

DON BOSCO'S MADONNA

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**"Mary
is at the beginning
of the Church
and in the Church
she is the model
for every
believer."**

(St. Ambrose)

Cover: **The Madonna
of the Magnificat**
by
Sandro Botticelli
1445 - 1510



From The Editor's Desk

The Amnesia in Forgiving

When reading St. Matthew's account of the 'Our Father' I realize that the only issue Christ elaborates on is the invocation about forgiveness. He did not comment on *Thy will be done* – nor on *Give us this day our daily bread*...reminding us to trust in His Father's Providence. But in the prayer he taught his apostles he only further explained the invocation of forgiveness. Was it something so significant?

Suddenly reflecting on why Christ must have added the extra comment I am inclined to admit how difficult it is for us to forgive... and even more to forget. I believe that if forgiveness has to have any closure or to be truly called forgiveness then forgetting is an essential ingredient. Yet, we all admit that forgetting does not subsequently follow either automatically or eventually. The hurt with its intent, its intensity, its consequent pain and the circumstances surrounding it, have all to be consciously willed out of our minds.

While sitting down to write this editorial I asked myself: "But haven't I written about forgiveness earlier?" Indeed I have, (July 2007 – *Saviours like Jesus*) and yet I must admit I can never reflect enough on this invocation about forgiveness. I believe all of us are victims of this subtle malady: forgiving without forgetting. It is indeed a sickness that surreptitiously eats into our souls like an obnoxious and lethal cancer that leaves us tired, old and dried up like the earth that is parched by the summer's heat.

We always feel the pain when we are hurt by someone and, sensitive as we are, we too begin to hurt because, all too often, we too have inflicted pain on others. Even the most heartless of us do have that sensitive streak in us that can sense hurt. The very presence of the one we have hurt intimidates us, so we desperately try to avoid him/her, praying that s/he will not remember the 'pain' we have inflicted on them or at least we hope it will not be brought up. Yet should it even inadvertently come up in a conversation, oh, how we wish the earth would open and swallow us up! The pain of being 'belittled' even by the gaze of the 'forgiver' could turn out to be even more excruciating than the pain we've inflicted. That is why I think that **forgetting** has to be willed if **forgiving** has to have any closure. As limited human beings we do not have dictatorial control over our emotions – only diplomatic – so things usually take time in this area.

How awful and mean it is when painful memories of past hurts are regurgitated and used to inflict fresh wounds and further suffering on its hapless victims. Our own hearts gnaw at us...begging for release and for peace but that will only come when forgiveness is eventually followed by forgetting. As I said above, if forgiveness has to be complete then forgetting has to be willed so that a relationship to blossom once more allowing us to live in love.

Fr. Ian Douulton sdb

7. THE GURU'S CAT

Fr. Erasto Fernandez, sss

In a certain ashram several years ago, the ashram pet cat made a considerable nuisance of itself each time the community gathered for prayer. She would like to fuss after the Guru seeking his attention and expecting a morsel of food. Unable to take this disturbance any longer, the Guru ordered his disciples to tie up the cat before they began their community prayer, and she was to be kept tied for the entire duration of the prayer. The eager disciples were faithful to this little ritual ever since. If the appointed disciple was distracted and forgot to tie the cat before services began, others dutifully reminded him of this sacred observance. Several months later when this particular cat died, the inmates promptly procured another one to replace it and even though the new replacement did not interfere with their devotions, they religiously kept up the tradition of

tying the cat before community prayers began, just in order that they may never be unfaithful to the Guru's command.

Religious Routine

Ridiculous as this might seem, we have several instances of even learned people doing exactly the same in different areas of their lives, but especially in the religious sphere. The story reveals many important truths – the first is the power of habit. Once a person or a group gets habituated to a certain behavioural pattern, the pattern itself takes over and literally dominates the life of the individuals. Second, to break an established pattern of behaviour, several important steps would need to be taken. In the first place, the behaviour pattern needs to be questioned either by oneself or by someone else – more in the form of



a challenge to see what would happen if one did not follow the routine pattern. This leads to an enquiry into the reason behind doing this particular action in this fashion. Then follows a search for alternative ways: is there an alternative way of doing things, maybe even a better, shorter or faster one? Once the myth behind the tyrannical pattern has been exploded, a new and better way becomes possible and also meaningful. Yet, in actual life, how many such habitual actions are really challenged and eventually changed for better ones?

Further, such habitual actions or rituals originate because of the unquestioned authority of some great figure. Or, perhaps it comes about because of a practical necessity. And so, it would take an equally great authority to realize that now circumstances have changed and the original reasons for initiating this action do not any longer exist. Great courage is called for to be able to break the established pattern and start something different or new. In several situations it is fear or maybe even laziness or convenience that leads to establishing a particular pattern for our actions. When this happens the underlying reasons would possibly take longer to be questioned or dislodged and the pattern would take much longer to break and be replaced. However, we must recognize that habits can be very useful in our lives. But it is when we become slaves of any given habit that we lose our very dignity as human beings.

Several Examples

Religious services generally abound in such 'meaningless'

rituals: some such rituals also exist in the Eucharistic liturgy even today almost fifty years after the Vatican reform. Way back in the early Church, out of their generosity people brought all kinds of foodstuffs and presented them at the altar – for use during the Eucharist and also for distribution to the poor after Eucharist. Now the Celebrant who received all these personally would obviously soil his hands requiring that he wash them before proceeding to the next action. This very practical necessity soon became an established ritual and in later years, even when the practice of bringing gifts of any kind was totally abandoned, the celebrant still continued to wash his hands at this point of the Eucharist – in fact, elaborate prayers linked with interior purification were also recited very religiously. Besides, the ritual gradually got so truncated that it became almost mandatory for the Celebrant to wash merely the tips of his thumbs and forefingers – a far cry from the original washing of hands to rid them of dirt!

Towards the eleventh century we see another glaring example arise: in those days, Eucharist was still celebrated in Latin even though most Christians, including the celebrant did not understand it all that much. Several other reasons combined to make the Eucharistic celebration an almost totally foreign ritual for most Christians. Add to that a warped theology that gave tremendous importance to merely 'gazing' at the sacred host, especially after the words of consecration had 'transformed' it

bringing Jesus down from heaven to take the place of the substance of bread/wine. With all these factors combined, the Church had this curious situation on its hands. The common Christian came for Eucharist but since s/he could not follow anything that happened there, they remained outside until the most important part arrived – the Consecration. To alert those standing outside, a bell was rung at the appropriate time, at which all rushed in eager to gaze at the sacred Host. No sooner was the Consecration completed than they all trooped out and hastened to the next Church to catch the next consecration-elevation. Today, when everyone celebrating Eucharist is already inside the bell is still rung just before the Institution Narrative – reason? Is it because people are inside, yet outside, with their minds wandering or wool-gathering?

Servant Eats Before the Master?

The next example might be considered as pedantic by some. For centuries now the celebrant is the one who receives Holy Communion first (both the sacred bread and the cup) and only then does he proceed to distribute Communion to the faithful. Why is it that the minister should receive first especially if he represents the ‘servant Church’? In all other situations, the servants do not eat before the master and guests have finished their meal. Way back in the Middle Ages very few Catholics partook of the sacred body and blood of Jesus so much so that the rule of receiving Communion at least once a year had to be introduced. The real problem is that if no one shares in the banquet,

eating and drinking of the Lord’s body and blood, the entire process and significance of meal would be incomplete. And so to ensure that the completeness was maintained, the Celebrant was required to receive first, so that if no one followed it would not matter as far as the integrity of the Sacrament is concerned! Today when almost everyone present comes up for reception of Communion, is there still need for the Celebrant to receive first? What would happen if he did receive last, befitting his status there as minister (servant) of the Lord?

Maybe on closer investigation we could point out quite a few more. And the same would hold good for other areas of our lives – in the way in which we cook or sew clothes, arrange the décor of our homes or plan our holidays. The point really is that particularly in all matters of worship and religion it helps to question why, at least from time to time, because in this field the stakes are so high. This need not always be done with a view to eliminating some ritual or gesture, but could be an incentive to understanding what one does better and so be encouraged to do it more meaningfully. Vatican II requires of Christians that they participate in the Liturgy, actively, intelligently and fruitfully! When communicating with another human being, and so even much more when communing with God, every word and gesture must come from the heart, as much as this is possible for us mortals whose span of attention is so limited. Could we develop the habit of questioning everything that we do, so that more and more of our actions are done more consciously and meaningfully? □

BY GOD'S GRACE I AM WHAT I AM

Fr. Roy Noronha, sdb

Administrator & Catechist of Don Bosco, Matunga



People think that priests and religious have a hotline with God and that **"the call"** takes place dramatically. We have heard testimonies saying that: "God spoke to me"; "I had a dream," "a vision." But let me share with you that I was not so lucky – no privilege of an Angel appearing to me, no voice was heard, no dream. My case was just the opposite – the Devil constantly kept prompting me not to join.

Hailing from an economically poor family background my childhood was spent with just the basic necessities. Thanks to the struggle of my parents and the support of my teachers and priests of the parish I completed Std. VII from St. Joseph's Wadala. From there I was admitted to Don Bosco Lonavla (VIII to XII) which was altogether a different world for me – a lot of opportunities to grow, in music, games, leadership, etc. I grew in wisdom, self-esteem and in talent. Here was where the roots of my vocation began to grow.... The Salesian priests and brothers became role models.

(The Devil's intervention) My family situation prevented me from being accepted to the Novitiate after my XII. On completion of my graduation I applied to join the Novitiate once again and was accepted. After a year of -(Regency) Practical training I decided to discontinue... There was unhappiness, tension (again



the Devil's intervention). Working in the world, I felt an inner voice calling me back... after 2 years I asked if I could rejoin... and here I am a priest of God and a Salesian of Don Bosco.

It is my deep conviction that Jesus' call is an invitation and a free invitation. God's ways are mysterious... so too is His call. He does not force, he does not persuade you to follow Him. It is an invitation to respond to, a grace to accept or refuse. All is grace and with St. Paul I too can say **"By God's Grace I am what I am"** (1Cor15: 10).

My dear young men and women.... God extends this invitation freely to you today. He will give you the grace to respond. What is important: Have the courage to say, **"Yes"**☐

ENTER INTO YOUR HEART

by D. Mansfield

I am convinced that all of us need to help one another in this business of prayer. I myself continue to be helped and inspired by others. And often when I am trying to help those who come looking for some kind of assistance, here where I work, I find that their courage and searching is a real stimulus to my own faith and prayer.

Also, the simple Mass we have each day in our community chapel is truly an inspiration for prayer: the Mass itself, of course, being our best prayer, and leading us deeply into further prayer.

Childhood Memories

Permit me to say a word about myself first. Straightaway, my mind goes back to early childhood spent in the beautiful countryside, and I picture my grandmother there, for whom prayer was as

natural as breathing the air. Later on, at a farm, another picture comes before me: of a dear uncle of mine, a farmer, who used to pray the rosary all through Mass each Sunday. Mind you, that would not be recommended now-a-days!

Then, I think of where my family eventually settled down, and the town whose church was truly a place of prayer for many people, especially the poor, in the 1950s. They seemed to know the importance of prayer.

Incidentally, I have had the privilege of visiting my relatives in a religious community twice in recent years. And I can say that prayer, as well as vibrant humanity, is certainly woven into their lives.

Naturally enough, all that example of prayer rubbed off on me somehow, especially during rather troubled teenage years. And when I joined a religious congregation in 1963, there was much help given



on prayer, especially by our novice master, whose personal kindness will never be forgotten by me.

Ordinary People

And, to bring things right up to date, I need to mention that each summer I help out in a little city parish. And what most inspires me there? Apart from the great friendliness of people, what I find really helpful is their daily example of prayer. During every hour of the day you will notice men and women of all ages and backgrounds coming there, to the lovely church to spend a few moments of prayer.

As well, of course, they come to the Masses on Sundays, and in considerable numbers on weekdays, too. And at this stage in my own life, I can confidently say I find no better inspiration for myself than the example of so many people, high and low, in all sorts of circumstances and predicaments, simply coming to pray: to pray for themselves, for their families, for their neighbours, and for the world's need.

Simple and Profound

Now, out of all of this, I offer for your consideration one central thought, which I believe is the secret to prayer. It is this: To pray, all you need do is enter into your own heart. Enter there, into your own heart, within the innermost recesses of your own being, and you will find you are praying, or else can turn to prayer very easily.

It is as simple as that, as profound as that. It is as simple as that, and therefore so easy to shrug it off and pass on, to look for something more complicated. And, because it is also profound, and we often prefer to live on the surface of things, we can tend to leave prayer aside, or perhaps just 'say a few prayers', thinking that this is as far as we can go.

Enter into your heart, and you will pray. Why is that the secret of prayer? Why is that the secret of the lives of all those people whose prayer over a lifetime has influenced the likes of me? The answer is that, within each of us there is a wonderful mystery, and that mystery is nothing less than God's grace and presence. Therefore, prayer goes on within the heart, since it is indeed the place of God. Prayer goes on, because Scripture tells us that God's Holy Spirit is there, within us, the Spirit of love and of prayer. As St. Paul puts it, even when we are not sure how to pray or don't know what to pray for, then the Spirit dwelling within us does the praying for us 'with sighs too deep for words' (Rom. 8:26).

Tuning In

So, in a sense, all you or I need to do is 'tune in' to what is already going on within. I like to think of it that way, as a matter of 'tuning in'. What I have to do each day, as best I can, is tune in to that 'frequency', where there is a wonderful melody or music within, and which is the prayer of the Holy Spirit resonating in my own heart. It is as easy as that!

But it is also difficult, and challenging, because of that sad state of affairs in which we are often not in touch with our own heart, but tend to live 'outside' somewhere on the surface of things. So we need to clear away the clutter and distractions, make some space for ourselves, attend to what is deep within, and allow our prayer to surface from there.

Then, whether I say the Our Father and the Hail Mary, or simply stop for a quiet time to remember people and their needs, or try to reflect on the Scripture readings I hear at Mass, or am moved by something beautiful in nature, or find myself very anxious and turn to God for reassurance: whatever I do, once it is from my heart, then that is good prayer. □

walking with the Church



Praying, Angels, Tongues, Jesus the Jew

by St. Martin's Messenger

Praying Prayers

Q. *I have been saying the same prayers for years - which I learned when I was small. Sometimes I feel that I should change but I find it very hard to do so. Can you advise me?*

A. We do not have to continue with the same kind of prayer. When it concerns prayer a lot of people seem very slow, almost reluctant to change old habits, as if it were a disloyalty of some kind. But if we want to keep our prayer alive and sincere it is only common sense to realise that what suited us at one period in our lives may not suit us at all at a later stage in our lives. Prayers that worked for us one time may not work for us another time and so we have to lay them aside and try something else.

The way we pray is much less important than our prayer itself. The purpose of our prayer is to raise our minds and hearts to God, to lay ourselves open to his love, to bring ourselves into close personal contact with him. As long as this is happening it does not matter how we are doing it.

The Angels

Q. *I pray to Our Lord, Our Lady and*

I have one or two favourite saints to whom I also pray. Do I need to pray to the angels as well? Now-a-days angels are very popular and you will find Angel shops filled with statues of all kinds of angels. Do angels really exist? If so, do I need to pray to them?

A. The simple answer to your first question is "Yes, we believe they do exist." On October 2nd we have the Mass of the Guardian Angels in which we honour these angelic beings who protect us from spiritual and physical harm and inspire us to do good. Remember what God said to Moses, "I am sending you an angel before you to guard you on the way..." (Exodus 18:12). In the New Testament (Mt 18:12) Jesus says "See that you never despise one of these little ones, I assure you, their angels in Heaven constantly behold my heavenly Father's face." You can make up your own short prayer to your guardian angel or perhaps use the simple one we learned as children "Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen"

Speaking In Tongues

Q. What does speaking in tongues mean? Are there people in the Church who speak in tongues?

A. The Apostles spoke in tongues after the coming down of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. People of different languages from different countries were able to understand the preaching of the Apostles on that day. That is the only occasion, as far as we know, when the Holy Spirit manifested His presence and power in that particular way.

When the Charismatic movement flourished in the Church a few decades ago, some people at these meetings spoke in tongues, and as such seemed to possess the 'gift of tongues'. This meant speaking at their meeting in a language that no one could understand but which was later interpreted by the person who had spoken or by someone else at the meeting. The gift of tongues is one of the special manifestations of the presence of the Holy Spirit in an individual or group. One difficulty as St. Paul pointed out is that people can easily deceive themselves. Someone may believe that he or she is speaking in tongues when, in fact, the vocal sounds are merely the result of an emotional state. Apart from those charismatic meetings 'the gift of tongues' is rarely heard or spoken of now-a-days but it was not uncommon in the early church. St. Paul in writing about it (1 Cor. 14) says the gift is good if the speaker uses it to build up the Church and not to build up himself.

Jesus the Jew, Messiah

Q. Wasn't Jesus a Jew! Where did the Catholic Church come from?

A. Thank you for your question. As you say Jesus was a Jew and for centuries the Jewish people had awaited the Messiah who would fulfil God's promise to establish a kingdom. He would help the poor and the weak and defeat all their enemies. For the Jewish people the promised kingdom was to be a political kingdom ruled over by the Messiah. But Jesus, the son of God, the Messiah, made it clear when he came that he was not about to establish that kind of kingdom. For Jesus the kingdom of God was the reign or rule of God over people's minds and hearts. He had been sent by God the Father to set people free from anything that would prevent God from ruling over their lives. To ensure that his teaching would reach the ends of the earth and continue to be preached after he had gone, he gathered a group of apostles around him, and sent them out to preach all that he had taught them. They laid the foundations on which his church, his kingdom, was built. Christ himself, as St. Paul says, was the foundation stone of the Church. It is a church no longer exclusive to one race. All people are invited to be part of his church. As St. Paul teaches "Jesus Christ...abolished the Jewish Law, with its commandments and rules, in order to create out of the two races one new people in union with himself, in this way making peace.

...By means of the cross he united both races into one body and brought them back to God." (Eph 2:14.) This one body is his Church. □

Witnesses in & for Our Times



'I HAVE SEEN THE LORD' ST. MARY MAGDALENE (JULY 22)

by Mario Scudu

There is a legend that Mary of Magdala who was privileged to have witnessed the Death and Resurrection of Jesus, was invited to a banquet given by the emperor Tiberius. When she met him, she had an egg in her hand and she said loudly: "Christ is risen!" Tiberius laughed and said that the resurrection of Christ was as probable as the egg in her hand turning red... before he finished speaking the egg did turn red... and she continued to proclaim the Gospel unimpeded. It is probably from there that the tradition of 'painted eggs' comes – going right back to Mary of Magdala.

Her destiny is strange. She is one of the most significantly beautiful figures in the Gospel – a true, passionate and faithful disciple of Christ who to this day continues to have a very large following though her name is synonymous with traditions, legends, strange imagery and even stranger movements of witches. Even today she has sparked of a recent spate of queer theories without any serious historical and biblical basis that have become the



*The Magdalene of
history has
been a good subject
for some novels*

foundation of the fictional historico-theological novel the *Da Vinci Code*.^f But if one confines oneself only to information regarding the life and message of Mary of Magdala that is contained in the Gospels there is nothing to

titillate the imagination of readers.

The Mary of the “seven demons”

But who was Mary? The latest theory of the Australian bibliologist Elizabeth Fletcher maintains that this Mary was in reality a Jewish entrepreneur who was active at Magdala which was a commercial centre in the fish trade, especially dry fish (it is also true that town Magdala's Greek name was Tarichea, meaning salt fish), and dyes for wool. It was a very flourishing trade in those days. That was why she was able to offer financial and logistical support that Rabbi from Galilee and to his itinerant disciples. It is true that historically, Magdala was a city situated near Capernaum which was not as important as its neighbour. It became a haven for the Anti Roman resistance since it was strategically situated on the trade routes that crisscrossed the region.

About Mary of Magdala we know very little (but important), and the rest we can intuit. She is not mentioned very often in the Gospels, and because of the socio-cultural contest between the Jewish clergy of the time (in which the Gospels were born) she is placed on the sidelines as she was a woman. The Gospel of Luke in 8, 2-3 simply states that Mary of Magdala was one from whom “seven demons” were cast out. What does “demon” mean? In Gospel language “demon” was not only rooted in moral evil but also physical evils that could “occupy” and subdue the entire person. In biblical symbology then, the number seven meant fullness. So, Mary had some moral or very serious physical illness from

which Jesus had freed her. This is what assisted the argument that she went up to the foot of the cross out of gratitude or “for the grace received.” Therefore, Mary is portrayed as a true disciple of Jesus and held up as a model of a recovered person who is reconciled with herself, with others and with God.

Mary of Many Misunderstandings

We can truly say that Mary had a history of misunderstandings, ancient and recent, intentional and unintentional.

The first: Identifying the Magdalene with a prostitute, the public sinner as described in Luke (7, 36-50) who has found in the house of the leading Pharisee, Simon. He was highly scandalized by her behaviour and baffled by the mercy of the young rabbi of Nazareth. The reason for the error was perhaps the fact that immediately after this Jesus spoke of Mary of Magdala and her “seven demons.”

The second misunderstanding, comes from the common misconception that Mary of Magdala is identified with Mary of Bethany (the sister of Martha and Lazarus). She also performs the same gesture (John 12, 1-8) of the anonymous sinner: “anointing the feet of Jesus with perfumed oil of pure nard and wiping them with her own hair.” This was a sign of exquisite hospitality on the part of Mary for the guest, Jesus.

But that is not all, someone made her not only a true leader of the first Christian community (and it was also possible, given the fact that she was a credible witness of the Death and Resurrection of Christ) but also the author of the fourth Gospel. Mary of Magdala

took the place of the beloved disciple John and she was therefore, according to fictitious interpretation, also in the painting of the celebrated painter Leonardo da Vinci!

Other misunderstandings and distortions came with the arrival of apocryphal gospels such as the gospel of Mary Magdalene and the gospel of Philip. The latter (recovered at Nag Hammadi in 1945).

The Mary of "I have seen the Lord"

In another legend, from medieval times (Jacopo from Varagine) affirms that "St. Peter entrusted Mary Magdalene to St. Maximus, one of the 72 disciples of the Lord. Then Maximus, Mary Magdalene, Lazarus and Martha... were attacked in the sea by infidels" and then they reached Provence in the South of France... Woven with this trip is the story of the Holy Grail and the Mervingian Dynasty, and the "secret" brought by Magdalene and the latest Da Vinci Code became fodder for the imagination. In France however, there has been a fervent cult to the saint of Magdala (also associated with famous sanctuaries).

Instead, according to an ancient (and a serious) tradition, Mary of Magdala died and was buried in the city of Ephesus or on the outskirts where Mary of Nazareth, the mother of Jesus lived.

To us Christians of the third Millennium Mary Magdalene gives us a lesson in genuine faith. Faith is an assent to the gift of God but it is also a quest, an effort, a meditation, confrontation, doubt, trust, in short, a labour of reason. This quest, if authentic will be impassioned, carried out "with

one's whole mind and gladly," in short with one's whole self. It is said that one who loves, seeks, but also one who seeks, loves. So, to persevere honestly and confidently in this quest for God, in a certain sense, one has already found him. "You would not look for me if you had not already found me" (St. Augustine).

Strange was the destiny of the Magdalene with all these misunderstandings, legends, fables, various theories and imaginations that rendered her story so salacious...but be not upset. The Gospels give us a few details, but extremely important ones because they concern her as a woman. The apostles and evangelists, sons of the Jewish culture and tradition were generally not well disposed toward women but perhaps subsequently they began to accept her since she was the first to see the Risen Jesus (apart from Mary of Nazareth). She, a woman, she, Mary of Magdala was present at the crucifixion of Jesus when the others, starting from Peter, all ran away full of fear.

Why all this? St. Augustine wrote that when Peter and John returned home after they had visited the empty sepulchre, **Mary remained there because she did not want to accept the fact that she had lost her Rabbuni, her "Good Teacher," she wanted to look yet again, to see where they had laid him, because she had, among the other disciples, "loved much"** (Homily 121, 1). So much so that Jesus himself not only rewarded her by making her the first witness of the Resurrection but also by sending her to announce to the others what she had seen, making her an "apostle of the apostles." And that was no mean reward! □

IN A CHEERFUL MOOD

The Professional Patient

Mr. Teller was in poor health and continually changing physicians. At one time he called in a young man just beginning to practice in the town, and told him all his ailments, remarking that he had symptoms of heart trouble of a serious nature.

"No necessarily," said the young doctor.

This did not please the patient and in his irritation he looked accusingly at the other, sternly remarking:

"It isn't for a young physician like you, just out of college, to disagree with an old and experienced invalid like me, sir!"

Meticulous Mistakes

The student reporter had just submitted his editorial for the day. Leaving the room, he began to reflect upon what he had written and decided to go back and change something in it.

"I have a few corrections to make on the editorial that I submitted," he told the editor.

The editor reached into the waste-basket and pulled out the articles.

"All right, but make it snappy; the wastebaskets will be emptied in five minutes."

Fatal Courtesy

Two Parisians, Francois and Louis, got to arguing about a lady. One word led to a thousand others, and they finally agreed to settle the matter by a pistol duel in

the park.

At 7:00 on the appointed morning Francois was on hand with his pistol, his second and his physician. A few minutes later, a messenger arrived with a note from Louis. "Dear Francois," it read, "If I am late, don't wait. Go ahead and shoot."

Helped to the Teeth

As the speaker of the evening sat down, he coughed. His upper denture fell to the floor and broke. A guest at his side realized the man's plight, dug into his pocket and came up with a set. The speaker-to-be tried them, but they were too big. The helpful guest supplied another set. They were too small. The third set fit.

The speaker got along perfectly with the borrowed teeth, and as he sat down, returned them with thanks.

"By the way," he said, "are you a dentist?"

"No. An undertaker."

A Stern View

"Did you hear," asked the senior, "about our cross eyed professor getting fired?"

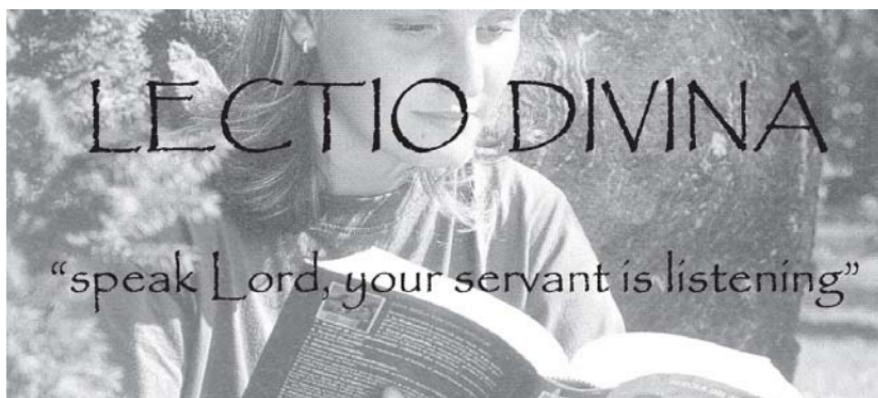
"No," replied the innocent freshman. "Why was he let out?"

"Because he couldn't control his pupils."

The Nut Behind the Wheel

"How's your wife getting along with her driving?"

"She took a turn for the worse last week." □



Our Father...Forgive us our trespasses!

by Roberta Fora

Have mercy on me O God, in your kindness, in your great love blot out my sin. *f* Psalm 50

It is the humble cry of the Christian who is aware of his poverty and inadequacy and seeks and invokes God for his infinite mercy.

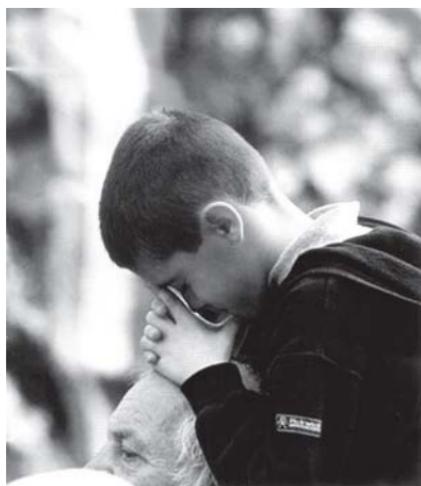
The Lord is great and we can certainly never doubt the mercy that he has demonstrated so many times in the course of his presence among us. One of the greatest gifts that Jesus left us was certainly the

institution of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We read of this in the Gospel of John: *Then he breathed on them and said: Receive the Holy Spirit, whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven and whose sins you shall retain they are retained* *f* (Jn 20, 22-23).

No serious journey in the spiritual life is possible without a frequent recourse to the stages of reconciliation. As Christians we should make the examination of conscience every evening and turn to God asking for his forgiveness for our daily shortcomings.

The celebration of the sacrament of Confession is another matter however. After a sincere repentance for our sins we humbly confess them to the priest who represents Christ and in that moment we are filled with Divine Grace. The Lord forgives us through the absolution of the priest and we can recommence our journey completely renewed with the strength of the Holy Spirit.

In praying the Our Father and saying: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," we wish to



entrust ourselves to the mercy of God and his love not afraid that we will fall again but humbly recognizing that we are sinners willing to start afresh with enthusiasm and joy.

Therefore, let us entrust ourselves to the infinite mercy of God and why not? Even when Don Bosco preached the spiritual retreat to his boys, he encouraged them to prepare themselves for Confession and live as if it would be the last Confession of their lives.

It would be wonderful to frequent

this enriching experience. The fruits would be marvellous but too many other preoccupations of life prevent this and don't allow us. We try, however to use the liturgical seasons as 'strong' reminders that this grace always awaits us and after we have prepared ourselves well we approach this sacrament of Reconciliation.

It will be an experience of the Lord's love for us and a great help to ourselves. We will certainly benefit from it and so will those who live around us. □

POPE BENEDICT XVI on the *Our Father*

(*Jesus of Nazareth* p. 158 -159)

What is forgiveness, really? What happens when forgiveness takes place? Guilt is a reality, an objective force; it has caused destruction that must be repaired. For this reason, forgiveness must be more than a matter of ignoring, or merely trying to forget. Guilt must be worked through, healed, and thus overcome. Forgiveness exacts a price - first of all from the person who forgives. He must overcome within himself the evil done to him: he must, as it were, burn it interiorly and in so doing renew himself. As a result, he also involves the other, the trespasser, in this process of transformation, of inner purification, and both parties, suffering all the way through an overcoming evil, are made new. At this point, we encounter the mystery of Christ's Cross. But the very first thing we encounter is the limit of our power to heal and to overcome evil, which we cannot master with our unaided powers. Reinhold

Schneider says apropos of this that "evil lives in a thousand forms; it occupies the pinnacles of power... it bubbles up from the abyss. Love has just one form - your Son" (*Das Vaterunser*, p. 68). □



DEDICATED TO THE
BREAD OF LIFE

Quiet

A SPECIAL

by Sr. Margot

When I woke up that morning I knew that it was going to be a special day. Then I remembered why: my whole family was going to listen to the prophet. Everyone was talking about him and the wonderful things he was doing for the sick. Wherever he went huge crowds were following him.

He wasn't like most preachers. He had a group of friends who were just ordinary workers. Most of them were fishermen like my dad; they weren't rich or clever. He was their leader and master. And he had a strange way of talking about God as his Father. Some people objected to that.

Setting Out

As I was the eldest, my mum gave me the basket with the food for the day. She told me not to put it down anywhere, or lose it. She said she had counted the loaves, so she would know if I had eaten any of them. Since she only had two fish I wouldn't dare chance my luck there!

It was a bright spring morning when we set out. There were streams of people climbing the hill slopes, so we knew where the prophet was likely to be found. But we never expected to see so many people: there were thousands of them!

I was fairly small, so I wormed my way through the crowds. It was a pretty steep climb and, with the day getting hotter, it was not easy to keep going. After a while, I looked around to see if the others were still behind me, but they were nowhere to be seen. I was going to have a job to find them when meal-time arrived.

On the Hilltop

At last I reached the top, but I couldn't see the prophet. I noticed a very big man who was telling everybody to sit down. Someone beside me whispered, 'That's Peter, one of the prophet's friends; and that's his brother Andrew beside him'.

I couldn't see Andrew, so I squeezed in between two people in



Spaces

AL SMILE

aret Mary

front of me. Then I saw, not just Andrew, but the prophet himself. There he was, the one everybody was talking about.

He started talking about the Kingdom of God and his Father's love for everybody. It was easy to listen to him, and we didn't notice the time going by. When he had finished preaching, I heard him ask his friends where they could buy food. It was getting late, he said, and everyone was tired and hungry. They said it was impossible to get food at that hour, even if they had the money. Andrew then said something which I couldn't hear.

Food For All

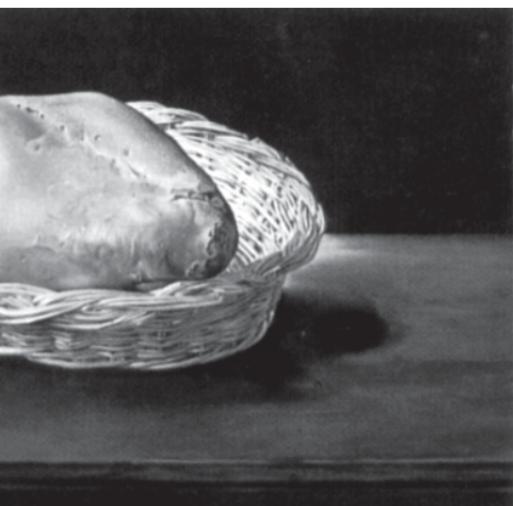
Suddenly the prophet's voice rang out: 'Bring him here to me'. I thought I was dreaming when Andrew came over, and said that the prophet wanted me. I went towards him as he sat looking at me with his kind eyes. He didn't have to say anything. I just held out my basket to him, and he took it with a smile I'll never forget.

Then he held the bread and fish, thanked God in prayer, and gave the food to his friends to distribute. 'What am I going to say to my mother?' I thought, as I watched her loaves disappear.

'Her little basketful won't go far with this crowd.'

As I watched I saw Andrew and the others dipping into their baskets, and coming up with more bread and fish every time! I couldn't believe my eyes. When I tasted my share I knew it was my

mum's cooking. All those thousands had enough to eat in the few loaves Mum had baked for our picnic. How did he do it?



Recalling his Smile

I looked across at the prophet. He was looking at me with a special smile. I think it meant, 'You and I have given them all a big surprise!' I smiled back at him.

The next time I saw Jesus he was dragging a cross... All that happened many years ago. Now I am a Christian, and every time we gather to celebrate the Eucharist I remember his smile. □



The story so far:

John Campbell is amazed to discover that a stranger visiting his home town is his mother's brother, Patrick McCarthy, of whose existence he and his brothers have been unaware. His mother has warned them to avoid this man, and has even suggested that he could put John's plans to marry Carol Martin in jeopardy. But John is friendly towards him, and arranges to take him sightseeing. On reflection, however, he fears that this may have been unwise.

John's mother and Joe were in the kitchen starting their lunch, when John came to join them. His mother's eyes were red, and there were traces of tears on her face. Joe looked worried, and his expression was unfriendly when he saw his brother come in.

John waited for his mother to speak first, but she watched him

in silence. After a while he said, 'I've met your brother'.

She left down her knife and fork, and tears welled up in her eyes. 'After all I said to you, you had to go and throw away everything I've worked for these past thirty-five years.'

'How did you know I'd met him?'

'I went to the Post Office, and saw you at the petrol station talking to him. And so, I'm sure, did half the town.'

'And what harm could it do to talk to him?'

'After all you've heard from me about him, you ask me what harm it could do!'

'I know who he is, but I know nothing about him. He wouldn't tell me why you don't want him here. And, Mum, he is your brother.'

'Too well I know he's my brother. And everyone in the area where we were reared knew he was my brother when he went to jail. That's why I came to live where no one knew anything about us. I've never told a soul about him, except your father when he was alive. I reared you all to be respectable. I gave you a

clean start in life, with nothing out of the past to drag you down. And now that he's found out where I live, nothing will do him but to come here and destroy all the respect for us that I've built up over the years.'

John sank down into a chair as his mother continued. 'He disgraced his family. And now he'll disgrace all of you, too.'

He suddenly thought of Carol. And Carol's father. What had he brought on himself and his family by ignoring his mother's warning?

'Why was he sent to jail?'

'For stealing a large amount of money from the firm he worked for.'

If Carol's father heard this, he might try to prevent her from marrying him! And even if her father never heard about it, he would have to tell Carol herself if he were to ask her to marry him. How would she take the news?

'And that job you're going for,' his mother mumbled through her sobbing, 'James Martin has a big say in who gets that. Do you think it will encourage him to trust you, when he finds out how trustworthy your mother's brother was?'

'Ah, go easy, Mom,' Joe cut in. 'If one man does wrong it doesn't mean that everyone belonging to him is the same.'

'Don't upset yourself, Mom,'

John said, trying to comfort her. 'He'll probably go away soon. Anyway, no one here knows who he is. I'll talk to him, and explain that it's better for all of us if he goes home. I'll tell him that we'll go and visit him as often as he

likes.'

'Maybe he hasn't got a home. And anyway he was never the kind of man you could persuade. In fact he would never listen to anyone. I'm going to offer him money to go away and stay away.'

But first I have to think of how I can meet him without anyone in this place knowing about it.'



Uneasily John began to eat his lunch, all appetite for it gone.

'I'll do that for you,' he began tentatively. 'I... I've arranged to take him for a drive this evening.'

'You're mad! It must matter very little to you whether or not Carol Martin marries you.'

John spoke angrily. 'I do care very much about whether she marries me. Isn't that all the more reason for me to deal with this problem about your brother?'

Joe looked from one to the other. 'People will think he was just someone John knew in Dublin,' he suggested. 'It would attract less attention than if you were to meet him, Mom.'

Eventually she agreed reluctantly. 'Keep him as far away from this town as you can,' she

urged John.

'How much money will I offer him?'

'Start with a couple of hundred. But I'd be prepared to give him a thousand if I had to.'

'We can't afford a thousand!'

'We can't afford to be disgraced,' his mother answered harshly. 'And you can't afford to let Gerald O'Rourke use this to prevent you from marrying Carol, so that he can marry her himself.'



His mother's words were still ringing in John's ears as he drove out of the town with her brother. Anger and fear simmered within him.

'Your attitude to me has changed since this morning,' Patrick McCarthy said. 'I can see that your mother has told you all about me.'

'You can hardly expect me to be pleased that my job prospects and – and other important hopes I have – may be put at risk because of you.'

'No one need know my history. I'm certainly not going to tell anyone. I'm deeply ashamed that I behaved the way I did at that time. It's a long time ago, you know, John. I've changed a lot since then.'

'What made you steal that money?'

Patrick sighed. 'I was earning good money at the time, but I was spending far more than I earned on gambling. I was certain that eventually I'd win enough to clear

my debts, and have plenty of money over. And later, when I stole that money, I intended to pay it back with interest out of my winnings.'

'Intending to pay it back gave you no right to take it in the first place.'

'I know, I know.' The older man sighed deeply, and looked close to tears.

'And then you were caught?'

'Then I was caught, and I was sent to prison. It was the chaplain there who explained to me that I was a compulsive gambler. He told me about Gamblers Anonymous, and I joined them. That was how I got straightened out. When I came out of prison I got a job, and did well. Eventually I paid back every penny, as well as all the interest on it. It wasn't easy, but I was determined to make amends.'

'Did you tell this to my mother?' John enquired.

'She didn't give me a chance to tell her anything. If you tell her, maybe she'll let me stay in this town. I've just retired, and I have a pension. Maybe I could get a little flat somewhere.'

John was ashamed of his immediate but unspoken rejection of this idea. Having Patrick

McCarthy living in the town would be too much of a risk. Suppose someone recognized him? Suppose Gerald O'Rourke got to hear the story? Suppose it got to the ears of Carol's father?

Yet the pathetic eagerness in Patrick's voice filled him with compassion. □

To be continued

Don Bosco: The Times, The Man, The Facts

DON BOSCO'S CANE

by Natale Cerrato (T/A:ID)

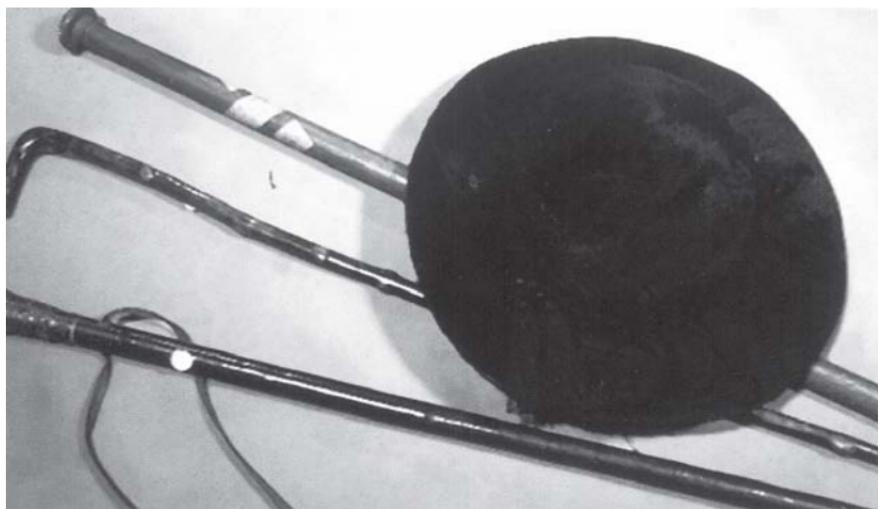
The first time that Don Bosco was seen supporting himself on a cane was in the summer of 1846 when he came out of his room at the Refuge (of Marchioness Barolo) to return to the Pindari Shed after having survived a serious illness that brought him to death's door. The fervent prayers of his boys to the Madonna of the Consolation (*La Consolata*) were instrumental in his unexpected recovery much to the surprise of even the physicians.

It was on that occasion that Don Bosco told the Oratory boys of Valdocco, who hastened around him delirious with joy, that he was indebted to them and he promised to spend the remainder



of his life that the Lord had granted him for their spiritual and material welfare.

The *Biographical Memoirs* state that "...Don Bosco, leaning on his cane took his first walk to the



The beret and the canes used by Don Bosco

Refuge.” (EBM, 385)

The Cane of Varazze

To this day, still preserved in a glass case in the rooms of Don Bosco at Valdocco, is a black cane with a worn-out metal tip. It is 83 cm and it belonged to Don Bosco.

In one of his books that richly deserves a reprint, Fr. M. Molineris deals with the cane that Don Bosco used to take his first steps after having been ill from December 1871 to February 1872 at Varazze.

His illness was described precisely by Prof. Joseph Gucci when he was interviewed by Fr. M. Molineris who was studying the details: “a miliary fever that was rare with rheumatic symptoms” (Michael Molineris, *Don Bosco inedito*).

Finally, when Don Bosco returned to Turin he was constrained to rest for a month and use his cane for support. This cane ended up in the custody of the relatives of the Salesian Fr. Pietro Squarzon.

The priest died on September 24, 1959 at Piossasco. He used it in the hope that it would relieve him of his ailment and he obstinately defended his possession against the assaults of the Salesians of Varazze and Turin. Fr. Peter Farina, the rector of the house of Piossasco succeeded in recovering from him this precious relic. (Michael MOLINERIS, op. cit.1)

The Biographical Memoirs record another humorous incident regarding the cane used by Don Bosco. One day he was travelling by train from Varazze to Sampierdarena with an assistant. He held in his hand a

cane and he kept looking at it while he was conversing with those present among who was a monsignor of Curia. Suddenly during the trip, to lighten the spirits of his fellow travellers, he blurted out:

“This is Adam’s cane!”

Faking bewilderment, the monsignor added:

“Good gracious! This cane must be ante deluvian!”

But Don Bosco immediately specified:

“This cane on which I am leaning is my valet and he’s called Adam.”

Everyone laughed at his humorous remark while the saint hid his pain and discomfort. (MB 10, 1258)

During the last years of his life he continuously used the cane. He leaned on it while walking and it saddened people to see him stooped toward it in order to help him to walk (MB 17, 429).

Don Bosco’s Cane in Ireland

The story of a cane used by Don Bosco during his last years deserves a mention. It is recounted by one of the four young Irishmen who joined Valdocco late in the summer of 1882.

They were welcomed by the first Irish Salesian Fr. Edward Patrick Mackiernan. It was he who led the Salesians to Battersea, London. One of those Salesian aspirants was Bernard Redahan. He made his novitiate at San Benigno Canavese in the years 1883-1884 and was ordained a priest in Turin in 1888. He worked for ten years in various houses in Italy before being sent as a Parish Priest to the church of “Corpus Christi”



in San Francisco in California. He later ministered in the church of Sts. Peter and Paul in that same city. Fr. Redahan died on January 15, 1920.

His relatives in Ireland affirmed that he had received one of the canes of Don Bosco (cf. W.J. DICKSON, *Dynamics of growth*, LAS Roma 1991, p. 45-55).

This was how it happened. The young Bernard, after his priestly ordination was going to his country to celebrate his First Mass when he received the sad news of the accident of his father that prevented him from walking. Therefore he would not be present at the First Mass of his son. Don Bosco accompanied the newly ordained priest to the railway station and before taking his leave he reflected a moment and said to him:

“Here, Bernard, take this cane and give it to your father and you will see that he will be able to come for your First Mass”.

On the day of his First Mass, to

the great surprise of all present his father arrived. Everyone had known the condition of the father. For the rest of his life he used the cane of Don Bosco. Fr. Bernard left for America but strongly urged his relatives to jealously guard the cane because one day it would be considered a true relic. Fr. Redahan before dying gave the cane to his eldest brother and it was still with him in 1955 where it was preserved as a family treasure. The people of the place called it “the golden baton,” as so many graces were obtained through contact with it (cf. Bolletino Salesiano, 1 June 1956, p. 103)

Religion or the Cane!

If Don Bosco supported himself on the cane to sustain himself in the midst of his infirmities and the weight of his years he never used it in his educational method.

Two Englishmen arrived at the Oratory of Valdocco to see the Salesian work that was, by now, fairly famous in Italy. These gentlemen marvelled at the order and the serenity that reigned without any threats of punishments. Don Bosco explained that his educational system was based on religion, not on the cane.

“You are right” one of the two guests who was a government official exclaimed. “It’s either religion or the stick.” (EBM 337)

One day Don Bosco speaking about “knocks” remarked, “The Oratory of St. Francis de Sales was born of hard knocks, grew under hard knocks, and continues to thrive under hard knocks.” (EBM 7, 187) □



ROME

Pope Benedict XVI remembered **Sister Maria Laura Mainetti**, who was stabbed to death in 2000 by three young girls during a Satanic ritual in Italy.

After delivering the general audience in St. Peter's Square April 9, the pope greeted the Daughters of the Cross and the laity that share the charism, "united today in the memory of Sister Maria Laura," who was murdered at the hands of three teenage girls in the small Italian town of Chiavenna.

The girls, two aged 17 and one 16, called Sister late June 6, 2000 telling her that one of them was pregnant and needed help. The sister responded positively. Upon arriving at the agreed location, the three grabbed her, stabbed her 19 times and stoned her.

Sister Maria Laura's last words were that of a prayer to God asking for pardon for the three youth.

"The Italian sister," said Pope Benedict XVI, "faithful to the total surrender of herself, sacrificed her life, praying for those who were beating her."

The Congregation for Saints' Causes recognized the murder of the religious in March as martyrdom, thus advancing the cause for her beatification.

Teresina Mainetti was born in Colico, Italy, in 1939. She taught in the schools of her congregation, and at the moment of her death she was the superior of the community of the Daughters of the Cross at the Institute of Mary Immaculate in Chiavenna.

The girls, who at first said the murder was "a game", confessed later that it was a Satanic ritual.

Officials investigating the murder learned that the trio initially wanted to sacrifice a priest, Monsignor Ambrogio Balatti, archpriest of Chiavenna San Lorenzo, in their Satanic rite.

At that time, interest in Satanism and occultism had become a fad. Even dress, music and some books contributed to the spread of such a tendency.

Many young people followed more than anything out of a desire to call attention, to defy rules. It found fertile ground in some because they were angry with God, perhaps because of personal problems. (*Zenit*)

LONDON

The sainthood cause of the 19th Century English cardinal has taken a step forward after the Vatican's medical commission rules that there was no natural explanation for the healing of a U.S. deacon who prayed for the cardinal's intercession.

The progress of the cause of

Cardinal John Henry Newman, (who shocked English society with his conversion to Catholicism), was announced on April 24 by Peter Jennings, spokesman for the Archdiocese of Birmingham, England.

"The case of Deacon Jack Sullivan from Marshfield near Boston, Mass., was discussed and voted on by "the medical commission of the Congregation for Saints' Causes, Jennings said in a statement.

"The opinion of the doctors is positive," he said.

After the doctors determined there is no natural explanation for the healing, the case is passed on to a theological commission. The theologians are asked to certify that the alleged miracle took place after prayers for the sainthood candidate's intercession.

Deacon Sullivan, 69, was suffering from an extremely serious spinal disorder when he first prayed that Cardinal Newman would intercede on his behalf. The father of three was healed inexplicably of his condition – which had left him bent double over – Aug. 15, 2001, the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Before he became a Catholic at the age of 44, Cardinal Newman was an Anglican priest who led the 1830's Oxford movement to draw Anglicans to their Catholic roots. He died in 1890 at the age of 89. (CNS)

SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO, ITALY
Pilgrims will be able to view the body of the Capuchin friar, who died Sep 26, 1968, at San Giovanni



Rotondo.

The Capuchins of San Giovanni Rotondo and the papal delegate for the saint's shrine, Archbishop Domenico D'Ambrosio, have said the body will be on view at least until September, but perhaps for as long as a year before the crystal will be covered.

The shrine which has a dedicated telephone line (39-088) 241-7500 – which potential pilgrims can use to reserve a date for visiting the tomb. Those without reservation will have to stand in line and take a chance on making it inside the crypt between 7.00am and 7.00pm.

As of April 23, the friars said about 750,000 people had made reservations.

Padre Pio's body was exhumed in a service that began late at night March 2 to verify the state of the body and to allow technicians to ensure its long-term preservation.

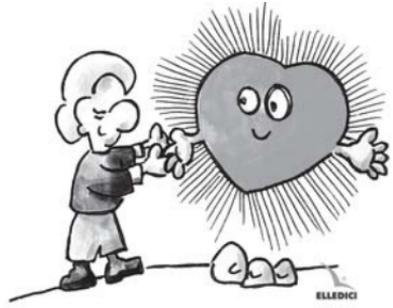
The friars had said the body was in "fair condition," although the skull and parts of the upper body show serious signs of decay.

The archbishop and the Capuchins hired the London based Gems Studio to create a silicone mask – including a short moustache and ample beard – for the body. (CNS) □

16 STEPS to GREATNESS

(Operation Wardrobe)

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



The age of 15

15 - HUMILITY Part 2

**WHO IS TRULY HUMBLE?
THE LITTLE "SPECK"
WHO MAKES HERSELF TINY**

MARY



TWO EXAMPLES:

From the Gospel of Matthew
(Mt 11, 25 - 26)

Jesus said: "Father, Lord of heaven and earth! I thank you because you have shown to the unlearned what you have hidden from the wise and the learned. Yes, Father, this was how you wanted it to happen."

ST TERESA OF LISIEUX



Read this story:

I asked her to pray for the poor little grain of sand that lies in such a place that it is trampled by everyone under foot. No one acknowledges it; let us just say that its existence is ignored... the grain of sand

doesn't even want to be humiliated: even such a desire would not be so pretentious, because it would need to be preoccupied with that thought. The little grain of sand has only one desire: "to be forgotten and to be considered as nothing!..." It, nevertheless, desires to be seen by Jesus. The gaze of human beings don't stoop so low. At least the blood-stained face of Jesus would look up at it!... The little grain of sand desires nothing else, no other gaze, just one! (*What St. Teresa of Lisieux thought about herself*)



at the age of 8

at the age of 15



at the age of 16

at the age of 23



WHO THEN, IS A HUMBLE YOUNGSTER?

1) ONE WHO RECOGNIZES WHO S/HE IS, HAVING A FAIR OPINION OF ONESELF, A FAIR ASSESSMENT OF ONESELF

St. Paul in the letter to the Romans (12:3) says: "Do not think of yourself more highly than you should. Instead be modest in your thinking and judge yourself..." again in 12:16 he says: "Do not be proud but accept humble duties. Do not think of yourselves as wise."

2) ONE WHO REALIZES THAT HE IS ACTUALLY NOTHING AND THEREFORE IS NEVER DELIRIOUS WITH POWER

From the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians: (1 Cor 4,7) "Who made you superior to others? Didn't God give you everything you have? Well, then, how can you boast as if what you have were not a gift?"

3) ONE WHO DOES NOT BOAST NOR IS BLOATED WITH PRIDE. HE DOES NOT SEEK ASCENDENCY NOR TALKS ABOUT HIMSELF.

4) ONE WHO MAKES HIMSELF LITTLE, BECOMING "INSIGNIFICANT", ABASING HIMSELF TO BE OF SERVICE TO WASH THE FEET OF OTHERS.

5) ONE WHO LOVES THOSE WHO ARE LITTLE AND STRIVES TO BECOME LITTLE.

6) ONE WHO HIDES HIMSELF AND DOES NOT SEEK THE LIMELIGHT, BUT ONLY THE GAZE OF CHRIST.

Prayer

*Lord, with all my heart I ask you to:
free me from the desire to be the first,
from the desire to be esteemed
from the desire to be praised and applauded,
from the desire to be appreciated.*

*Free me, Lord,
because I am not **Mr. MEE-ON-LEE**.
Lord, free me,
from the fear of not being acknowledged,
from the fear of being forgotten.*

*Lord I admire what you have done:
you were indeed humble,
you stooped down to raise us up.*

*That is what I want to do.
I want to be a little grain,
as humble as Mary,
as humble as little Teresa of Lisieux...
as a tiny grain of sand that lives
hidden yet under your gaze.*

To be continued

**LOVING CHILDREN TO
THEIR LOVING MOTHER**

Our sincere thanks to Our Lady for all the favours received.

Ethel, Canada

My sincere thanks to Our Blessed Lord and Our Blessed Mother for protecting my family and for blessing me with a good job and many other favours received.

Lloyd Daniel, Kuwait

Thank you for the success you granted me in my studies and for helping me secure a first class and a distinction. Thank you for helping me overcome my disappointments.

Alroy Raj Rodrigues, Bangalore

Thank you for all the graces and favours received.

A Devotee

Thank you dear Mother Mary for the wonderful parents I have and for the wonderful graces I have been blessed with. I believe you have been with me all this time and I am most grateful.

Samantha Josephine Fernandes, Halifax Canada

My most grateful thanks to dear Jesus, Mama Mary for saving me from an accident where my rickshaw went swerving over a divider and yet I came out without a scratch.

Rufiana Menezes, Bombay

Thank you Mary Help of Christians for the favours received and especially for saving us from a fire in the house.

A. Rego

Thank you Jesus and Mary Help of Christians for helping me clear my examinations.

M.R. Bombay

Thank you dear Jesus and Mother Mary for the countless graces and blessings received.

Ida/John Barrow

Thank you, dear Mother Mary, Help of Christians for favours showered on me.

Minni, Bombay

I am grateful to dear Mother Mary for all the graces bestowed on my family.

Sabrina

Thank you dearest Mother for giving my daughter a good job and also for helping to get one.

Rita D'Souza, Bombay

Thank you dear Mother Mary for your powerful protection in the scapular, and saving me from what could have been a dreadful accident.

J. Carvalho, Goa

Thank you dear Mary Help of Christians for helping my husband of his prostate problem and thank you for helping me administer my school in the academic year 2007-2008.

Mrs Maria Martins, Goa

My heartfelt thanks to Jesus and Mother Mary for the safe return of my son from abroad and a cure for my cough and the chest pain of my daughter.

M.R. Australia

I am grateful to Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for protecting my father who had an accident in the middle of the night and was bleeding profusely. The bleeding stopped only about three hours later and I was able to contact the family doctor who advised him to come in the morning for stitches. Thankfully there were no broken bones and no other open wounds. Thank you, dear Mother Mary for your love and your protection.

Natalia D'Sa, Bombay

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.

Dear Infant Jesus, Our Lady and Don Bosco. My sincere thanks for saving my life today. I was driving my car on the Western Express Highway when suddenly two men tried to cross the road out of time. I could have hit either of the two as they were frozen to the ground when they saw me approach. Somehow, I managed to brake the car in the nick of time and avoided them. My car rammed into a lamp-post and was badly damaged however but I was left unhurt, not a scar on my body. This was all thanks to the Infant Jesus that I have placed on the dashboard and the Rosary on my rear view mirror. Mother Mary, you have given me another life today and I thank you for that.

Arden McDonald

Thank you Jesus, Mother Mary, and St. Dominic Savio through the faithful recitation of the 3 Hail Marys Mertle had a safe delivery and a healthy baby girl. Mother Mary, do continue to protect our family.

Isabel Campbell, Seychelles

Dear Mother Mary, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio do accept my belated but sincere gratitude for the safe and normal delivery of a healthy baby boy and a girl. Thank you for all the graces received through the faithful recitation of the 3 Hail Marys.

Mrs. C. A. Fernandes, Bombay

My four year old child suddenly started howling and crying. She said she was getting choked and seeing her I started crying. I turned her upside down but to no avail. I was desperate and I fervently prayed the 3 Hail Marys. Gradually she calmed down and she is completely healed. I am grateful to Our Lady, Don Boso and Dominic Savio for their protection of my family.

Laura Kumar & Family, Bombay

Through the recitation of the 3 Hail Marys I have received so many graces and favours for which I am immensely grateful.

Mrs. Bridget Fernandes, Ajmer, Rajasthan

My father had a urinary problem. I immediately said my 3 Hail Marys. He went for a test immediately and thankfully his reports were clear. Thank you dearest Mother for constantly being at our side and for your constant intercession to your son Our Lord Jesus Christ.

RDP

Thank you dear Mother Mary for giving my daughter a suitable partner and a happy marriage through the recitation of the 3 Hail Marys.

Mr. & Mrs. Edward O'Connor, Hubli

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

Thank you dear Mother Mary and Don Bosco for all the favours granted and for the gift of a wonderful husband.

Serafina Anthony, Mira Road

My grateful thanks to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Our Beloved Mother Mary, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for granting me so many favours especially for a successful bypass surgery that my husband had in the month of December. *Meuriss Coutinho, Canada*

Many thanks to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, Mary Help of Christians, St. John Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for helping me to win the court case, for regularizing my job and for getting my grants.

Mrs. Gail Almeida, Goa

Our grateful thanks to dear Jesus, Mother Mary and Don Bosco for the favours received.

Edith D'Souza, Bombay

Thank you dear Mother Mary and Don Bosco for the safe and normal delivery of my daughter Saleeta and for all the blessings received.

Mrs. Aninha Soares, London

Thanksgiving to Mary Help of Christians for relief from a persistent cough and for various favours granted to me and my family.

S.J. Fernandes, Ahmedabad

Thank you dear Mother Mary and St. Don Bosco for all the favours granted to us.

Annie Job, Pune

My sincere and heartfelt thanks to Our Blessed Mother and Don Bosco for all the favours received especially for helping me in my promotion. Do keep me always under your protection.

Shalini Soares, Bombay

Thank you dear Mother Mary for saving my son from a severe paralytic stroke and for many, many other favours that you bless us with.

Benedicta Fernandes, Goa

My son was playing under a glass table. He happened to pull the legs of the table which suddenly came crashing down. It was truly Mary's presence that saved him.

Saira Lewis, Bombay

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

R. A. Fernandes, Goa

In spite of all the complications my husband's operation was successful. I am grateful to Our blessed Mother and Don Bosco for their intercession.

Argentina Fernandes, Bombay

Thanks to Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the many favours received.

Vijay Aranha, Mangalore

My sincere thanks to Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for my mother's uterine cancer operation and for saving her life.

Vijay Aranha, Mangalore

I am most grateful to Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for a healing that was granted to me.

Cecilia D'Souza, Mangalore

THANKS TO DEAR ST. DOMINIC SAVIO



Thank you dear Mother Mary, Don Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for the graces that I received through your intercession.

Michael George, Kerala

My grateful thanks to the Holy Spirit, Mother Mary, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for curing my daughter-in-law's chest pain and also the lump on her breast.

Palcy R. Soares

Our sincere thanks to Jesus, Mother Mary Help of Christians and Dominic Savio for the gift of a baby girl after eight years.

C. Gracias, Goa

Our grateful thanks dear St. Dominic Savio for good health and there are many other favours for which I am grateful too. Thank you for answering my prayers.

Savio P.A. Faleiro, Goa

Our sincere thanks to Jesus, Mother Mary, St. John Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for the safe delivery of a lovely boy.

Johnny and Anita D'Souza

My sincere though belated thanks to Our Lady, Don Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for the safe delivery of my daughter.

Philo Pereira, Muscat

Our sincere thanks to the Divine Mercy, Our Lady Help of Christians, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for healing my son and for many graces, blessings and favours received.

Maria Nunes, Bombay

Thank you Mother Mary and St. Dominic Savio for the safe delivery of my daughter Stellina and the gift of a baby boy to her. She had been wearing a scapular of St. Dominic Savio throughout her pregnancy.

Mrs. Stella Carvalho, Bombay

Thank you dear St. Dominic Savio for the safe delivery of my daughter and for the gift of a baby girl.

Fatima D'Sa, Bombay

Thank you dear St. Dominic Savio for a safe and normal delivery and the gift of a healthy baby.

Roque and Quonnie Pinto, Goa

I thank Dominic Savio for all my three safe deliveries and for all the graces received through his intercession.

Sylvia Cardozo, Goa

Thanks to dear St. Dominic Savio for helping me get a job on a ship.

Flezió Barboza, Bombay

APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

JULY 2008

Holy Father's General Intention: *That there may be an increase in the number of those who, as volunteers, offer their services to the Christian Community with generous and prompt availability.*

Missionary Intention: *That the World Youth Day held in Sydney, Australia, may awaken the fire of divine love in young people and make them sowers of hope for a new humanity.*

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MARY WAS THERE

The time was 10.40pm, our maid put off the kitchen light to retire for the night when she noticed flames in the children's bedroom. We rushed and brought our four kids out of the a/c bedroom which was full of smoke and plastic fumes. The air cooler was on fire due to a short circuit and had melted down completely, even the mattress on which my son was sleeping had caught fire. All our four children were blissfully asleep, tired after a hectic day of study, play and a long Palm Sunday service and procession. They were dazed and did not realize what had happened. Neighbours and friends and the Fire Force finally did the needful. The worst could have happened to our children who were saved and we attribute this miracle to the protection of Mary Help of Christians to whom we consecrate our family and home by reciting the "Consecration of our home to Mary Help of Christians" everyday after praying the Holy Rosary.

Hemant & Greta de Barros, Goa

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.

The magazine is sent to all who ask for it, even though there is a fixed subscription (Rs 200/- India & Rs 400/- Airmail)). We trust in the generosity of our readers/benefactors. Whatever you send us will help cover the expenses of printing and mailing; the surplus if any, is devoted to the support of orphans and poor boys in our schools and apostolic centres.

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