. Calosso, up to his untimely and

unexpected death helped Johnny go to school.

John's exceptional memory was seen while he was a student in Chieri. He very easily remembered all that he read.

One day, in 1832, the Latin teacher, Ch. V. Cima, was narrating to the class the life of the Spartan King Agesilaus written by the historian Cornelio Nepote. That day John did not have his text and to conceal this fact he held in front of him Donato's Grammar.

His classmates realized this and began to giggle. The teacher, noticing that all the students were looking at John, asked him to construct the Latin sentence that he was explaining. John stood up and, holding in his hand Donato's Grammar, repeated the Latin passage, and explained its construction from memory.

The companions spontaneously burst into an applause which irritated the teacher. He was even more surprised when he realized that John answered the question about Cornelio Nepote while he held before him Donato's grammar! (cf. *Memoirs of the Oratory*)

Indeed, John had a good memory coupled with the astuteness of a student!

### As an Adult

Don Bosco's memory seemed flawless even when he grew up. Here are few examples here that might satisfy us.

In Turin, the parish of Our Lady di Campagna was celebrating the feast of the Holy Name of Mary on 12<sup>th</sup> September in the year 1858.

On that day Don Bosco came there with boys on a pilgrimage and he celebrated Holy Mass. The students of the College of Our Lady of Mount Carmel also participated and made their confession to Don Bosco. Among those youngsters there was a to whom Don Bosco said:

– One day you will be a priest.

At that time the youngster had no intention of becoming a priest. He spoke to his companions and every now and again they had a good laugh over the prophecy. But at one point of time he became a friend of Don Bosco and began to frequent the Oratory. A year passed. Then 15 years passed from the day he spoke to Don Bosco. He had become a priest.

One day, the youngster by now a priest, met Don Bosco at San Vito (in the hills of Turin). Don Bosco stopped and looked at him and said:

– You are the young man I told fifteen years ago that he would become a priest, right?”

– That’s true! – replied the priest amazed. (cf. *BM 6, 24*)

Reading the life of Don Bosco recorded by his followers, they narrate that as a young lad when he was unable to sleep he recited from memory verses from Dante. When speaking to them he would quote verses from Horace, Ovid and Virgil even though his mind was occupied with other thoughts.

In his old age, if a youngster introduced himself to him among so many thousands who had passed through the Oratory he could still remember the name and

at times, even the place where he came from and what had happened at the Oratory at that time. One day he met a gentleman who had been a boy in 1846 and he asked him for news of his brother who had been at the Oratory even mentioning him by name.

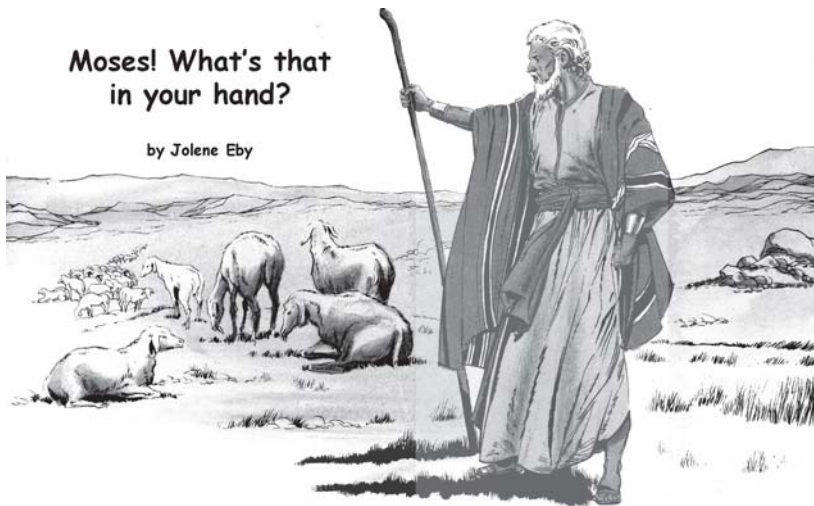
Fr. G. B. Lemoyne, who lived so close to Don Bosco in his last years wrote: “Whenever Don Bosco meets a physician, no matter of what kind of sickness they may speak about, he is acquainted with its cause, development, crisis and the medicines mainly prescribed for it. If someone mentions Greek, he is at no loss to recite a list of literary references and authors. If anyone speaks of Italian or Latin writers, Don Bosco does not fail to quote from many of their works...History was his forte. He could quote authors who have dealt with any specific time period. This was especially true if the subject dealt with ecclesiastical matters.” (*BM 17, 101-102*)

The one who is given credit for these stories is not left out – Don Bosco! But they cannot amount to nothing! And Fr. G.B. Lemoyne was not his first biographer.

“*You are a musician and I am a poet by profession*” wrote Don Bosco from Turin on July 12<sup>th</sup> 1876 to Fr. John Cagliero, a missionary in Argentina. His descriptions that were peppered with poetic tinges were a “feast” for his hearers and his readers. But he always treats history candidly, describing reality as it was really lived. □

## Moses! What's that in your hand?

by Jolene Eby



*In marvellous ways God  
works through the weak,  
the lowly, the helpless.*

**G**od asked this above question of Moses over 2000 years ago.

You remember Moses. As a Hebrew baby, he was hidden by his mother in a basket among bulrushes in the river. The Pharaoh of Egypt, where Moses was born, ordered all male children, two years old and under, to be killed. Pharaoh's daughter discovered the little one when she came with her maidens to bathe. She found a Hebrew woman (who happened to be Moses' mother) to raise him in the palace.

When he grew up, he killed an Egyptian he saw fighting one of his own people. Pharaoh heard about it and Moses ran for his life.

Now he was living in the desert region of Sinai and worked as a shepherd tending his father-in-law's sheep. One day he saw a

bush on fire, but it wasn't consumed by the flames. As he stepped closer to look, the voice of Almighty God spoke from the bush calling Moses by name. He hid his face in fear.

God had heard the cries of His chosen people, the Hebrews who had become slaves in this foreign land of Egypt. The great 'I AM' was about to free them and bring them back to their promised land in Canaan. He wanted Moses to go to Pharaoh and demand their release.

Moses is full of excuses. "Who am I that I should go? I can't speak well. Send somebody else."

"What's that in your hand?" God asks. He then displays His awesome power when He touches the rod or shepherd's staff that Moses is holding and turns it into a snake. He then turns Moses

hand white with leprosy. Fortunately, He immediately restores both.

Weeks later at God's command Moses lifts up this same staff over the Red sea. The waters roll back allowing the Hebrew people to cross over safely on dry ground as they flee the mighty Egyptian army. When the soldiers try to cross, the waters crash down drowning them all.

Through the years, as Moses obeys God more and more, they develop a beautiful and intimate relationship. This is how he is remembered.

"The Lord spoke to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend." (Exodus 33:11) "Since that time there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses. (Deut. 34:10)

There is a wonderful lesson in this story for us today. Perhaps you feel insignificant. You want to serve God, but what can you do? "What's that in your hand? Is it a pen? It could be used to send cards to shut-ins, even composing your own verse.

Imagine the joy in knowing someone cares. You could also make phone calls.

Can you write stories or poems? Just recently at my age 60, God has enabled me to be published, fulfilling a life-long dream.

Maybe you like to bake. Use your mixing spoon to make sweets or pickles for a church function or a new neighbour. Think how appreciative an exhausted family would be with a freshly baked treat to welcome them.

Do you knit, crochet or enjoy doing crafts? Someone could surely benefit from your efforts.

Receiving a hand-made gift has always meant so much to me.

Do you play an instrument? I have a dear friend in a retirement home who is 92. She plays the piano for the mentally challenged. Music has a tremendous impact on people. It can penetrate the heart of a sad or confused soul in ways nothing else can.

I often think of Joni Eareckson Tada. She became a quadriplegic at age 17 after breaking her neck in a diving accident. In the eyes of the world she is totally helpless. But by giving herself to God, she is a painter, writer and conference speaker. What an encouragement she is to others who are physically challenged!

First Corinthians 1:27-29 says that God chose the weak of this world to shame the strong. The lowly and despised to bring to nothing the things that are. He does this so that no human being can boast in the presence of God.

Don't ever give up on yourself. After all, He made you. With both hands you can give a hug to someone who is grieving. Words aren't always the answer.

When Jesus walked among men, He touched lepers. He made clay and caused the blind to see. He broke bread and fed the people.

He is no longer with us in bodily form, so we become His hands. No, we can't do the incredible things He did, but we can still touch a lost and hurting world with what we can do.

Offer yourself to Him. Then watch Him move through you. He might just blow your socks off! To God be the glory. □



## NEWSBITS

### Seoul - KOREA

Tucked among towering skyscrapers and shopping malls in downtown Seoul, inside police stations, corporate offices and hospitals, urban mission stations quietly serve busy Catholics in or near their workplaces.

The Seoul archdiocese has about 180 such stations. The archdiocese established the Department for Pastoral Ministry in the Workplace in 1993 to provide pastoral care and help build faith communities in workplaces. The 38 mission stations in police institutions and the 40 stations in non-Catholic hospitals have chapels where Masses and other sacraments are offered regularly on weekdays.

"For police officers who cannot attend religious activities in their own parish regularly, these faith communities can help by holding such activities in their workplaces," said Fr. Augustine Kang Hyuck-june, director of the archdiocese's Police Pastoral Committee.

The missions in police stations are mostly served by priests from the parish in which the stations are located. The hospital stations are served by full-time chaplains, which include several priests and 28 religious women.

The workplace ministry department has two full-time priest-chaplains to visit the 120 mission stations located in office buildings and commercial properties in downtown Seoul. About 1,500 office workers and civil servants regularly attend workplace ministry activities.

The faith groups meeting in these stations have no permanent chapels and must make do with

conference rooms, auditoriums or other such facilities, according to Fr. Gregory Choi Soo-ho, a workplace ministry chaplain. Besides celebrating the sacraments, these priests also teach catechism classes and offer counseling in the office missions, often after normal business hours.

The ministry celebrates a lunchtime Mass for office workers on Fridays at Myeongdong Cathedral. It publishes *Catholic Office Workers*, a 32-page monthly magazine and a five-day a week e-mail newsletter, *Spring of the Soul*, that contains short Bible readings and essays on Catholic social teaching and Gospel stories.

Seoul has a population of about 10 million and 1.3 million are Catholics.

A recent survey of Seoul office workers found that they work an average of nine hours and 42 minutes a day. (NCR)

### BANGLADESH

For 32 years, Maryknoll Fr. **Bob McCahill** has lived among the poor in Bangladesh, riding his bike through the streets and helping the sick to get the care they need.

The 69-year-old priest, who has been called "the Mother Teresa of Maryknoll," encourages families to seek medical treatment for their sick children and often accompanies them to hospitals to make sure their children are admitted.

For the last 20 years he has moved to a new place about every three years. McCahill, who spent 11 years in the Philippines before

serving in Bangladesh, said local residents will not do the work he does if he is around because they do not want to appear that they are in competition with him. That's why he stays in an area just long enough to create an impression, build trust and produce a service for the people, the vast majority of whom are Muslims.

It's a process that doesn't happen immediately. The priest said Bangladeshis tend to think Christian missionaries are looking to convert people, so he always begins his work by explaining that he does what Jesus did, "doing good and healing," which is work they respect.

After traveling on his bicycle to seek out ailing children, the priest eventually persuades their parents of the need for medical attention for conditions such as cerebral palsy, cleft lip, burns and tumors.

By helping children and their parents with safe transportation to hospitals, he gains trust. He also helps pay for the necessary medications through donations sent to him by his extended family.

"The best example I can give is to give them things and not ask for anything in return," he told a diocesan newspaper during a June visit to the United States. (CNS)

### USA

"Maybe I should be reading more," mused Marianist **Brother Francis Deibel**.

The 99-year-old brother may have a point. Each day he spends up to four hours at his computer exchanging e-mails with more than 100 contacts.

"Lately I've been getting too many e-mails," added Brother Deibel, who thinks too many older people are afraid of technology and computers. "I try to open and read all of them, but sometimes they are too

numerous."

He begins his computer time by forwarding readings about the saint of the day. "I send this information to all my Marianist contacts," he said. He then spends hours answering personal e-mails and deleting junk e-mails.

Brother Deibel has been a Marianist since 1926 — one year before the first "talkie" feature film.

"I began using a computer when it was just a bunch of wires put together," he said. He refined his skills in classes at the University of Dayton, where he worked for 48 years as a librarian. He also credits 86-year-old **Marianist Brother Bill Callahan**, whom Brother Deibel calls his "young" friend, with teaching him additional skills.

Brother Deibel started e-mailing in 1990 and he says he has used his computer daily ever since. His e-mail address book has four groups: Marianists, relatives, "something else," and "all." The size of his groups are growing, too.

"When I learn of a new e-mail address for someone I know, I'll add it to my list, if it is OK with that person. It doesn't cost extra to add them, so I go ahead and do it," he said.

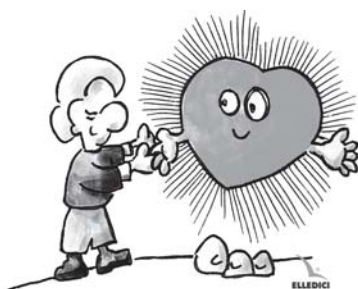
Brother Deibel said it's possible for all of his fellow senior citizens to pick up the technological tricks of the trade.

"I would encourage old people not to be afraid of the computer," he said. "Too many old people are, but there is nothing to be afraid of. It's just like a typewriter. It won't talk back at you! Learn how to use it. Don't lose time watching TV. Using the computer is much more personal and enjoyable." □

# 16 STEPS to GREATNESS

(Operation Wardrobe)

Text by: Jimmy Rizzi  
Drawings by: Giovanni Gherardi  
Translation & adaptation: I.D.



The age of Ad

## 13 - JUSTICE Part 4

### **Who is the Just Youngster?**

- 1) **He is one who desires justice:** In the Gospel Jesus says: 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice. They shall be satisfied.' (Mt. 5:6)
- 2) **He is one who respects the Law:** There are different kinds of laws, beginning from those about living in harmony.
- 3) **He is one who respects the property of others:** The others things are a prolongation of him and therefore what belongs to others cannot be touched.
- 4) **He is one who repairs what is broken.**
- 5) **He is one who doesn't support injustice or inequality:** he will never support or advocate injustice but will put it down vehemently...
- 6) **He is one who struggles against injustice:** He will never keep quiet. He will never remain silent when he knows the truth. He will not do or hide injustice but will reveal it and struggle against it.
- 7) **He will never blame the innocent.**
- 8) **He will always stand on the side of the innocent, the defenceless or those who are weak.**
- 9) **He is always upright and true to his word being faithful to the laws of God.**
- 10) **He is one who defends the truth.**
- 11) **He strives to be perfect as the Heavenly Father is perfect and pardons and is merciful...**

# Prayer

**H**ow much injustice exists in the world!

*It is really true that there are some  
who live on the backs of others.*

*If there are some who are fat  
it is because they have stolen from those  
who have become mere skin and bones.*

*Lord, help me see these injustices  
and not remain calm thereafter.*

*I realize that there is already much I can do.*

*I must admit that there were times  
when I have spontaneously reacted  
like the workers who came at the first hour,  
is that justice?*

*But then I understood the concept of your justice  
even as you give each one what he deserves.*

*Lord, your justice is very different.*

*I admire the way you give.*

*It is justice that is freely loving and merciful.*

*I now understand that not all are last, but everyone is  
first.*

*Make me a youngster who is just, Lord*

*- a youngster who lives by your commandments,  
who does your will and strives to be perfect  
even as you are perfect...*

*Loving perfectly  
and being merciful like you.*

To be continued

**LOVING CHILDREN TO  
THEIR LOVING MOTHER**

Thank you Virgin Mary for all the support and help you have given me and my family over the years. *Rodney D'Souza, Bombay*

Our sincere thanks to Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the normal delivery of a second baby girl after eight years and also for healing baby from low diabetes and a kidney infection at the time of delivery. *Mary Aranha, Bombay*

Thank you Jesus and Mother Mary for curing me of a wound I had on my leg for a long time. *Mrs T. T. Johnson, Madurai*

I thank Mother Mary for protecting me from a falling branch that would have been very disastrous. *Mrs Antonette Fernandes, Bombay*

Thank you O most loving Mother of Jesus for helping us in our difficulties and problems in our daily life. *Maxy L. Dias, Thane*

My heartfelt thanks of gratitude to our Lord Jesus Christ and Our Lady for giving us the privilege of celebrating the golden jubilee of our married life. We were married in India and we are now in Australia. Surely our faith continues to grow and may our Lord and his Divine Mother continue to guide, guard and protect us, our children and grand children now and always. *Mrs P. Pereira, Australia*

Thank you dearest Mother Mary for giving me success in my TYBSc examinations and for helping me get admission to the post graduate diploma course and many other favours. *Mably Fernandes, Goa*

Thank you sincerely for protecting me from an accident that could have been serious. *Fatima Luis, Bombay*

November 11<sup>th</sup> is a red-letter date in my life. I was employed by Air India on this day...my wife Patsy proposed to me on this day and married me on this day (1957). It was on this day my daughter who stays alone in Brussels was returning home from church when she skid on an oil slick. The car was badly damaged but thanks to the protection of our Blessed Mother, she was safe though shaken but well enough to tell her story to the police.

*George & Patsy Miranda, Bombay*

I had two miscarriages last year and this time when I got pregnant again, the doctors had given up hope as I had a serious blood infection. I had various complications throughout my pregnancy and the doctors also thought that I might have a Caesarean. I, along with my family kept trusting in the Lord and prayed to Our Lady to intercede for me. Through the intercession and blessing of our Blessed Mother I had a normal and safe delivery and my baby girl 'Samantha' is now two months old and healthy. I thank our Lord and Our Lady for this grace and for many others I have received. *Sarita D'Souza, Bhayander*

## THE DEVOTION OF THE THREE HAIL MARYS



*The devotion of the THREE HAIL MARYS is a very simple yet most efficacious devotion. Everyday, recite Three Hail Marys, adding the invocation: "O Mary, My Mother, keep me from mortal sin." Many people recite the Three Hail Marys as part of their morning and night prayers. To practise this devotion in time of danger, stress, special need or temptation, is a sure means to obtain Our Lady's help.*

Thank you dear Mother Mary for all the graces received through the faithful recitation of the 3 Hail Marys. *Sam, Bombay*

Dearest Mother Mary thank you for all the graces received through the faithful recitation of the 3 Hail Marys. *Melody Sequeira, Australia*

I thank and praise you, Most Holy Mother. Through the recitation of the 3 Hail Marys I have been cured of the lumps on my breast.

*Rita D'Souza, Bombay*

Through the recitation of the 3 Hail Marys my daughter was cured of her sickness. Thank you dearest Mother. *Walter A. Lobo, Bombay*

My sincere thanks dear Mother Mary for curing me from gastroenteritis through the faithful recitation of the 3 Hail Marys. *Hazel Anthony, Bombay*

Thanks to Almighty God and our dear Mother Mary for curing my nephew who was hit by a ball and had lost consciousness for about 8 hours.

We always pray the 3 Hail Marys. Thank you for delivering us from all other ailments. *F. Fernandes, Bombay*

My belated thanks to Mother Mary for special favours received through the faithful recitation of the 3 Hail Marys. *Mrs Marina Thomas, Vasai*

Our sincere and heartfelt thanks to Mother Mary for the success of my two daughters in their B.ed examination through the recitation of the 3 Hail Marys and for many other favours too. *Mrs Mary Campbell, Igatpuri*

My grandson Jeremiah Bennett fell ill with a viral fever and was unable to breathe. He is only 14 months old. My daughter, his mother telephoned me. Then I remembered that I should pray the 3 Hail Marys and trusting in the love of Our Lord and his Blessed Mother. A little later my daughter telephoned me again to say that Jeremiah was much better. I owe his recovery to the faithful and fervent recitation of the 3 Hail Marys.

*Lilly Chandramani, Bangalore*

Thank you dearest Mother Mary for the successful completion of my son's PG examinations and for all the other favours granted to me through the recitation of the 3 Hail Marys.

*Mrs George, Bombay*



**THEY ARE GRATEFUL TO  
OUR LADY AND DON BOSCO**

Thank you dear Mother Mary, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for all the graces and favours received.

*Melody Sequeira, Australia*

My sincere thanks dear Mother Mary, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for all the graces I have received.

*Mr Domnic Trinidad, Bombay*

Thank you dear Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the safe delivery of my daughter and the gift of a baby to her.

*Cynthia Fernandes, Goa*

For many many favours and blessings received over the years through the most powerful intercession of our Heavenly Father, Jesus, Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio and all the saints.

*Mrs. Blossom Vaz, Bombay*

My sincere thanks for all the graces that have been bestowed on me and my family through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother, Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio.

*Mr. J.B. D'Souza, Goa*

My grateful thanks to Mother Mary, help of Christians and Dominic Savio loving and protecting Judith.

*Basilia Fernandes, Goa*

Thank you dearest Mother and Don Bosco for the blessings of good health, for Hemant, Mira, Maya, Cuckoo and myself.

*Ms. Samagond, USA*

Dear Mother Mary and Don Bosco and Dominic Savio do accept my belated but sincere gratitude for the safe delivery of my daughter. She gave birth to a normal baby girl.

*Mrs M.L. Quadros, Goa*

Thank you Mother Mary and Don Bosco for saving us from a major accident that took place on our way to Goa. No one was injured and by God's grace we reached our destination safely.

*Jasmine D'Souza, Bombay*

Thank you dear Mother Mary and Don Bosco for all the graces and favours received through your intercession.

*Monica F. Bombay*

My sincere thanks, dear Jesus, Mother Mary and Don Bosco for being at my side during the long treatment for CML and helping me to lead a normal life thanks for all the wonderful favours you have granted me too.

*JBM. Goa*

Thank you dear Mother Mary and Don Bosco for the high percentage and the marks in my board examinations.

*Matthew & Jane D'Cruz, Bombay*

Thank you dear Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for granting me the gift of a beautiful granddaughter. My daughter was married for four years and was having problems and I prayed and my prayers were answered.

*Maureen Burrows, Australia*

# THANKS TO DEAR ST. DOMINIC SAVIO



Thank you dear St. Dominic Savio for bringing my sister's family together again.

*F. Lopes, Bombay*

Thank you dear Mother Mary and Dominic Savio for good health and a safe flight.

*Thelma Gonsalves, Bombay*

My sincere thanks to the Infant Jesus, Mother Mary and Dominic Savio for giving my daughter success in her SSC examinations.

*Selina Falcao, Bombay*

Thanks dear St. Dominic Savio for the safe delivery of my daughter.

*Vincent & Lilian Pereira, Goa*

Thank you dear Mother Mary and St. Dominic Savio for the admission of my son in the engineering college.

*Shirley D'Souza, Bombay*

My sincere thanks to Jesus, Mother Mary, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for all the favours received and for my successful ear operation.

*Mrs Sally D'Souza, Bombay*

Our grateful thanks to dear Mother Mary and St. Dominic Savio for bringing our friend safely home. He had been missing for quite some time.

*Ena & Rico, KSA*

Thank you, dear Mother Mary, Don Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for all your help in my necessities and do continue to protect us always.

*Sarah Miranda, Bahrain*

Our heartfelt thanks to Our dear Lord, Jesus Christ, Mother Mary, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the love and help in saving us from a short circuit in our home and for many other favours.

*A devotee*

## APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER FEBRUARY 2008

**Holy Father's General Intention:** *That the mentally handicapped may not be marginalized, but respected and lovingly helped to live in a way worthy of their physical and social condition.*

**Missionary Intention:** *That institutes of Consecrated Life, which are so flourishing in mission countries, may rediscover the missionary dimension and, faithful to the radical choice of the evangelical counsels, be generous in bearing witness to and announcing Christ to the ends of the earth.*

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### **MARY WAS THERE**

I miraculously escaped from two serious accidents unscathed. The first involved a small truck that suddenly hit my car at right angles and seriously injured a passer-by.

The second one was more serious since my car was hit straight on the driver's side with me at the wheel. My car swung 180 degrees and my door was smashed right in missing me by inches. I again miraculously escaped without a bruise. Only a slight back pain due to the impact and my seat belt holding me firm. My car was written off.

Both were miraculous escapes which I owe to Our Blessed Mother. The rosary is always on my rear view mirror and I have a strong devotion to Our Lady having been a legionary for 15 years. She has always protected me and interceded for me and my loved ones. My sincere and humble wish is that many more Catholics have recourse to Mary and pray the Rosary.

*Merwyn D'Souza, Sydney, Australia*

**Don Bosco's Madonna**, has developed to its present form from a folder published in 1937, by late Fr Aurelius Maschio, on behalf of the Salesians of Don Bosco, Bombay.

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