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***At the school  
of Mary  
we find the courage  
to meet  
the challenges  
and struggles  
of our times.***

***Let the little children  
come to me  
by  
Carl Christian von Vogelstein  
1788 - 1868***



## From The Editor's Desk

*Faith: Private affair or Public Apology*

A phenomenon I have observed here and elsewhere is that entire families come for Mass while in other cases it is a major part of a family that comes. For whatever reason, there is a fairly good family turnout who come "to celebrate" the Eucharist. Yet another category is the teens or "college-able" youth (21-25 yrs) who also attend.

Though sometimes a strange sight meets the eye. Some families do not make it further than the holy water font - as a family. From that point they disperse to go their own private ways; youngsters to the deep-end, the middle-aged somewhere midfield while the aged hobble up, if they can manage it, upfront. I can't help wondering if this is not an indicator of the 'intensity' of their Faith. I then pause to ask myself what is it that causes this '*fission*' to the family when in fact the Church is the one place where there ought to be a '*fusion*' of the family.

I am beginning to realize that in some of our homes there is an unwritten code that says: Faith is a pretty 'personal' affair. As the child grows up and attends 'First Communion Catechesis,' mom or dad insist that Junior comes with them for Mass and attend Catechism class. Besides he is boldly asked: *When did you last go to Confession?* But as the youngster grows into his denims or her tights there are no more questions. Further, once the Sacrament of Confirmation is administered the youngster is presumed old enough to make his own decisions. At this point neither the family nor the Church seems to have any claims on him - total freedom or so the youngster is given to understand. A mutual awkwardness prevails between parents and the teen/youth causing a certain silence on the subject of the Faith resulting in the safe - yet not so wise rule of thumb - that the youngster ought to take responsibility for his or her own Faith from now on. The next brush with the Church will occur around the time of Matrimony... but till then he can 'hang out' around the church or on its fringes just so he can say he's been to Mass! A kind of Public Apology.

Why is it that parents are so particular about whom the youngster goes around with but not half as perturbed about when their youngster last sat down to read the Bible or joined the family at prayer? Why is it that he is handled with kid gloves in matters of the Faith but very firmly when it comes to choosing a career or even a partner? Is there some kind of an awkwardness that prevents parents from taking a stand regarding the practice of the youngster's Faith?

It is time that we adults take our role more seriously and help our youngsters (whatever their age) to live their Faith more intensely. 'It (the Faith) is an ecclesial act which expresses itself in the proclamation, "We believe." It is in fact the Church that believes.' (*Compendium of the CCC # 30*) The family is the Domestic Church - Pope Paul VI said, so the 'clergy' of the home - the parents - have a duty to conserve and nurture the Faith therein so they do not have to apologize for believing but will boldly help to build a vibrant Local Christian Community that is charged with its own personal and family witness. *Fr. Ian Doultton sdb*

## 6. THE LITTLE FISH AND THE OCEAN

*Fr. Erasto Fernandez, sss*

**A**n energetic and enterprising little fish was frantically searching for the Ocean which he desired to experience at least once before he died. He had heard others speak glowingly about the vagaries of the great ocean currents, the myriads of varieties of marine animals and plants, the stretches of clear water plunging to depths unheard of – but where was he to find it? Finally he decided to enquire of others who might know better. Stopping a great big fish he enquired: 'Where, O great fish, where would I be able to find the Ocean?' Startled the big fish responded, 'Why, this is the ocean; right here where you are! You don't need to go anywhere else!' But, of course, the little fish was disappointed with the answer and felt somewhat cheated! How could this be the Ocean – this was nothing but water, as far as he was concerned.

### **The Living One in the Tomb?**

This delightful little story reminds us of what we read in the Resurrection narratives concluding each of the four Gospels. But Luke is the one evangelist who puts the point most dramatically. He has the

two men dressed in white ask the startled women: 'Why look for the Living One among the dead?' Little realizing that the Living One (the risen Lord) is not to be found in the tomb among the dead, but among the living, they had come very early in the morning, leaving aside all their other preoccupations, in order to anoint him. Presuming that they were really serious about meeting the Risen Lord, Luke proceeds to point out seven different situations in which the Christians of his community could meet the Risen One if their faith was strong enough – and right where they were, in the midst of their day-to-day living!

### **Seven Different Ways – Present to Us**

Proceeding to recount the Emmaus story, Luke indicates that the Risen One can be encountered in the 'breaking of the Word.'<sup>(1)</sup> He opened the Scriptures to them, and beginning with Moses and going through the whole of the Law and the Prophets, he showed them how it was necessary for the Christ to have suffered and thus enter into his glory. Later that evening, after they had gathered around the table, the same 'Stranger' who had traveled with them the whole day, took the bread, said the blessing ... and in the breaking of the bread <sup>(2)</sup> showed them that he was alive, for their eyes were opened and they recognized him. These two re-juvenated disciples ran all the way back to Jerusalem to share this good news with the rest and



'while they were yet speaking (sharing their faith in his presence) Jesus stood in their midst and said, 'Peace be with you!' (3) Sharing our faith in the Risen One with others, this effort itself make him more alive and present to us. Seeing that they were still incredulous, though, he asked them for something to eat and 'they gave him a piece of broiled fish which he ate in their presence.' In this sharing of a meal with the community (4) the risen Lord once again made himself present and visible to them. He then went on to open the Scriptures to the entire community gathered there (5), as he had done for the two on the road to Emmaus. The message here too was the same: 'It was necessary for the Christ to have suffered and thus enter into his glory.'

'You are witnesses of all this,' he reminded them as he commissioned them to go and preach repentance for the forgiveness of sin, assuring them of the gift of the Spirit who would come as promised by the Father. This 'apostolate' of theirs, their witnessing to his risen presence would again put them in touch with the Risen One (6). And finally, he led them out as far as Bethany and having laid hands on them, he blessed them and departed from their sight. A very intriguing detail no doubt, but self-evident to those who remember that it is at Bethany that Jesus had begun his Passion with the triumphant entry into Jerusalem as the first step. Suffering had been the bug-bear of the apostles who chose to follow Jesus. They just could not understand why the Messiah would have had need to

suffer. But now that he had demonstrated this clearly enough, both to the pair of disciples and to the entire community at Jerusalem and that too from the Scriptures about himself, Jesus led them all to the start of his own Passion journey, and empowering them with his understanding and Spirit, he left them to make that journey in faith and love. And as they gladly embraced all their crosses they would experience his risen presence anew. (7)

### **Living One Among the Living**

So, while all along the disciples had these seven ways in which they could encounter the Risen Lord in their day-to-day lives, they were yet searching for him in the empty tomb! Not unlike the little fish we too will be thoroughly disappointed with our losing him ('him they did not see!') until we realize that he is very much with us; in fact, he dwells within us, not only in these seven avenues, but in innumerable ways open to anyone who has faith to see and hear what reason cannot fathom.

Would the parable of the little fish have any implications for us Christians of today? What seems to characterize Christian life today is a multiplicity of novenas, devotions, prayers, pilgrimages and the like, most of them pointing outwards to a presence of the Lord 'out there!' Think of the number of people who will happily make an arduous and expensive pilgrimage all the way to Pota in Kerala to seek the Lord there, failing all the while to notice his presence deep within their very being, right where they are! It never strikes them that they will not find the Lord there unless they

first learn to find him within themselves.

Again, many seem to find great relief in reciting prayers like novenas – even when these prayers are recited at such break-neck speed that it is hard to follow what exactly is being said. These Christians would not even dream that even a few genuine words that come straight from the heart (maybe not even articulated aloud or formulated in correct grammatical speech) would be more precious and acceptable to the Father than these beautiful formulae recited by heart but with little heart in it. Even when some choose to spend quiet personal time before the Blessed Sacrament exposed in our Prayer Chapels that characterize every parish in Mumbai, they seem to be at a loss knowing not what to do there; and so they revert to reciting the Rosary or other prayers from a book oblivious of the fact that a personal dialogue with the Lord is what is really called for. Even in the Adoration Chapel, often their attention is diverted from the risen presence to pictures and statues of the Sacred Heart or Divine Mercy; they delight in kissing or touching these images as if it is this touch that establishes a true contact between us and the divinity.

### **Searching In Empty Tombs?**

Why is it that Christians find it so easy and convenient to look for the Risen Lord outside of themselves rather than within? Perhaps it is the ingrained idea that we are basically unworthy

sinful people all our lives. It is unimaginable how deeply ingrained in us is the doctrine of 'original sin' – that each and every one of us comes into the world as an enemy of God. And this primal sin seems to cling to us all our lives making us abhorrent (in our view of things) to the Almighty. Even Jesus wasn't able to dislodge this kind of thinking from the people of his times. We recall how they asked him concerning the man born blind – whether it was he who sinned or his parents (Jn. ch. 9)? From the story it appears that Jesus' answer (that this was not because of sin, but an occasion to manifest the glory of God) did not really go down with the people – and perhaps does not satisfy us either. We need to realize that we actually come into this world with an 'original blessing', God's invitation to enter into a deep personal oneness of life with him in Covenant. And until we consciously repudiate or reject this invitation, it remains open to us always.

So the truth that Jesus dived into us is that God is more within us than without. We need to train ourselves to recognize his loving presence within the fabric of our daily lives and only then would we 'live and move and have our being in him.' When will our simple ordinary Catholics realize that God is not to be found in a multiplicity of external rituals or things, but in the depth of one's own heart and life? That's when he will know that the Ocean is all around us – Emmanuel means, God is with us! ☐

***God is with us, let us celebrate!***

FROM 'SANTINO' to SANTO  
1913 - 2007

Rev. Fr. Santino Mondini, sdb



When looking at a person's life we tend to ask about his end and accordingly judgments and evaluations of his life begin. With such conjectures we may tend to forget that the person had a childhood, a youth who was robust and strong. After his 94<sup>th</sup> birthday he went to the Lord but when asked if he wanted to cross a century, the alert response comes: *'it depends on the Lord.'* That is **FR. SANTINO MONDINI.**

Born into a loving family, on 1<sup>st</sup> Nov. 1913, the feast of All Saints, to a very religious couple he was baptized: "Santino" which means "Little Saint." Young Santino loved cycling, running races and outdoor games. He was a choirboy and when he was just 12 years old he wanted to be a Bishop!

He had heard of the *Collegio Missionario* run by the Salesians of Don Bosco and wanted to join, but his father preferred that he finish his schooling and then make up his mind. At 15 he completed school and worked for 2 years as a carpenter, painter and a weaver. Like many youngsters his age, he joined the Catholic Action which was at its peak. He reports that once while they were singing the hymn "Noi vogliamo Dio" (We want God) the Fascists arrived and told them to stop and go home. "We obeyed them since we were frightened that they would beat us

up!" he says with great simplicity.

At 17 he was happy to join the aspirantate for Salesian Missionaries in Ivrea, Italy. "There I learned how to deepen my relationship with God and how to be generous and hardworking.

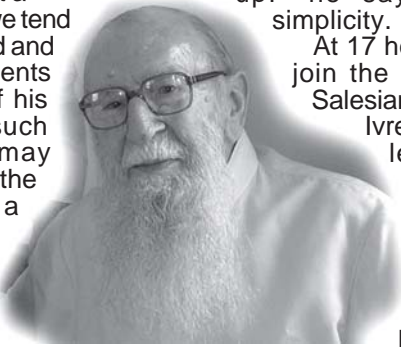
Hearing about the Salesian Missionaries from South America, the zeal to be a missionary burned brightly in my heart."

Fr Joseph Corso, his Rector at Ivrea, at the time of his departure advised him: "If you wish to be always happy and live in peace with God and men then conjugate in your life the verb 'YIELD' in all its tenses, and never blurt out but swallow everything with a smile."

On 7<sup>th</sup> Jan 1935, he stepped off the ship at Bombay and left immediately for Tirupattur in Tamilnadu where his training for the Salesian Priesthood began. Santino recalls:

"Though we were novices from 10 different countries, we were all very united. There was no electricity, no water, no proper place to study. The refectory was open and when the wind blew, all the dust settled on our food, but we were not unhappy. All of us enjoyed our novitiate."

During the II World War, he spent 2 years in the Prisoners of War Camp at Ajmer and Dehra



Dun. "In 1938, I asked Fr Provincial to allow me to become a Salesian Brother since Latin was very difficult for me. I thought I was unworthy of becoming a priest." Obviously the Provincial thought differently and encouraged the young Santino, whom he was considered a late vocation, to go ahead with his priestly studies.

After his ordination on 10<sup>th</sup> Oct 1945, he worked in a parish and a boarding school as prefect of studies and bursar in South India. Whatever he did he did assiduously, even if that meant going about the campus at two o'clock in the afternoon with the sun blazing down on him at 48 degrees Celsius. After 11 years at Don Bosco Matunga as bursar and confessor he was posted to Kurla in 1976 as confessor.

Whether at Tirupattur, Matunga or Kurla he was a messenger of God's mercy and grace especially in the confessional, for students parishioners and religious. He would travel to the Shrine twice a week and during major feasts so that he could be available for confessions.

He was a man whose simple ways and winning smile endeared him to young and old alike. Anyone who met him was struck by his gentleness and joy. His "*God Bless you*" or "*I will pray for you*" gave many hope. He was always at home among the youth at Kurla, participating in all their events religious, cultural or sports. He had a passion for sports and he was very interested in all that was happening on in the campus. He ensured that he was in the know of things.

When he saw the work being done for youngsters in need, his heart went out to them. He assisted those projects with what

funds he could muster, but it was not just Kurla, his generosity quietly extended to the homeless in Gujarat, the lepers and the other needy, to the Formation houses and various other projects.

He would sometimes visit his relatives and friends in Italy and each time they would press him to stay on, perhaps as an assistant parish priest. 'Let someone younger take your place,' they would say. And each time Fr Mondini would reply: "I must go back. I want to go back. That is my vocation. That is what Jesus wants." And so back he would come to his beloved Kurla, back to the land of his missionary dreams.

In 1990 the Italian government bestowed on him the title of Cavaliere dell'Ordine "*al Merito della Repubblica Italiana*" in recognition of the years spent in the service of the poor and the marginalized. We would not be wrong in addressing Fr Mondini as "*Cavaliere Mondini*".

Healthy till he crossed 90, old age took its toll of him but he soldiered on never complaining yet we all knew that despite the ever smiling exterior and the gentle demeanor he was in much pain.

Fr Mondini lived out his life as it had been given to him, and he lived it beautifully. He loved God and his Heavenly Mother very tenderly. He spent most of his time working or praying and happy to be in the company of his Salesian confreres. His last days were edifying because one got the feeling he was already in the company of his Lord and Master Jesus Christ whom he had served so faithfully. That was when the Lord called him to his heavenly reward on 21 December 2007. Perhaps up there he is called "Santo"! □

# TURN OFF THAT RUBBISH!

by Annette Gilmore

Once you start looking at the television ads with a satirical eye you'll find plenty of unconscious humour there. This is an excellent way for your kids to develop a defence against the adman's techniques, but when you come right down to it, it isn't the ads that scare us, is it, it's real TV, the programmes.

It might seem ridiculous to compare a thirty-second ad with a programme that lasts thirty or sixty or ninety minutes, but if you look closely you will see that all TV is chopped up into short segments.

## Fragile Concentration

It is recognised by the makers of TV programmes that the attention of the viewers is very easily diverted. We talk to each other in mid-programme, we get up and let the dog out, we even fall asleep. The screen image has to keep on the move all the time or it loses us.

Sound is even more important than this rapid interchange of images. Sound forms a linkage; we see a man dismissed from his job, and even as we watch him turning away dispiritedly from the boss's desk we hear his wife's angry voice telling him what she thinks of him. When the action is pushed forward like this our attention is engaged all the time. We have absorbed the scene in the office and before it is over we want to know about the husband and wife scene.

The television set rarely falls silent. If the human voice isn't to be heard then there is music to arouse our emotions. Even the news is heralded like this. If you nip out to the kitchen to put on the

kettle there will be a clamorous musical phrase plucking at your coat-tails. And when you return you won't have missed much, because of TV's segmentation. The narrative will have hopped from the boss's office to the man's home, to the boss saying goodnight to his secretary, to the reactions of the man's children, to the boss locking up his safe, to the man throwing away the cap of the whiskey bottle. Your bone-idle family, that let you go out and make the tea, will know very little more than you do about the plot, thanks to the technique of segmentation.

All TV is presented in chopped-off sections. The ad-breaks, slotted into the programme, seem to call for more concentration from us, because there the segments are ostensibly broken off from one another, but in fact the ads are just more of the same. Once you have learned how to separate the message from technique in the ads you are well on the way to doing the same thing with programme TV.

## Unreality

When we think of TV as damaging society we become most perturbed about the fiction programme. Yet frequently the fictional programme is only doing what the ads are doing, but on a larger scale. The ads take the dissatisfaction that is built into every son of Adam, and, by implication, tell us how to cure that dissatisfaction. We can strip away the surface gimmickry that veils every ad, and then we can judge its



philosophy. Yet these veils too can be stripped away piece by piece until we reach the underlying message. Only then can we decide whether that message is true or false.

Recently RTE showed the serial *Late Starter*. It told about Edward, a retired professor, whose life has fallen apart. He meets Liz, who, week by week, is revealed to us as warm and sympathetic and very helpful to Edward. This serial is superbly produced, written, acted, designed. Every skill is used to make the various characters intelligible and, in some cases, lovable.

### Emotional Conditioning

Three or four episodes on our compassion for Edward becomes real. Liz tells him all about her short tragic marriage, which has ended in desertion and divorce. "And the thing I felt worst," she says, "is that he didn't even give me a baby." Now we are grieving for both Liz and Edward. They are delightful people and life has been tough for them. We're glad that they are there to help each other. We have seen evidence that Liz is not chaste, but it isn't for us to pass judgements, least of all on someone who is warm, sympathetic, and helpful.

The serial moves on. Liz and Edward keep meeting trouble, but keep on being thoroughly likeable and admirable. A time comes when Liz confides to Edward that she is pregnant, that she has become so deliberately that the father doesn't know and wouldn't be interested. Poor humbling innocent old Edward is rocked back on his heels but he quickly recovers, kisses Liz on the cheek, and starts wondering where she should keep the pram.

Liz is deeply moved and tells him she had thought of asking him to provide for her desired baby. Edward is charmed and flattered and admits he finds Liz attractive. The episode ends there, leaving viewers filled with delight at the way things are turning out. Liz will have her longed-for baby, and Edward will be there to look after her. The message conveyed to us so efficiently is that nice people deserve to get what they want, even if they get it by immoral means. I don't just mean sexually immoral, I mean immoral in a wider sense.

### Where the Danger Lies

Christians (members of other religions too), cannot approve of Liz's sexual behaviour, but she is guilty of a much graver immorality that nobody, however permissive, should condone. To suit herself, she is planning to bring into the world a deprived, child - and this child will be deprived of half of the parents to whom it has a right. (Suppose for starters that Liz dies before the child is reared?). The message TV is giving us here is, "It is better to be nice than to be virtuous." Since it is *easier* to be nice than to be virtuous. This is a very acceptable message, and indeed it often turns out that nice is the same thing as virtuous. But not always; and that is where the danger lies. Nice is sending get-well cards; it is bringing a cup of tea to new neighbours in the throes of moving house; it is helping old ladies across the street. And on television it is, very often, having sex with a friend who is down in the dumps. Is that the message we're subtly receiving as we take time off to watch the latest episode of ? Who knows? Are we taken in by the "Media Man"? □

# walking with the Church



## **Youth Apathy Towards the Faith**

*by St. Martin's Messenger*

**Q.** *My son tells me he is no longer a Catholic or Christian. He is a good man and the news breaks my heart. Please help me to understand this.*

**A.** Your problem is indeed a very common one today. Many parents have the same experience with their children. Once they become teenagers they abandon the usual practice of their faith: they no longer go to Mass or Confession and they gradually withdraw from their local Christian community.

Still many of them retain their belief in God as our Creator and the ultimate goal of our lives. Many also retain their belief in Christ, either as God who died for us or as a wonderful human being whose life and teachings are still relevant to their daily lives. But they are determined to relate to both, not as members of the Christian community but as isolated individuals. They do not feel any need to join with fellow Christians in public ritual of prayer or worship. Some may, privately, but many drop this practice also.

### **Reasons given**

Many blame the Church, or nuns or priests or recent scandals for

their new attitudes. Accusations of hypocrisy and insincerity in others are scattered around quite freely. Certainly the Church, and that is all of us who are believers, must accept some of the blame for the decline in religious practices; only 48% go to the sacraments regularly. But these reasons aren't the whole story.

It is more likely that the decline is due to the growing individualism which is widespread today and is nourished by a rampant materialism. Experience teaches us that a Tiger economy and a religious society do not cuddle up to each other. This individualism affects the political community also; most young people do not vote because they couldn't be bothered. Yet they have to depend on that same community for so many of their needs, and they are loud in their anger when the state does not respond to their demands. Why should it if they don't care?

### **Young must take responsibility for their lives**

People talk about the alienation of the young and lay all the blame on the rest of the community. But the young must take responsibility

for their own religious or spiritual lives just as they do for other aspects. Some do but many drift and their hearts grow cold; they lose all taste for spiritual realities; they live their lives at a sensuous material level and devote their energies to fulfilling their sensuous needs. Most keep a loose contact with the Church e.g. baptisms, first communions, marriages and funerals are still significant times for many people.

The ultimate stage of disenchantment is when they cease to believe in God. They become agnostics i.e. they don't know whether He exists or not and may not bother to find the answer or they become atheists and are certain that He doesn't exist.

Your son is no longer Catholic or Christian but he doesn't say he is an agnostic or atheist. He is clearly a sincere and honest person since he does not feel able to act as a godfather. He realises he couldn't take care of the religious formation of his nephew.

If he continues to search for the truth he will find it and your constant prayers for him may bring him to a deeper appreciation for the divine mysteries of our faith.

Remember St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine? She prayed incessantly for his conversion and her wish was granted before she died. For him it was a most profound emotional experience and he uttered these beautiful words to his newly found God and Friend: "Late have I loved thee, O beauty so ancient and so new, late have I loved thee."

**Q.** *Is life laid out for you and no matter what you do you won't get what you want? With me that is a husband. And is it true to say that because life is going so well for me (and I always thank God for that) that my penance is not to meet someone?*

**A.** The question constantly arises when we talk about the Providence of God, that is, His universal care and concern for everything He has created. God provides for all His creatures by giving each and everything its own nature, need and purposes - plants, animals and human beings. So what does this mean for us humans? We have been given a special nature with a special purpose, which is the vision of God for all eternity. We have also been given the freedom to say 'yes' or 'no' to His plan for us - we are God's partners in that task. Every single one of us has to decide which path of life (vocation) he or she should take in that journey to eternal life with God. So I am free to marry or not marry, become a footballer, scientist, nurse, mother etc. Many people have their own personal wishes for themselves fulfilled, many others do not. That may be their own or someone else's fault. So it is not God who is preventing you from getting a husband. Maybe you have not met the right person, or perhaps not tried hard enough, or it could be also that your expectations are too high. Whether we succeed or fail in our personal purposes God's only concern is that we grow closer to Him. You are still young and have plenty of time yet to meet someone. You are in our prayers. □

# Witnesses in & for Our Times



## MARTYR FOR THE CRUCIFIED BL. HELEN KAFKA 1894 - 1943

*by Paolo Riso*

**I**n 1894, in the humble house of a cobbler at Hussowitz-Brunn (Moldavia), Helen Kafka was born, the sixth of seven children. As soon as she started speaking, she began to stammer. In the year 1896, when she was just two years old her family migrated to Vienna to seek a better life.

At the age six, Helen began to go to school, but because of her stammering, the teacher forbade her to speak for three months with the hope that she would recover from that serious defect. It was a commonly used remedy in those days. 'The cure' seemed to work and Helen soon began to express herself freely and boldly like the other children.

She felt inclined to study, but at the age of 15 she was forced to leave school and take up the job of a housemaid. In her heart she nurtured a great love for Jesus. She wanted to consecrate herself only to Him. She did not like the work she was doing because she wanted to serve Jesus as a nurse.

### Jesus in the sick

She succeeded in securing employment at the hospital in Lainz that was run by the Sisters of Christian Charity, a Viennese congregation. There, her desire to become a nun and to consecrate herself completely to God became even more intense. Her parents



opposed her but, as was typical of her, she stubbornly did not desist. She prayed and tried to convince her parents but to no avail so she finally ran away from home.

At the age of 20 she joyfully entered the institute she had grown to love so much. Dressed in her religious habit she took the name of Sister Maria Restituta, following a young martyr who was killed in 304 AD during the persecutions of the emperor Diocletian.

In 1914 the "Great War" began. The novice Restituta lent her services at the hospital at Modling as nurse in the operation theatre and also as an anesthetist. There was nothing that could intimidate or frighten her. She was extremely kind to the casualties wounded in the war and was ready to attend to any emergencies even the most serious cases.

She had an ardent love for Jesus Crucified and the Eucharist. Her bright and energetic spirit came from Him. She spent a long time in prayer every morning at Holy Mass which was the representation of His Sacrifice. During the day she often lifted her eyes to the Crucifix that was hung in every room and even in the operation theatre.

Doctors, colleagues and above all, the patients were literally fascinated at her cordiality, cheerfulness and her ability to resolve any problem she faced. Soon she was given the nickname: "Sister Resolute." This did not bother her because it would be a great honour to Jesus that she had such a strong and sweet personality that allowed her to consecrate herself to Him. She had not yet made her perpetual vows and yet she experienced boundless joy.

At the end of the war, sister Restituta voluntarily offered herself as an assistant to a famous surgeon whom no one wished to work with. On her part she "dominated" and channeled all her energies to serving the sick as their sister and mother in true Christian charity.

She intended to love and to give herself after the example of Jesus who gave up his very life, because greater love has no one than this that a man gives up his life for his friends. With the passing of years she became an institution. Although small in stature one saw her greatness at the very first encounter. Her good humour in moments of great difficulty impressed everyone. They asked her: "How can you be so cheerful?" Helen would respond by raising her finger and pointing to the Crucifix: "It all depends on Him."

In 1938, the Nazis invaded Vienna. Hitler didn't want any nuns running the hospitals and ordered the Crucifix be removed from all public places, just as some want to do today. Sister Helen succeeded in secretly continuing to assist the sick and the dying. The new surgeon was a Nazi fanatic and though he desperately needed her experience he reported her.



*The church of  
Hussowitz-Brunn  
in Moldavia  
where Helen was baptized*

When they removed the Crucifix from the hospital at Modling, she rebelled and replaced it. When they built a new wing at the hospital, Sister Helen hung the Crucifix in all the rooms, knowing well what would happen to her.

### **That is the place for the Crucifix!**

Her gesture was a challenge to the false cross – the swastika – the symbol of Nazism. Hearing that she had put back the Crucifix she was reported to the Gestapo. On Ash Wednesday in 1942 she was arrested by the SS for the crime of libel because she called Hitler a bloodthirsty dictator.

She was accused of high treason and imprisoned at Vienna. Her long Calvary of a year began. Sister Helen continued to assist her companions in prison – pregnant women, convicts on death-row, and with her invincible faith she brought them courage and cheer.

Towards the end of March 1943 her death sentence arrived from Berlin, signed by Bormann himself, one of the highest ranking Nazis. Sister Helen succeeded in sending a last message to her sisters: “For Jesus I live and for Jesus I want to die.”

On March 30<sup>th</sup> 1943, Sister Helen Restituta Kafka was beheaded at Vienna under the blade of the guillotine. Before turning herself over to the executioner, she asked the chaplain: “Father, please make the sign of the Cross on

my forehead.”

Pope John Paul II beatified her in 1998, as a “martyr of the Crucifix.” On June 21<sup>st</sup> 1998, speaking of her at the Haldenplatz (heroes’ plaza) in Vienna 60 years after a demonstration held by Hitler at the same place the Pope said: “Thank you, Sister Restituta for your resistance to the craze of the moment.” After that he went on: “So many things have been taken away from Christians, but we will not remove the Cross, it is the sign of our Salvation. We will not allow the Cross to be excluded from public life. We will listen to the voice of our conscience that says: “we need to obey God rather than men.” (Acts 5,29) “Dear young people, plant in your life, the Cross of Christ. It is the Cross that is the true Tree of Life.”

In these our times, among other things, there are many self-styled believers who wish to remove the Crucifix from homes, schools, public places and even from churches, this humble daughter of the people with unusual authoritativeness, tells us: “Do not touch the Crucifix.” □



*The hospital in Vienna where Helen worked as a nurse*

# IN A CHEERFUL MOOD

## The Sweetest Part

"Bill used to call his house over there 'the Nutshell.' Wonder why he changed the name?"

"He got tired of having funny people calling to ask whether the kernel was in."

## What Providence

"How's times around here?" inquired the tourist.

"Pretty tolerable," responded the old man, sitting idly on the stump of a tree: "I had a pile of brush to burn, and the lightning set fire to it and saved me the trouble of burning it."

"That was good."

"Yes, and I had some trees to cut down, but the cyclone took 'em down for me and saved me the trouble."

"Remarkable! But what are you doing now?"

"Oh, just waiting for an earthquake to come along and shake the potatoes out of the ground."

## Stiffnecked Spine

Vicar: "Amid all your troubles Mrs. Abbott, I am pleased to see that your gratitude to Providence does not fail."

"No, sir, rheumatism is bad," she said, "but I thank Heaven I still have a back to have it in."

## Seeing is Believing

"Why don't you go in?" asked one tramp to another, as they stood before the gate. "That dog's all right. Don't you see he's wagging his tail?"

"Sure I do; but he's growling too,

and I don't know which end to believe."

## Missed Fortune

There had been a dreadful flood in Missouri. One man, who had lost nearly everything he possessed including a lot of poultry was sitting on the roof of his house, as it floated along. He was gazing out over the vast stretch of water, a neighbour in a boat approached and called out:

"Hello, Bill! Did all your fowls wash away?"

"Yes, but the ducks can swim. I reckon they're alright."

"Peach-trees gone, too, eh?"

"Well, they said the crop would be a failure anyhow."

"I see the water is way above your windows."

"That's all right, Sam. Them windows needed washing mighty badly, anyhow."

## Take What You Get

Two women were discussing domestic troubles on a bus the other day.

"I'm worried about the mice in my house. Last week they ate up the roast-beef and yesterday they finished the cake."

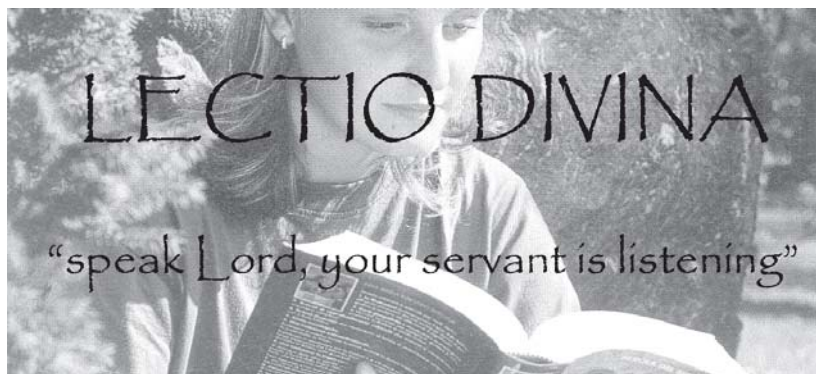
"Why don't you get some rat biscuits?" suggested her friend.

"Don't be daft! If they won't eat what we eat, they can starve!"

## What's in a Name?

First Student: "Great Scott! I forgot who wrote 'Ivanhoe.'"

Second Student: "I'll tell you if you'll tell me who the dickens wrote the 'Tale of Two Cities.'"



## ***Our Father...Give us this day our daily bread!***

*by Roberta Fora*

**I**t happens even today and in so many places all over the world, that there are some who will not be able to sit at table and satisfy their pangs of hunger.

We are in the year 2008 and even today there are those who struggle to survive, unable to feed either themselves or their own families.

We would do well to try, at least sometimes, to educate our children to be content with what they have and not waste that which they might think is superfluous out of respect for those who are less fortunate than themselves.

*Give us this day, our daily bread,* is an invocation that we recite daily in the Our Father. Besides forcing us to reflect on those who still suffer because they are deprived of this bread, this invocation should not stop us from turning our attention to a hunger that should exist for another type of “Bread” – that is spiritual.

Jesus quotes scripture when he is tempted in the desert and he tells the Devil: “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

Going through the pages of the Gospel of John we are certainly touched as we meditate on the

words: “I am the living bread come down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread he will live forever and the bread that I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world.” (Jn 6, 51)

It is important to think also about spiritually nourishing our souls.

We cannot profess to be Christians if we do not make the Eucharist the foundation of our lives.

A profound encounter with Jesus in this Bread is essential to strengthen and assist us to live our lives in a manner worthy of our Christian calling.

Only in Him, through Him and with Him is it possible to give deep meaning to our own vocation, to the mission that God has entrusted to us as individuals, as a family, at our place of work or as members of a religious congregation, in a city or in some lost corner of the world.

Help us, Father, to hunger more and more for this Bread and to be humbly convinced that we cannot do without it.

When we encounter Him, His grace that moves the depths of our hearts, helping us each day, as Don Bosco said to become: “good Christians and honest citizens,” in a world that is more and more in need of faith, hope and love. □



DEDICATED TO  
THE MOST SACRED  
HEART OF JESUS

Quiet Space

*(Even though this year, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart falls on the 30th May, the Month of June is traditionally dedicated to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus)*

**W**hen Jesus invited the crowds, 'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest... for I am gentle and humble in heart' (Mt 11 :28), he made no idle promise. That heart is still as humble and gentle now as then, with an inexhaustible capacity to understand our suffering and help us bear our load.

### **Love for Individuals**

You can see people who need that kind of understanding, people with worry on their faces: mothers hassled with children or commuters tense and irritable. Some manage to disguise their pain, but you can sense it from their expressionless attitude in a bus queue or at a check-out counter. Jesus always noticed such things, for when he saw the crowds he felt sorry for them (Mt 9:36).

At the same time no one was simply one in a crowd to him. Jesus saw individuals. He took in the hopes and fears of every single person. Think, for instance, of the leper who whispered, 'Lord, if you are willing, you can cleanse me'. 'I am willing,' said Jesus in reply. Then he did what no other Jew at that time would have done: he touched him saying, 'Be cleansed' (Mt 8:2-3).

### **Touching his Heart**

Even when the individual did not ask to be singled out, Jesus still gave his personal attention. On one occasion he was on his way to a dying child when he was caught in a jostling throng. A woman with an embarrassing haemorrhage edged her way through the crowd towards him. 'If only I can touch his cloak,' she told herself, 'I shall be saved' (Mt 9:21).

Jesus, however, turned and saw her, and acknowledged her faith with warmth. Even though he was on urgent business he would not let this woman disappear into obscurity again. She had touched his heart as well as his garment, and that heart went out to her in so human a way that it revealed its hidden divinity.

### **Search for the Stray**

So concerned was he for the individual that Jesus taught his disciples to be the same. 'Will a shepherd not leave the ninety-nine on the hillside,' he asked, 'and go in search of the stray?' (Mt 18:12). It was the stray he cared for most.

# A SHARE IN HIS RICHES

by T. Oliver

Nothing deterred the shepherd-heart of Christ, not even the religious leaders who disapproved of his healing on the Sabbath. Jesus bypassed their disapproval since, as he said himself, the whole of the law is fulfilled in loving, and it was for our sake that the Sabbath was made, not the other way round (*Mt 22:36-40; Mk 2:27*).

So he did not hesitate to heal the man with the withered hand, and to straighten the woman bent nearly double for eighteen years. These miracles were his way of showing his even greater power to cure the internal withering and maladies of the soul in sin. It was after such events that the Pharisees went out and plotted how to kill him.

## Love to the End

Not even their murderous schemes, however, could defeat Jesus. As he hung from the cross he prayed for them to his Father: 'Father, forgive them, they do not know what they are doing' (*Lk 23:34*). In that moment he had totally absorbed into his

dying heart, not only the leprosy of the leper, the bleeding of the woman, the withered limbs and twisted spines of those bent double. He had even absorbed the hatred of those who wished him dead. All these he transformed into a power for good that burst from his heart when he died. It was upon his heart that the last wound on his body was inflicted, when a soldier ripped it open with a spear.

Even in death that heart remained open, emptying itself to the last drop of blood. St John Chrysostom writes movingly: 'The soldier pierced his side: he breached the wall of the holy temple, and I found the treasure and acquired the wealth.' This month Jesus invites all who labour and are overburdened to acquire a share in that wealth too. It flows from his wounded heart especially for you. □





**The story so far:**

*At a party to celebrate his graduation, John Campbell is worried when he notices the attention Gerald O'Rourke is paying to his girlfriend Carol Martin. He is also worried when the appearance of a stranger clearly distresses his mother. John's aunt asks him what has upset his mother, and Gerald overhears the question.*

Aware of Aunt Alison's sharp eyes watching him as she waited for his reply, and aware of Gerald's insolent half-smile as he too waited, John tried to think calmly. If he admitted that his mother was distressed, the attention of Aunt Alison and Gerald would only add to her distress. He wanted to avoid that.

'Do you hear?' Aunt Alison prompted.

Quickly John took the plate from her hand. 'Let me carry your plate over here for you, Aunt Alison. There's such a crowd they could accidentally knock it out of your hand.'

Determinedly he shepherded her away from Gerald and Carol to a chair in a quiet corner. As he handed back her plate she asked, 'Who was that man your mother was talking to near the door about ten minutes ago? She seemed very angry and upset.'

'Perhaps he was a gatecrasher,' John replied. 'Well, I'd better get back and get something to eat myself.'

Gerald and Carol were chatting easily as they stood near the tables. He was anxious to get back and resume the contest with Gerald for Carol's time and attention.

When the party was over, he could not decide which of them had won that contest. But he was in no doubt about Gerald's determination to take his place in Carol's affections. He walked the short distance from the hotel to his home with his brother Joe and his mother, thinking over the events of the night.

'Mum, who was that man you went to the door to talk to tonight?' John asked.

He heard her sharp intake of breath, and she was silent for several seconds. Then she turned to him with blazing eyes. 'If you see that man again, keep far away from him. He means trouble for all our family, and if you want to have any hope of marrying Carol Martin, have nothing to do with him.'

John stared, and he saw that Joe, too, was looking at her in amazement.

'What has a stranger to do with my marrying Carol?'

They had reached their hall door, and his mother turned her latchkey in the lock, and pushed the door in with such force that it crashed back against the wall inside.

'I'm not going to discuss it. There's nothing to discuss. Just take my word for it that man's coming here could mean trouble for all of us. Serious trouble. Have nothing to say to him or about him. Keep out of his way.'

John said, 'If he means trouble, hadn't you better tell Joe and myself what kind of trouble it is, so that we can deal with it?'

His mother turned the security lock on the door and rammed across the bolts, as if she were trying to lock out the threat they were discussing. There was a note of desperation in her voice. 'There's no way of dealing with it except to get him out of this town as quickly as possible, and you must leave that to me.'

She turned and walked away from them.

Joe asked, 'What was all that about?'

John told him what had happened earlier at the party.

'Whoever he is,' Joe said, 'what

harm can he do us?'

John frowned. 'I wouldn't be so concerned if I knew that. But Mum is not the kind of person to be easily upset, and the fact that she's so troubled now worries me.'



John left the house the following morning, before the others were up, to make a call as the replacement for the resident district vet. At the nearest petrol station he filled the tank of his new Fiat, and walked to the shop to pay for the petrol. A man came out of the shop reading the headlines in the morning paper. He didn't see John until he had almost walked into him. It was the man with whom John's mother had been talking the previous night.

'Sorry,' the man said, lowering the newspaper. Then he looked at John more intently, and John realized that this man knew who he was.

'I saw you at our party last night,' John said.

The man's clear grey eyes studied him. 'You could hardly say I was at the party.'

'You were talking to my mother.'

The man did not reply. He folded his newspaper, turned

aside and began to walk away.

John went after him. 'Wait! Who are you?'

The man turned and looked at John with a faint smile that seemed to have a degree of sadness in it. 'Your mother is anxious that neither you, nor your brother, nor anyone else in this town, should know who I am.'

'And I,' John said, 'am even more anxious to know who you are, and why you have come here.'

'I see that you're as determined as your mother. Very well, then, I'm your mother's brother, Patrick McCarthy.'

John looked at him for a moment in stunned silence. Then he said 'I didn't know that she had a brother still alive.'

A brother and a sister died young, and there were only the two of us left.'

'But she never mentioned you!'

'I'm sure she didn't! She left the town we grew up in, and went off to live where no one would know she had a brother.'

'Why?'

'She had her reasons. But she needn't worry. I won't tell anyone in this town that I'm related to her.'

'Why did you come here?'

'I thought she might... She's the only relative I have now. I - I

thought it would be nice to meet her children - that maybe we could be friends.'

His head was bowed, his voice low.

John held out his hand. 'Well, we can be friends.' They shook hands.

'I'll be out working all morning,' John said. 'But will you call up to our house this evening?'

'Your mother doesn't want me in the town, let alone in her house.'

'You haven't told me why.'

'And I won't either. I promised her I wouldn't.'

'How long are you staying here?'

'I don't know. Maybe we could meet again before I leave.'

John said, 'I could take you for a drive this evening to see the country round about here. Where are you staying?'

'The Fairways Guest-House.'

'I'll call for you at three, then.'

The full realization of what he had done did not hit John until he was driving home after his morning's work. His mother had warned him that, if he hoped to marry Carol Martin, he must have nothing to do with this man. With increasing anxiety he locked the Fiat and walked into the house. □

*To be continued*

### **Little Girls and Boys**

**A little girl**, dressed in her Sunday best, was running as fast as she could, trying not to be late for Bible class. As she ran she prayed, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late! Dear Lord, please don't let me be late!" As she was running and praying, she tripped on a curb and fell, getting her clothes dirty and tearing her dress. She got up, brushed herself off, and started running again. As she ran she once again began to pray, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late... But please don't shove me either!"

**A little boy** was overheard praying: "Lord, if You can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am. □"

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

## **DON BOSCO AND HIS NAME DAY**

by Natale Cerrato (T/A:ID)

**W**as Don Bosco named after John the Baptist or John the Evangelist? In the first Salesian history Fr. John Baptist Lemoyne a close and affectionate friend of Don Bosco was happy to be able to write that Don Bosco was called John Baptist like himself. Instead, in the second volume of the *Biographical Memoirs* we read that in 1846 “after the feast of St. Aloysius, the oratory boys solemnly celebrated the feast of St.



*Stainglass at Tempio di Don Bosco*

John the Baptist. Don Bosco had received at Baptism the name of the apostle John, but since in Turin the feast of St. John the Baptist was very popular and usually solemnized with bonfires and salvos from the troops taking part in the celebration, the boys, believing this to be his name day, began to present their greetings, congratulations and flowers on that day. Don Bosco let them have their way, and for the rest of his life, his name day continued to be celebrated on the feast of St. John the Baptist. (EBM 2, 381)

### **In the Parish Register**

In the baptismal register (1815) that already existed in the records of the parish of St. Andrew, Castelnuovo, it was discovered that at his baptism Don Bosco was given the name John and this was recorded in Latin.



Charles Gastini

John took the name of his great-grandfather Giovanni (John) Zucca, the father of Margaret Zucca, the second wife of Anthony Bosco, the paternal grandfather of the Saint. His second name was Melchior, which was the name of his maternal grandfather and who on that occasion acted as his godfather. (cf. M. Molineris, *Don Bosco inedito*, Castelnuovo Don Bosco 1974, p.104).

It is good to remember that in Piedmont, when the name "Giovanni" (John) was used it meant "John the Evangelist," the apostle; while in the case of Giovanni Battista, the name always came to be written with its simple initials "G.B." For the most part, it was commonly written as "Battista" (Baptist) without the prefix "Giovanni" (John).

Fr. Giovanni Bosco was, in the local dialect addressed as *Gioan* or, more often, *Gioanin*. On the other hand, Fr. Francesca, who

was Giovanni Battista or G.B. was simply called *Battista* or *Batistin*. That was Lemoyne's first name *Giovanni Battista*. Moreover, Don Bosco, in his letters habitually signed himself as *Gio. Bosco* or *Gioanni Bosco* in Piedmontese; but never Giovanni Battista or G.B. Bosco.

After all, from the genealogical tree of the Bosco family there were more than a few Giovanni(s) found but no Giovanni Battista. The first known ancestor of Don Bosco was a certain Giovanni Bosco born in 1603 at Chieri. He gave the first name "Giovanni" to three of his four children: Giovanni Domenico, Giovanni Francesco (born 1638) who was the father of Giovanni Pietro (born 1666), Don's Bosco great-great grandfather. After these three there were actually no more other Giovanni(s) in the branch of the Bosco family up to our Giovanni Bosco (born 1815).

As mentioned above, Don Bosco recalled that his baptismal name was taken from Giovanni Zucca, the father of the second wife of Anthony Bosco.

### The celebrations of Don Bosco's Name Day

Every year at Valdocco, from 1846, Don Bosco's feast was celebrated on the feast of St. John the Baptist (June 24<sup>th</sup> or the Sunday closest to the feast of St. Aloysius).

Charles Gastini first met Don Bosco when he was an apprentice at a barber's shop. Frederick Reviglio was saved by Don Bosco from a severe thrashing when he took refuge in the safe confines of the Oratory. The two of them, in 1849 secretly planned something

for Don Bosco's feast day. For several months in advance they forfeited their food and jealously saved their pocket money so that they could buy two silver hearts that they would present to Don Bosco on his feast day.

On the eve of the feast they knocked on his door and offered him their gift, two silver hearts. The following day everyone came to know about this gift and Fr. Giacinto Carpano composed and sang a hymn that he himself had composed. The first strophe went like this:

*Come, friends,  
Don Bosco awaits us;  
Perfect joy  
Awakens in our hearts.*

Thirty-eight years later, on June 24<sup>th</sup> 1887, they celebrated, what would be Don Bosco's last name day. He came back to the Oratory from Valsalice to meet his old boys. Music and songs, poetry and prose and many other gifts demonstrated the affection of so many grateful children to their good father. Among these was Fr. G.B. Piano, the parish priest of the church of "the Great Mother of God." He made a brief speech that was a meaningful demonstration of his affection:

"How often when facing the problems of our ministry does the mere recollection of your words encourage us! How often do we recall to mind your loving face, your penetrating glance, your fatherly advice, and strive to emulate them ourselves, when we find ourselves surrounded by a swarm of children! How often did I hear, to my infinite delight, people say of your sons: 'Ah! One can tell that they were brought up by Don Bosco!' Although we live

far away from this beloved Oratory, we still look on it as our home. Our thoughts return to it often, and instantly we conjure up your image, Father. Whenever we have an opportunity to come back and talk to you, life seems better to us, the exercise of virtue seems easier and help from God seems more certain...We still feel the love we felt for you then. It is this love of ours that enables us to look on your glory as our own, and which induces us to enroll greater numbers of people as your sons and Cooperators." (EBM 18, 311-312).

Everyone was filled with the sad presentiment that this was going to be Don Bosco's last name day celebration. The lyrics written by Fr. John Baptist Lemoyne and the music composed by (Salesian brother) Dogliani had linked one of the very early songs to one, which was to be the very last. It aroused nostalgic longing in the hearts of the older pupils of bygone days. Don Bosco felt it too, for at every four strophes sung by the first chorus, a second chorus repeated the two verses which the boys of the Oratory had sung, the first time his name day had ever been celebrated:

*Come, friends,  
Don Bosco awaits us;  
Perfect joy  
Awakens in our hearts.*

*It is a pleasant day  
Inviting us to joy;  
Let us hasten to the summons,  
Of feasting and delight.*

Few months later, on January 31<sup>st</sup> 1888, Don Bosco died. He had said to them: "I wait for you all in Paradise." □



## NEWSBITS

### Vietnam



A Montagnard villager died in prison after being arrested and tortured by police, the Montagnard Foundation International has alleged.

Rahlan Hen from Ploi Beng village in Giala Province died in March while serving a six year jail term, "for refusing to join the church of (a local official) Siu Kim", the Foundation says.

"Many Degar Montagnard Christians disagree with the practices of this church and feel that Siu Kim is actually teaching people to worship the government and not God," MFI explained. "This is why Rahlan Hen refused to join. Because of this, the government decided to arrest him in June 2006.

"The Vietnamese government sent security police along with riot police to his house and arrested him. They handcuffed him and began to beat and kick him severely," said MFI. "They dragged him from his house, stomping on him with their heavy military boots until he lost consciousness and then they threw his body in their jeep and took him to the district of Ia Grai prison," the Foundation says.

"At this prison facility, the security police repeatedly beat

and tortured him. They kicked, punched, stomped on and shocked him with electric rods." He was reportedly transferred to several other prison facilities.

Before he died, his wife visited him at the Phu Yen Province prison, and saw that "one of his legs were paralysed and that he could barely walk," MFI told *BosNewsLife*. "She was overcome with sorrow, but could do nothing to help him. All she could offer him was her tears."

Elsewhere in the Central Highlands, Degar-Montagnard Christians have also been targeted by security forces in recent months, including in Ploi Kuk Tu, in Gialai Province, where 44 year old Dinh Plok lost his farm and belongings for "refusing to sign a document renouncing his Christian faith," MFI said.

### Vatican



After ten years work, a team of UK calligraphers has presented Pope Benedict with a copy of the first illuminated handwritten Bible commissioned by a Benedictine monastery in over 500 years.

The *BBC* reports the \$ 5.8 million project is the work of Monmouthshire-based artist Donald Jackson and his team of calligraphers.

Mr Jackson, senior scribe to the Queen, was commissioned by Benedictine monks of St John's Abbey in Minnesota, USA.

The Pope was handed a full-sized reproduction of the seven-volume St John's Bible weighing 23kg.

The bible contains more than 1,000 pages and 160 illuminations - illustrations crafted using hand-cut feather quills in the same way as in medieval times.

As he turned the pages, the Pope described the bible as "a work of art, a great work of art".

The presentation occurred in a private audience at the Vatican in Rome during the annual meeting of the Papal Foundation.

Mr Jackson, the creative force behind the Bible, described the project as the calligrapher's Sistine Chapel.

"The bibles and the wonderful works of the past have always been the inspiration for lettering artists and calligraphers, so that's always the one you'd love to do.

"I just asked a monastery in the United States if they'd like to have me do it. I just happened to ask at the right time."

The reproduction given to the Pope is one of just 12 copies of the St Peter Apostles edition of the Bible.

Mr Jackson and his team are still working in Monmouth on the last two volumes of the bible, which will be kept at St John's University in Minnesota.

### Vatican

Three years after the death of Pope John Paul II on April 2 2005, Vatican officials have submitted a 2,000 page report on the late pontiff's life to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

Monsignor Slawomir Oder said

the document summarises and analyses all the documentation about John Paul's life and virtues that had been gathered since his death, including testimony from witnesses and the late pontiff's own writings.

"In the past days I have submitted a semi-final version," Mgr Oder said.

Now an independent Vatican official, Fr Daniel Ols, must review the report and give it the final go-ahead for an official presentation to the Congregation, which must then gather committees of cardinals and bishops to discuss the merits of the case.

The Vatican's saint-making procedures - which can include the weighing of favourable and unfavourable information - require that a miracle attributed to the candidate's intercession be confirmed before beatification. A second miracle is necessary for canonisation.

Pope Benedict put John Paul on the fast track for possible sainthood just weeks after his death, waiving the customary five-year waiting period and allowing the investigation into his virtues to begin immediately.

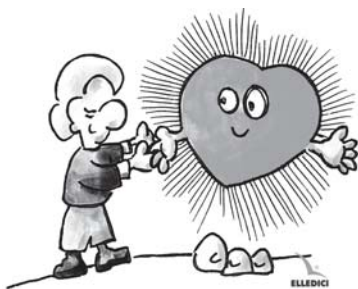
Such a waiver had only been granted once before, to Mother Teresa, who died in 1997 and who was beatified by John Paul in 2003.

John Paul's sainthood process is going ahead quickly with milestones reached at nearly every anniversary of his death. Last year, the investigation into John Paul's life and virtues was officially closed, and French Church officials turned over to the Vatican documentation about a purported miracle attributed to his intercession. □

# 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 1

The word humility has a pretty precise root: it comes from **HUMUS** meaning earth, ground, mud. Therefore humility is a word that reminds us that we are made from the earth, from mud and so we're very delicate beings.

Let me introduce you to someone; he's known to us all.  
He is:

**Mr. Mee-on-Lee**



Have you seen him? Did you notice the mirror and him incensing it?  
HE LOOKS OUT FOR PRAISE, RECONGNITION, FOR PEOPLE TO  
APPLAUD HIM!

Who of us it is not like him? Who of us is eager to make some of  
his good qualities known to all? Or who doesn't do something and  
hopes to receive the praise and applause of everyone around?

self-praise

self-made

self-  
improvement



## *WARNING*

*THERE IS A TERRIBLE VIRUS  
PRESENT EVERYWHERE:  
PRIDE, VANITY...*

On the other hand, look at the dynamics of God!

self-abasement  
belittling oneself



Here is an example you can imitate:

## 1 - Jesus, meek and humble of heart

From the Gospel of Matthew  
(Mt. 11:28-30)

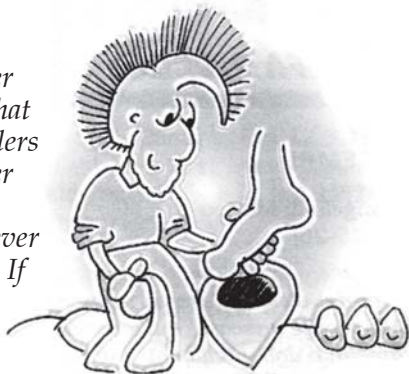
*Jesus said: "Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit; and you will find rest. For the yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light."*



## 2 - Jesus, the lowest servant

From the Gospel of Mark  
(Mk. 10:42-45)

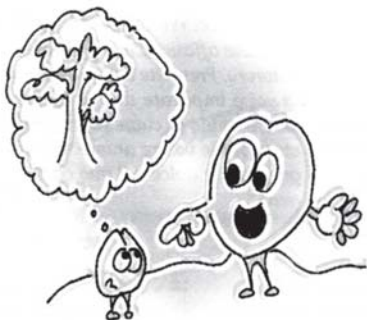
*So Jesus called them all together to him and said:, "You know that the men who are considered rulers of the heathens have power over them, and the leaders have complete authority. This, however is not the way it is among you. If one of you wants to be great, he must be the servant of the rest; and if one of you wants to be first, he must be the slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served; he came to serve and to give his life to redeem many people."*



### HOW STRANGE IS THIS KINGDOM OF GOD

From the Gospel of Mark  
(Mk. 4:30-32)

*"What shall we say the kingdom of God is like?" asked Jesus. "What parable shall we use to explain it? It is like this. A man takes a mustard seed, the smallest seed in the world, and plants it in the ground. After a while it grows up and becomes the biggest of all plants. It puts out such large branches that the birds come and make their nests in its shade."*



To be continued

# Prayer

by *Geoffrey Rowell*

**W**hen do we turn to prayer? Perhaps, many would say, only in extreme situations. "One can only pray" is the point of last resort. When circumstances crowd in and crush, and when all else fails we can but pray. "Out of the deep have I called to thee, O Lord, O Lord, hear my voice!" The psalmist gives us words for reaching out from darkness and despair, "out of the mire and clay." When meaning and purpose seem to evaporate then our cry for help, to whatever meaning or purpose there may be, comes from the depths of our hearts. "God, if there be a God, help me. O Lord make speed to save me!"

But is prayer only a matter of last resort, a cry of desperation or

dereliction? It is surely more than this. Maurice Nedoncelle, in a book of almost half a century ago, pointed to prayer as embedded in our human reactions with each other. In our praying to God we are grounded in our prayer to each other.

All languages are marked by the vocative in which we express in one way or another, our requests to another person, requests that are petition, not command. This human kind of praying always demands attention to another and a longing for an answering and sympathetic response. There is no prayer without attentiveness, and the deepest prayer is the language of love, for love both seeks and knows that the other person will respond.

Here is the clue as to why we are, even if we do not acknowledge it, praying beings. It is because we are made as human persons with all the intricacy and delicacy of our physical makeup and grounding, as those who are made in the image of God, who is, in Dante's words "the love that moves the sun and other stars."

That God is, of course, a mystery, just as every person is a mystery (there are indeed two things that recede in the face of definition, one is God and the other is I). To know God is to seek for him continually. In praying we reach out to our Creator who both reveals and hides himself, "smiting on the dark cloud with



the dart of our longing love” as the medieval Christian treatise *The Cloud of Unknowing* puts it.

Prayer is about coming before God as we are and as God is. Therefore at the heart of prayer is adoration. Almost all the words for worship in the Bible are about bowing down or prostration. “Come in, let us bow and bend low, and kneel before the Lord who made us.” Because prayer requires abandonment of the pride in which we see ourselves as the centre of the universe, its condition is humility. We respond to God with the vocative as we respond to each other – “O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!”

If we come before God in his goodness, grace and compassion, then our adoration passes into penitence, our need of forgiveness and mercy, our longing for the pouring of his healing light upon our souls.

A Broadmoor patient who had done terrible things told his psychotherapist that prayer was “washing your face from the inside” – or perhaps God washing our face from the inside. But how do we pray, how do we “turn to prayer” both in the sense of attending to God, and of turning the whole business of our life, our work and our relationships into that which is prayerful – “praying without ceasing?” The reality is there are only two choices – “You start from where you are, or you start from where you are not.”

Starting from where we are means coming before God “just as I am,” without the usual “wardrobe of excuses”, and with



all the roller coaster of emotions. But were everything to be shaped by our subjective needs then they would be the measure and not God. Starting from where we are not means taking the words of the psalms and the Scriptures, the given daily patterns of morning and evening prayer, and so being led to praise when we do not feel like it, and being open up to the mystery of the Divine Love which comes down to the very lowest part of our need.

When Jesus’ disciples asked how to pray he gave them the pattern prayer, known simply as The Lord’s Prayer. “Our Father in heaven, may your name be held holy.” It is a longing prayer for the coming of God’s kingdom, for the doing of his perfect will, for the gift now of the bread of heaven, for forgiveness rooted in our forgiveness of others, and for deliverance from evil and temptation. We are to pray deeply, drawing our minds into our hearts, our willing, and our choosing.

Then we will find, in George Herbert’s words that prayer is indeed “God’s breath in man returning to his birth, the soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage,” and indeed no less than “heaven in ordinary.” □



## 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.*

My sincere thanks to Jesus, Mother Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for the love, strength, hope and for all the favours received through the intercession of the 3 Hail Marys.

*F. Fernandes and Maria Crasto, Mira Road*

My sincere thanks to my dearest and Blessed Mother Mary for my safe and successful operation through the faithful recitation of the three Hail Marys.

*Mrs Arlene deSouza, Australia*

### LOVING CHILDREN TO THEIR LOVING MOTHER

Dearest Mother, thank you for a clear report after many complications. It was a cause of much tension and distress. Finally after all the tests turned out negative I am greatly relieved and most grateful to you most holy Mother.

*F. Fernandes, Mira Road*

My husband and I prayed to Our Lady Help of Christians and he recovered remarkably. My sincere and heartfelt thanks to you dearest Mother.

*Cynthia Gomes, Goa*

My sincere gratitude to Mother Mary, St. Dominic Savio and St. John Bosco. Through their heavenly intercession I secured 83% in my SSC examinations.

*Simi John, Thane*

Grateful thanks to Mary Help of Christians for all the favours, especially the good health of my family.

*Cheryl Pinto, Bombay*

## THANKS TO DEAR ST. DOMINIC SAVIO



Thank you dear St. Dominic Savio for the grace I received through your intercession.

*Enrique Crasto*

My sincere thanks to Our Blessed Mother Mary and St. Dominic Savio for my safe and successful operation.

*Mrs Arlene deSouza, Australia*

Our grateful thanks to Our Lady, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the many favours we have received especially, the sale of the property.

*Mrs. R. James, Australia*

## - Blue Roses -

*Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. ~ Hebrews 13:2*

**W**hy do I always have to be the one who starts to do laundry and there's no detergent? I guess it was time for me to do my 'Dollar Store run' which included light bulbs, paper towels, trash bags, Chlorox. So off I go.

I scurried around the store, gathered up my goodies, and headed for the checkout counter only to be blocked in the narrow aisle by a young man that appeared to be about sixteen years-old. I wasn't in a hurry, so I patiently waited for the boy to realize that I was there. This was when he waved his hands excitedly in the air and declared in a loud voice, "Mommy, I'm over here." It was obvious now, he was mentally challenged, and so startled as he turned and saw me standing so close to him, waiting to squeeze by. His eyes widened and surprise exploded on his face as I said, "Hey Buddy, what's your name?"

"My name is Denny and I'm shopping with my mother," he responded proudly. "Wow," I said, "that's a cool name; I wish my name was Denny, but my name is Hal." "Hal like Halloween?" he asked. "Yes," I answered. "How old are you Denny?" "How old am I now Mommy?" he asked his mother as she slowly came over from the next aisle. "You're fifteen years-old Denny; now be a good boy and let the man pass by."

I acknowledged her and continued to talk to Denny for several more minutes about summer, bicycles, and school. I watched his brown eyes dance with excitement because he was the centre of someone's attention. He then abruptly turned and headed toward the toy section.

Denny's mom had a puzzled look on her face and thanked me for taking time to talk with her son. She told me that most people wouldn't even look at him, much less talk to him. I told her that it was my pleasure and then I said something I have no idea where it came from, other than by the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

I told her that there are plenty of red, yellow and pink roses in God's garden, however, "Blue Roses" are very rare and should be appreciated for their beauty and distinctiveness. You see, Denny is a "Blue Rose" and if someone doesn't stop and smell that rose with their heart and touch that rose with their kindness, then they've missed a blessing from God.

She was silent for a second, then with a tear in her eye she asked, "Who are you?"

Without thinking I said, "Oh, I'm probably just a 'daffodil or maybe even a dandelion,' but sure love living in God's garden." □

### **APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER**

**JUNE 2008**

**Holy Father's General Intention:** *That all Christians may cultivate a deep and personal friendship with Christ in order to be able to communicate the strength of his love to every person they meet.*

**Missionary Intention:** *That the International Eucharistic Congress of Quebec in Canada may lead to an ever greater understanding that the Eucharist is the heart of the Church and the source of evangelization.*

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**Subs:** (One copy Rs. 20/-); **Inland:** Rs. 200 p.a.; **Airmail:** Rs.400 p.a

## **MARY WAS THERE**

It was the first day of the monsoon, and I was riding my scooter very early in the morning, it was barely light. Suddenly I landed in a pothole. I was a little shaken when I came out, but found that I was alright. I continued on my journey but soon realized that my bag with all my belongings (my keys, purse, spectacles and books) had slipped off the bike. I was very disturbed. I turned around, praying feverishly 'Hail Marys' as I made my way back to the pothole. There as nothing there. As I looked up two men came towards me with my bag in their hands. I was so grateful, I rewarded them when they returned it to me. I know that Mary was there and I am most grateful for this favour.

*Mrs. Suvarna Fonseca e Antao, 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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