

# DON BOSCO'S MADONNA

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*May we who honour  
the memory of  
the Mother of your Son,  
show forth  
in our mortal flesh  
the life of Jesus...  
who lives and reigns  
for ever and ever.*

*- From the Common of the BVM  
for Eastertide.*

Cover: **THE DIVINE MERCY**  
as described to the artist  
by Sr. Faustina Kowalska



## From The Editor's Desk

### THE EASTER EXPERIENCE

Around the time I prepare for the Easter Vigil service I am always tempted to ask myself how I would have felt were I to be christened – as an adult – at midnight Mass on Easter Saturday night with the Paschal fire blazing outside and the church bright with the burning candles of the large congregation. I once remember having presided at the service when a young college student was received into the Church on Easter Saturday night. While I went through the service with him prior to the actual christening he told me of his journey into faith up to that moment, from a childhood that was only anonymously Christian, to an adult search for faith during which he contacted the Catholic Enquiry Centre and with the help of the good Jesuit parish priest was given instruction in the Faith. His college friends were very supportive. Many of them actually accompanied him that night to support him in his decision.

Everything that evening came together in such a marvellous way. Reading after reading depicted God's marvellous dealings with his people: God reaching out in creation, the call of Abraham, Moses leading the enslaved Israelites to freedom, the Promised Land, and the prophets; always leading to the Messiah, to Jesus, who would define forever the God-man relationship. There would be no going back on this. Not even the long list of human failures to respond to God, not even the rejection that led to Jesus' death on Calvary, could stop God. He raised Jesus to life in the resurrection and in one move cancelled the power of death. And on that Easter Saturday night, a young man who had listened to God's call throughout scripture, fully conscious of what he was doing, answered that call in faith, and said out loud and clear, *'I believe in God. I believe in Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, and the resurrection from the dead.'*

My own progress to that kind of moment seemed so slow that that adult moment of profession of faith seems very attractive. What I am forgetting, of course, is that God's love of me began long before I was able to believe in him. Just as my parents loved me and cared for me long before I recognized their love or returned it, God loved me even before he created me. Sometimes we only come to recognize our parents' love after they are long dead, and sometimes we come to recognize God's love for us only long after we have come to adulthood and have the power to make decisions. In both cases we are the beneficiaries of a love we did nothing to deserve. I hope that this Easter we had the opportunity to renew our baptismal vows and repeated them with conviction, loud and clear, *'I believe in God, in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, and in the resurrection from the dead.'*

*Fr. Ian Doulton sdb*

## FOUND A TREASURE THEN RETURNED IT

*Fr. Erasto Fernandez, sss*

**R**iding on Cloud Nine, Ferrin procured the keys of his new house and decided to check it out in the Salt Lake City suburb of Bountiful before the family moved in. He was greatly excited to have finally acquired a place they could call their own but no sooner had he entered the garage than a piece of cloth that seemed stuck to an attic door caught his eye. Opening the hatch cautiously he climbed up the ladder and pulled out a strange-looking metal box. He almost fainted on seeing its contents! Hurriedly he called his wife to tell her she wouldn't believe what he had found. Further investigations revealed seven more boxes, all stuffed full with tightly wound rolls of cash bundled together with twine — more than \$40,000 in all!

When Ferrin and family had calmed down a bit, he instantly started surveying in his mind how such a large sum of money like that could go a long way, especially since they were still in the process of setting up this new house. "I'm not perfect, and I wish I could say there was never any doubt in my mind," he reported later. "We knew we had to give it back, but it doesn't mean I didn't think about our car in need of repairs, how we would love to adopt a child and aren't able to do that right now or fix up our outdated house that we had just bought," Ferrin confessed. "But the money wasn't ours to keep and I don't believe one gets a

chance very often to do something radically honest, to do something ridiculously awesome for someone else and, what is more, that is a lesson I always hoped to teach to my children."

Before anyone could come up with other bright ideas, he contacted the previous owner who had died a few months earlier and had left the house to his children. He had purchased the home in 1966 and lived there with his wife, who died some years earlier. Having spoken to the eldest son, Ferrin learnt that the old man was in the habit of hiding away money because the son had once found a bundle of cash taped beneath a drawer in their home, but had never dreamt that his father had stored such a huge treasure. "He grew up in hard times and people that survived that era didn't have anything when they came out of it unless they saved it themselves," the flabbergasted young man confessed! "He was a saver, not a spender."

The grateful young man called the money's return "a story that will outlast our generation and probably yours as well." Commenting on his unprecedented honest gesture, Ferrin reminisced, almost philosophically, "I'm a father too, and I also often worry about the future for my kids," Ferrin said. "I can see him putting that money away for a rainy day and it would have been wrong of me to deny

him that thing he worked on for years. I felt like I got to write a chapter in his life, a chapter he wasn't able to finish and see it through to its conclusion."

### **Honesty: Always the Best Policy**

We instinctively admire the great honesty of Ferrin and family perhaps because such heroic behaviour is so rare in our day. Maybe a good number of us would have to admit that somehow we would have tried to justify our keeping the great find, without even sharing the secret with our own family lest someone inadvertently spill the beans and the family return to square one. Some might even try to rationalize the find as a God-given gift to be received gratefully and used in part at least for the benefit of others.

As we delve enquiringly deep into the mind and heart of Ferrin, what we notice is an inborn sense of fairness: he recognized that the money was the hard-earned wages of a man who struggled all through life to make ends meet for the family he would eventually leave behind when he died. Ferrin seems to have entered into the feelings and got into the shoes of the previous owner appreciating his sentiments, respecting them even though he had never met the man. If we were to express all this in Gospel terminology, he practiced the Golden Rule which says, "Do to others as you would have them do to you"



(Lk 6:31). At times, this rule is expressed negatively as 'Do not do unto others what you would not want them to do to you!' which is rather a pale version of what Jesus teaches. For it is not enough to merely avoid hurting others - the Christian is encouraged to positively seek the good of others just as he would want others to treat him!

### **Eucharistic to the Core**

Such an altruistic attitude flows from the Eucharist we celebrate every Sunday, if not more often. The Eucharistic Command which is at the heart of the Eucharistic celebration places before us the supreme example of Jesus himself. Taken both in its synoptic form as also in the Johannine version of the washing of the feet of the disciples Jesus enjoined this kind of selfless behaviour on his disciples - 'Do this as a memorial of me' (Lk. 22:19-20) and 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord - and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to

you' (Jn 13:12-15). So, it would be expected of one who celebrates the Eucharist regularly that he would positively seek the good of his neighbour in every way and on every occasion.

All this would happen almost naturally in a Christian's life if and when one starts off by believing that Eucharist is not meant primarily

for celebration only – but that whatever is done at Eucharist in a symbolic gesture needs to be enfolded throughout the rest of the day! Unfortunately, there seems to be a big gap between what happens in the Church and what is our habitual Christian behaviour outside! Which again is not what Jesus himself did on the night before he suffered and died! No sooner had the Passover ceremony in the Cenacle ended and the concluding psalms sung, than he set out for the Garden of Gethsemane with his disciples. It was precisely at the end of this passionate prayer that Jesus was arrested and eventually led to the Cross to be crucified outside the city! Calvary followed and completed the Cenacle. And this is what should happen in our lives too!

### **What Matters is the Interior**

Again, many Christians labour under the misconception that as long as others do not witness our wrongful behaviour, we may act as we please. Actually, as David acknowledges in his psalm, “O LORD, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD, you know it completely. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it. Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in

Sheol, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. If I say, ‘Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night,’ even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you” (Ps 139:1-12). Adam and Eve too realized pretty soon after their sin that they could not in any way hide from God who sees everything (Gen. 3:8-11).

Jesus himself reminds us forcefully that it is not only the external action that can be sinful and displeasing to God, but also the very desire we cherish in our hearts to do it, even if nothing really happens externally. To quote only one example, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Mt 5:26-28). And so what we need to look at carefully is what happens within our hearts, for “what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person...” (Mt 15:18-20).

And so, it is the interior that we need to cultivate more assiduously ensuring that we are faithful to the Lord from within. “Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the

hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Mt 6:1-5).

When we seek to be faithful to

the Lord from deep within, we can be sure that not only will we be blessed, but that our behaviour will promote unity, love, peace and true fellowship, qualities that all of us deeply want to experience in our lives. It would be the best reward we could get for our life here on earth if we could be remembered, at least by our children, for qualities such as these!☐

## walking with the Church



### *The Godfather, The Eagle Symbol*

*From St. Martin's Messenger, Ireland*

**Q**What is the function of a Godparent? I have been asked to act as Godfather at a baptism of the son of a friend of mine and I would like to know what obligations I have.

**A.** Thank you for your question. The primary function of Godparents has always been to support and help the parents in bringing up their new born babies in the Christian life - the new life they received at Baptism. The parents are primarily responsible for the education of their children in the faith in which they are baptised. But in the secular age in which we live, mothers and fathers need all the help they can get in the development of their faith. The Godparent should morally support to the parents and take an interest in the spiritual development of their God children and of course, more importantly, give good example

to the baptised child in living their Catholic faith.

**Q** Please explain the significance of an eagle which can be seen as part of the stand where the priest reads at Mass? What does it represent?

**A.** The Eagle is a symbol of many things. It nests in very high places and because of that it is a symbol of heavenly beings. Job asked of God, "Is it at your command that eagles fly, and build their nest on high?" (Job 39:27) The eagle is also often depicted as the bird that carries a person from danger up to a safe place. "I will bear you up, on eagle's wings!"

And from the book of Revelation we read of the woman who had given birth to a male child (Jesus) and was in danger of being consumed by the great dragon (evil).

"Then the woman was given

*(Continued on pg. 30)*

# CAN INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIANS GO IT ALONE?

by N. Egan

**T**here is a growing number of Catholics who while professing to be believers do not participate in the public worship of the church. Various sorts of reasons are given mostly to do with the kind of liturgy offered; it is dull, boring and the preaching irrelevant. Or it has to do with the supposed corruption of the clergy and the consequent dislike of them due to the sins of the few. Some others have just drifted and become indifferent to religious practice; their hearts have grown cold. Finally there is a small number of people who, for serious personal reasons abstain from public worship and prefer to go it alone to God, following a personally chosen path and these are different and special.



## **We are social beings dependent on one another**

There is a deeper question involved here. Is it possible to remain a Catholic in these situations? The lessons of history suggest that there is a gradual alienation, not only from religious practice, but from God also. But this is not a necessary consequence, though for some a likely one since, for most of us, our practice and belief are very closely linked to participation in the life of the community. The interdependence of individuals which follows from our social

nature is worked out through networks of giving and receiving and sharing whether we are speaking of the secular or sacred community. It is through these that our essential needs are met in both secular and sacred situations. When we weaken our link to either community, then it is likely that our personal life and the life of the community will be diminished in quality.

Moreover because we are social beings through and through these two levels of community intertwine with each other in normal life situations. Thus the family, a natural community, is also the first point of contact with the liturgical and sacramental life of the church, the Christian community and through them with Christ. This is further enriched by the school and parish which work at both levels also. And just as the family, school and village are the repository of the culture, the natural wisdom and knowledge that the child needs to negotiate its way through life, so too they are the repository of the beliefs and practices which shape and sustain our spiritual life. They are the environment, the surroundings of Christian living.

## **Christianity is rooted in normal life**

The Christian life is not something apart. It is rooted in our

normal secular life. The early Christians were constantly reminding each other that they were normal people doing all the things that others do; working, loving, caring, marrying, having children and supporting the wider society.

The difference lay in the vision of life and the public and private practices of prayer and worship which nourished their spirits and community life. At the centre of these is the Eucharist which puts us in touch in a special way with the life, death and resurrection of Christ. It is this which fosters the generosity of soul which keeps us faithful in our devotion and dedication to Christ and the life of giving and receiving, caring and sharing, praying and worshipping with our neighbours. Out of all this comes that love of God and neighbour we call charity and is the essential requirement for eternal life.

### **Strong Christian community-Richer spiritual life**

Clearly then the stronger the Christian community life is at every level, the family, the school, the parish, the richer will be the spiritual lives of the members of the many subordinate networks of giving and receiving, caring and sharing like St. Vincent de Paul, the Legion of Mary, the religious orders and various caring organisations. These will be a further source of the outpouring of that love and charity which is kindled by the prayer and sacramental life of the members;



they will make Christ present to the world and hopefully will be shaping and reshaping, towards ever greater justice, goodness and holiness, the structures of secular society, so that the values of the beatitudes will permeate our everyday life and relationships. This is how the kingdom of God will come into being; a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of

holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice love and peace. But this depends on a pervasive charity. Sadly these conditions are diminishing because more and more families are no longer practicing and their children are lost to the Christian community thus weakening its service to the world. It is essential then to revitalise the family as a basic Christian community.

### **The Christian Community and anonymous Christians**

The Christian religion is therefore a community religion which has the mission of bringing the message of the Good News of Salvation through Christ to the world at large. But we must still allow for the possibility of individuals to make contact with Christ our Saviour apart from the community, because Christ died for everybody and the Spirit is available to all. So too those who withdraw from the Christian community can achieve the effect of the sacraments if they have a strong desire for and devotion to Christ. There have been plenty of examples of both. They are anonymous Christians. □

## AUGUSTUS CZARTORYSKI 1858 - 1893

**A**ugustus was born in Paris on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1858, in exile, to the Polish Prince Ladislaw and Princess Mary Amparo, daughter of the queen of Spain. Thirty years earlier this noble family, because of its links to the Polish aristocracy emigrated to France.

When he was six, Augustus lost his mother. Her place was taken by Margaret d'Orléans the daughter of the count of Paris, regent to the French throne. From his earliest years Augustus was never attracted to the life in the court. He was a pensive and serene youngster. He seemed detached from earthly goods and was attracted to a serious spiritual life.

From the age of 10 he studied in Paris and Krakow, but his health forced him to interrupt his studies and go to the south of Europe frequently because of its milder climate. At that time Divine Providence placed Joseph Kalinowski in his life.

The tutor described his pupil as a lad with a stable character, a good soul, perfectly courteous, sincere, intelligent and very religious, but with a simple heart. In May 1883 Don Bosco was in France. Don Bosco met him there and Augustus insisted with Don Bosco that he be allowed to join the Salesians, but the Founder was not convinced. Augustus spoke with Pope Leo XIII, who



invited Don Bosco to accept him.

He entered the novitiate against his family's wishes. He was 29 years of age. In his efforts to adapt himself to the Oratory and its lifestyle, he became the humblest of novices. He soon took ill with tuberculosis. In the house at Valsalice, Turin, he met Venerable Andrea Beltrami. The two developed a deep spiritual friendship, while Andrea looked after Augustus during his illness.

Meanwhile Don Rua let him study theology and admitted him to Holy Orders. When he was ordained priest at San Remo, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1892, his Fr. Augustus died at Alassio on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 1893, on the Saturday of the Octave of Easter: "What a wonderful Easter!", he had said. He was 35 years old. John Paul II, the Polish Pope, had the joy of declaring him Blessed on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2004. His body is venerated in Przemysl (Poland). □



## FR. PETER GONSALVES, SDB

*by Fr. Savio Silveira, sdb**Bombay's Salesian at The Salesian Headquarters in Rome*

**P**eter Gonsalves is a man who has influenced our province, the Salesian Society, and more recently, the world's perception of Gandhi's 'unclothing' for India's liberation!

He was born on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1958 to Bernard Lewellyn and Edna May Gonsalves. Along with his elder brother Francis, Peter was brought up in a big, lively, creative and religious family at Mahim.

Later, at the boarding in Don Bosco's Matunga, like many of his companions he was enchanted by Fr Oscar Misquitta who gradually convinced his mother to send him to the Lonavla aspirantate.

Peter reminisces, looking back at those adolescent years: "I believe we were truly blessed with a growth-enhancing, expressive education that was assisted by the motivating presence of Salesians-in-unity." He naturally caught the Salesian fever and joined the novitiate at beautiful Yercaud (TN) where he was guided by his Novice Master, Fr Anthony Mampra after which he pursued his Master's in Philosophy at Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth. During these years he honed his communication skills at the Salesian Catechetical Centre which was directed by Fr. Cyril de Souza. After his ordination on 19<sup>th</sup> December 1987 he spent three enriching years at Ahmednagar after which he was transferred to Koregaon Park, Pune, where 'Tej-Prasarini' was born.

Meanwhile, in June 1993 Peter



was asked to attend the short training programme before he took up the role of ANS news correspondent for South and Central India. He was then summoned to the Salesian headquarters in Rome.

Today, Peter has gone beyond redesigning Salesianity in cyberspace. He now dares to reinterpret Salesian pedagogy! A remarkable man and a remarkable journey indeed! When I asked Peter for the concluding lines of his story, this is what he had to say: "My story, as you can see, is not just mine. It is as much about our province, about confreres who have shaped my life and numerous others who have assisted me along the way. Above all, it is the story of 25 years (rather, 54 years) of accompaniment by a persistently patient and merciful God to whom I gratefully say: *Lord, I'm not worthy to be celebrated. I Celebrate YOU!*" □

# Witnesses in & for Our Times



## ST. ANSELM OF AOSTA (1034 - 1109) LIFE AS A LOVING QUEST FOR GOD (April 21)

by Mario Scudu (TA/ID)

*"That I seek to desire you, that I desire to seek you, so that I may find you to love you, that you love me who have found you."*

It is a very direct and meaningful prayer which expresses the life and the works of the author: St. Anselm of Aosta, a philosopher, a theologian and man of church (bishop). It is also an autobiographical prayer recounting his tireless yearning for God that was inflamed by Anselm's great desire for him. In fact, his entire life was a constant search for God. This virtuous quest concluded only when his life came to an end.

This is actually man's real and only quest on this earth, to know and love God and to constantly seek him. This was an endeavour most admirably carried out by St. Anselm.

Anselm was born in 1034 into a wealthy noble family in Aosta. It was his dear mother Ermenberga who gave him the first inklings of mysticism. The child beheld and ecstatically contemplated in the marvelous mountains and valleys surrounding his home. His father Gandulf was a very different

person. With royal blood in his veins his manner was rough, a bit arrogant and not in the least bit inclined towards religion. Therefore it was easy to imagine the rapport between father and son was not only not harmonious and constructive but ridden with severe conflicts. It was not long before a decisive conflict erupted.

Anselm, as a child was placed with the Benedictines of Aosta for his education. At the age of 15 years he asked to enter the religious order but his father flatly refused. Could he allow his eldest son to be confined to four walls and remain anonymous forever? Never! But the desire of the boy was very serious. He was dead earnest. It was not simply superficial or a transitory infatuation. When his father refused his request Anselm fell gravely ill and by the time he recovered from the illness Anselm had lost his mother whom he loved very much. His biographer, Eadmer wrote: "He lost the anchor of his soul because of which he was thrown mercilessly on to worldly pursuits." In fact the young man

turned to worldly pleasures and completely forgot about spiritual things. His father thought he was becoming more worldly but he was wrong. In fact he soon realized that his relationship with his son was gradually becoming more and more difficult and ridden with conflicts. The rift came swiftly. One day Anselm disappeared from home, crossed Mount Cenis and for three years he tramped around France in search of adventure. His wanderings took him to Normandy and here Providence led him to meet a great Italian, Lanfranc of Pavia, who was prior of the abbey of Le Bec. It was a fateful encounter. Anselm resumed his studies and took up his spiritual life once more ... even the flame of his monastic vocation was rekindled. At the age of 27 he took the habit and was ordained a priest. All that talk about God that he had learned as a child from his mother soon returned with force. He began to study asceticism and gradually came to love contemplation. God was now his 'all.' His intelligence and spiritual sensitivity did not go unnoticed. Because of these qualities he was chosen as teacher and mentor of the young monks. These were fascinated by his presence and his words. In fact, they asked him to write what he taught them. Mindful of how his father had failed him, Anselm was very paternal towards his young charges. He guided them with gradual and gentle persuasion not with authority and harshness.

### **Bishop of Canterbury**

Meanwhile Lanfranc became abbot of Caen and later in 1070 at the request of the king and the people, the archbishop of

Codex Admont 288, XIII.C, Stiftsbibliothek, Admont, Austria



*Archbishop Anselm offering  
Countess Matilda his work*

Canterbury in England. In 1078 the abbot of Le Bec died and the monks unanimously elected Anselm as his successor. The new abbot was very demanding with himself and with others, but - which is rare - he could arouse much conviction and enthusiasm for the Christian and religious life in all the monks, but especially in young people.

His former teacher and friend Lanfranc of Canterbury asked Anselm for his help. He invited him across the channel. This first trip to England was very positive. Anselm was appreciated by the people and the court of the new masters, not only for his intelligence, but also for his kindness and his manners. He was respectful towards everyone. He "became one of them." He was remembered very fondly and strongly when Lanfranc of Pavia died. King William sent his men

to Le Bec to bring Anselm and make him bishop. At first he refused, saying that his appointment was outside the jurisdiction of the king. But in the end he had to surrender to the unanimous will of the English bishops by becoming Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of England (which is why he is liturgically called St Anselm of Canterbury, while actually being from Aosta).

This second English experience was not simple. "The Church of England did not enjoy a time of peaceful growth since political power was trying to overrule religious authority. The conflict became violent when the king took a position in favour of a schism of the Church of England from Rome. Regardless of the defections by his brothers in the episcopate, Anselm resolutely proclaimed the independence of the spiritual from the temporal. They were the first signs of the schism that would reach its climax in 1500 when King Henry VIII would bring to birth the English national Church, also known as the Anglican Church. Since there were no phones, no faxes or e-mails to communicate, Anselm made two trips to Rome to consult with the Pope (in reality they were two periods of exile, in 1098 and again in 1103). 1106 when he returned to Canterbury after his second trip abroad he was warmly welcomed by the people and the clergy. We can only imagine how unenthusiastic was the king and all the political powers. He died three years later on 21 April 1109.

Anselm left this world not only as a saint and a bishop, but also as a great man of learning and a true theologian. Indeed, he is considered

the founder of Scholasticism. Using his research and the studies that he prepared, theologians such as St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure became the two pillars of that theological school in 1200.

St. Anselm is so important that after nine centuries he earned an important quote by Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Fides et Ratio* (1998) on the relationship between faith and reason.

The Pope defines him as "One of the most fruitful and significant thinkers in the history of humanity and a point of reference for both philosophy and theology (n. 14). The Pope mentions him because he considered St. Anselm as a teacher with regard to the relationship between faith and reason. In the same encyclical says that "faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth. And God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth, and ultimately, to know him, because knowing and loving God, we may also come to the fullness of truth about ourselves." St. Anselm wonderfully used these two wings to reach God.

Anselm was a teacher of the faith not only because he believed, studied and "wrote" the truth about the faith, but also because he has lived it. St. Benedict in his Rule required the applicant who stood at the door of his abbey to do nothing "but truly seek God." Anselm followed this advice precisely and sought only God, truly and totally throughout his life. This is the teaching that he has left us all who are too lazy to believe and because of which we seek reasons for our belief and love of God. □

# IN A CHEERFUL MOOD

## \$4000 Hearing

An elderly man inquired of his wife about a recent, large expense.

"Well yes I bought this new hearing aid, dear." his wife replied.

"How much did it cost, dear?," he asked.

"Four thousand dollars," she said.

"Four thousand dollars! Why would you have to pay so much for a hearing aid?," he exclaimed. "It's a wonderful hearing aid. Why I can hear everything around me. I can make out everything that people are saying around me even from the other side of the room."

"Really? What kind is it?"

"It's five-thirty," she said checking her watch. "Why?"

## Buying Shoes

A man walked into a shoe store, and tried on a pair of shoes.

"How do they feel?" asked the sales clerk.

"Well they feel a bit tight," replied the man.

The assistant promptly bent down and had a look at the shoes and at the man's feet.

"Try pulling the tongue out," the clerk said.

"Well, theyth sthlll feelth a bith tighth."

## Dog Applicant

A sign was hung in an office window. It read:

Help wanted.

Must type 70 words a minute.

Must be computer literate.

Must be bilingual.

An equal opportunity employer.

A dog was ambling down the street and saw the sign. He looked at it for a moment, pulled it down with his mouth, and walked into the manager's office, making it clear he wished to apply for the job.

The office manager laughed and said, "I can't hire a dog for this job."

The dog pointed to the line: "An equal opportunity employer."

So the manager said, "OK, take this letter and type it." The dog went off to the word processor and returned a minute later with the finished letter, perfectly formatted.

The manager said, "Alright, here's a problem. Write a computer programme for it and run it."

Fifteen minutes later, the dog came back with the correct answer.

The manager still wasn't convinced. "I still can't hire you for this position. You've got to be bilingual."

The dog looked up at the manager and said, "Meow."

## Too Late To Date

An elderly woman died last month.

Having never married, she requested no male pallbearers.

In her handwritten instructions for her memorial service, she wrote,

"They wouldn't take me out while I was alive, I don't want them to take me out when I'm dead." □



## **THE WOMEN AT THE TOMB AND THE SWEET ABSENCE OF JESUS**

(Luke 24,1- 12)

by Carlo Broccardo

*The faith of the women was not founded on their encounter with Jesus but on the memory of his words. Like the angels, we too can tell people we meet, “remember all that Jesus said and did.”*

**I**n the month of April during Sunday Mass we will not hear the Gospel of Luke proclaimed but the Gospel of John. Only on Easter Morning we may choose, as an option, the Gospel account according to St. Luke. I know a parish priest who always chose the Gospel account of the women hurrying to the sepulchre (the alternative is the passage from John). However, there is always a possibility of reading the first 12 verses of the last chapter of Luke, the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter of Luke.

The episode is set on “the first day after the Sabbath” (v. 1). Let us try and understand a little about the situation so that we may grasp the incident. Jesus died on the cross in the afternoon of Good Friday and was buried in a hurry that evening before it got dark. There was no coffin as

we use today there was only a shroud (a piece of linen cloth) in which he was wrapped and laid in a tomb hewn in the rock.

In those days, the tombs of the rich were made in this fashion (and Jesus was placed in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea). It was a kind of chamber hewn out of the hillside. Inside there were vaults in the side walls and into them the bodies of the deceased were laid. The body of Jesus was not sealed in a sarcophagus but only anointed with perfumes and laid out in a linen shroud preparing it to be placed in one of the vaults.

There was not time enough for an elaborate burial ritual. Things had to be done quickly as the Sabbath was already upon them and as you know, on the Sabbath no serious manual work was permitted. So, expecting the worst to happen to the body, the following day, his friends - having respected the Sabbath according to the Law - on the third day, “the day after the Sabbath” the women went to the sepulchre with the spices to anoint the body of Jesus.

Why so many details in order to understand the burial rituals of the time? Because we can pick out the significance of their actions: if the women went to the sepulchre with the spices, it was because they wanted to complete the task of preparing the body for burial. The process had been interrupted for two days. It means they were convinced that Jesus was dead. That was what was in their minds when they approached the tomb. They were not going to see if he had risen. They were going to anoint the body of someone who was deceased. They were going to

pay their final respects to his remains.

We can therefore quite understand that we were stunned when they found the sepulchre open and empty. Luke says they were “perplexed” which meant, they literally did not know where to go and what to do.

They were blank. To find the sepulchre empty was not enough for them to believe.

Strange: at least three times Jesus had predicted his death and resurrection, but when it actually happened no one recalled that. In the beginning none of the disciples believed that Jesus could rise from the dead. When we read the passage of the disciples at Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35) we can recall the significance that the death of Jesus could have on his friends. They had placed their trust in him, turned over their lives to him, risked everything because they trusted; and now he was dead, what a hoax! The death of Jesus was such a powerful blow that it deeply shocked the disciples and with them the women who accompanied Jesus up to the end. It was truly a heavy cross for them to bear.

At the end of the passage, however, the women will demonstrate their faith in the Resurrection and will even become the first announcers of the



*The Marys at the Sepulchre by  
Bartolomeo Schedoni, Parma, Italy*

event that changed the history of the world. What had happened? What had changed? Two angels appeared to them who said: “Remember how he told you while you were still in Galilee... saying he needed to be crucified and rise on the third day” (v.7). And the women remembered and believed.

The words of the angels are very important for us. They mean that the faith of the women was not founded on their encounter with the Risen Lord but only recalling his words. To us that is not something trite but rather, we who have not been given the gift of seeing with our eyes the face of the risen Jesus, listening to his voice with our ears or touching him with our hands, like the angels, we can tell people we meet: “remember all that Jesus said and did.” We can read the pages of the Gospel, of our life and of history, and believe that Jesus is truly risen, is alive and is truly present in our midst. □

## NEW MEN AND WOMEN OF THE EARTH

by His Holiness Pope

*At the General Audience on Wednesday 27th April 2011 the Holy Father commented on the first days of the Easter Season which lasts until Pentecost. The following is an edited translation which was given in Italian:*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In these first days of Eastertide, which is prolonged until Pentecost, we are still full of the freshness and new joy that the liturgical celebrations brought to our hearts. Therefore, today I would like to reflect briefly with you on Easter, heart of the Christian mystery. Everything, in fact, begins from here: Christ risen from the dead is the foundation of our faith. Radiating from Easter, as from a luminous, incandescent centre, is all the liturgy of the Church, bringing with it content and meaning. The liturgical celebration of the death and resurrection of Christ is not a simple commemoration of this event, but the actualization of the mystery, for the life of every Christian and every ecclesial community, for our life. St. Paul wrote to the first believers: "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth" (Ephesians 5:8-9).

How can we then make Easter become "life"? How can our whole interior and exterior existence assume a paschal "form"? We must begin from a genuine understanding of Jesus' resurrection: Such an event is not a simple return to the preceding life, as it was for Lazarus, for Jarius' daughter or for the young man of Nain, but rather it is something completely new and different. Christ's resurrection is the door that leads to a life no longer subject to the transience of time, a life immersed in the eternity of God. Because of this, St. Paul not only links in an inseparable way the resurrection of Christians to that of Jesus (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:16,20), but he also indicates how the paschal mystery must be lived in our daily life.

In the Letter to the Colossians, he says: "If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Think of what is above, not of what is on earth" (3:1-2). To understand the true meaning of these Pauline affirmations, suffice it not to separate them from the context. The Apostle specifies very well what he intends by "the things that are above," which



## MEN AT THE HEART OF THE EARTHLY CITY

*Pope Benedict XVI*

the Christian must seek, and "the things of the earth" of which he must beware. Here are first of all "the things of the earth" that one must avoid: "Put to death, then, the parts of you that are earthly: immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and the greed that is idolatry" (3:5-6). To put to death in us the insatiable desire for material goods, egoism, root of every sin. Hence, when the Apostle invites Christians to detach themselves with determination from the "things of the earth," he clearly wishes to make it understood that it belongs to the "old man" of whom the Christian must strip himself, to be clothed in Christ.

Hence St. Paul is very far from inviting Christians, each one of us, to evade the world in which God has put us. It is true that we are citizens of another "city," where our true homeland is, but we must follow the path to this goal daily on this earth. Participating henceforth in the life of the Risen Christ, we must live as new men in this world, in the heart of the earthly city.

And this is the way not only to transform ourselves, but to transform the world, to give the earthly city a new face that fosters the development of man and of society according to the logic of solidarity, of goodness, in profound respect of the dignity of each one. It summarizes and abstracts "the things of heaven": charity, which with faith and hope, represents the great rule of the Christian's life and defines his profound nature.

Every Christian, just as every community, if he lives the experience of this passage of Resurrection, cannot but be the ferment of a new world, giving himself without reservations for the most urgent and just causes, as the testimonies of saints demonstrate in every age and place.

Dear friends, Yes, Christ is truly risen! We cannot keep only for ourselves the life and joy that he has given us in his Easter, but we must give it to all those we approach. It is our task and our mission: to arouse in our neighbour hope where there is despair, joy where there is sadness, life where there is death. To witness every day the joy of the Risen Lord means to live always in a "paschal way" and to make resound the happy proclamation that Christ is not an idea or a memory of the past, but a Person who lives with us, for us and in us, and with him, by and in him, we can make all things new (cf. Revelation 21:5). □



# HOW NOT TO RAISE A CHILD

*From Fr. Ian Douulton's collection of stories*

**W**hat's wrong with so many of our children? Everybody is sick of this question, but it is so important that it cries for an answer. There must be some reason why such a large number of children get into trouble. We don't know the cause behind every case but we can tell you that part of the difficulty lies in the mistakes of normal respectable fathers and mothers. Here are some of the ways, not to raise children.

Take the Smiths for instance: little Mary, the baby is now at the walking stage and in the living room she catches sight of a low table filled with 'shining things' just as she reaches out her hand, mother and father see: "No, no, mustn't touch" Mary says in her baby-talk. "Pretty, pretty" says little Mary in her baby banter.

"Baby can't have 'pretties.'" Mary goes towards the crystal on the settee. "Mary!" Jill shouts. Al is irritated and says: "Now don't scream at her, Jill, you'll make her a nervous wreck." "I'm not screaming, I just don't want her to touch that glass elephant on the table." "Let her look at it. Why don't you show it to her?" "No, she has to learn to obey when I tell her to. Mary don't you touch that table!"

"Well, why don't you put all that stuff where she can't get at it." Al is exasperated.

"I'm not going to have the place looking like a barn. She has to learn to leave things alone." Turning to the toddler: "Mary if you touch that, I'll slap your hand."

In the mean time Mary reaches for the elephant and drops it. Jill is

furiously.

"You bad, bad, girl, come here..." and she slaps Mary's hand which makes Mary howl. "Stop that stop that crying!" screams Jill.

"You've got to quit slapping her, it doesn't do her any good." Al acts the behaviourist.

"Did you try to reason with a child her age?"

"Leave the elephant on the table and let her look at it. That's all she wants to do," says Al in frustration.

Now Al starts to teach Mary: "Mary, Mary, now Mary look, no, no, don't touch!" But Mary starts crying again. "Oh, for heaven's sake, here, take the elephant."

"Why did you give it to her after you told her she couldn't have it?"

"Well, it's the only way to make her stop crying. Your idea of trying to show it to her wasn't any good. I knew she'd grab it. Oh, I can't discipline the child when you're around."

"Now she's going after the cigarette box." Albert looks over his newspaper. "Well, she might as well have it before she starts screaming again."

"Phew! Anything to keep her quiet." Mary was frustrated and walked out of the room.

Mary's mother and father can't ever agree on how to train her so Mary goes untrained. She quickly gets the idea that if she screams loud enough for anything somebody will hand it to her. If daddy won't give in, she tries mother. Many of the things she wants aren't good for her, but somebody will let her have them

- anything to keep her quiet.

Mary's brother Johnny has reached the age of asking questions. Everything is new and interesting to Johnny particularly when he goes on a bus ride with his mother.

"Mum, what's the bus stopping for? Uh mother? Mum what's the bus stopping for? Mum what's?"

"Ssh...Johnny, Johnny, be quiet."

Suddenly he hears a whistle.

"What's that mother? What's that funny noise mum?" "It's, just a whistle dear." "What's a 'whistle'? I don't see any whistle. What's a whistle mum?"

"The policeman has it when he is directing traffic. Now sit still will you?"

"Where's the policeman? I don't see any policeman. What's 'directing traffic' mum?" Jill is embarrassed and the passengers are looking at the mother and son.

"Uh...mum? Mum!"

Jill is exasperated by this time.

"Johnnie if you don't quit asking questions, I'll never take you downtown with me again. Now just sit there and keep still."

Every time Johnny starts asking his mother questions anywhere, the same thing happens. He doesn't get very far with daddy either because his father is always too tired to be bothered with a lot of '*darn-fool questions.*' As Johnny grows older his questions are sometimes very important, but mum and dad still can't be bothered answering them. So Johnny finds it much easier to pick up answers from other children. He soon has a fine collection of - '*misinformation.*' He never confides in his father or his mother. Later on when he gets into trouble they'll say: "He never told us anything.

Parents are always the last ones to know."

Here's another scene at the Smiths:

Daddy and mummy love to give cocktail parties. They put Johnny and Mary to bed early, but the house is very small and the party gets louder as the hour grows late. The local radio station is playing just the right music tonight.

The kids upstairs are restless with the commotion downstairs.

"Johnny?" Mary gets up and comes to her brother's bed. "Mary stay in bed! You're supposed to be asleep." "I just woke up," she says rubbing her sleepy eyes. "They woke me up too," grumbles Johnny. "I want mamma," Mary is whimpering. "She's busy, she won't come." "I'm going to go find her," says Mary. "Mary, you get back in bed. You can't walk around with no shoes on." "Mamma won't care if I don't have any shoes on when she's busy."

From below the party music filters upward to the children's bedroom, so does the conversation. It's getting louder and more bawdy.

Johnny can hear his mother say rather loudly with a heavy slur in her voice:

"Come on everybody let's dance, I feel a tango coming on."

Al too is rather 'too merry'.

"Ah! She can't tell a mambo from a tango. What good is a foxtrot anyway?"

Upstairs, the brother and sister are discussing the mood downstairs: "Mother's talking funny and so is daddy," Johnny comments to Mary. "They won't let us play the radio loud like that"

Mary tells Johnny. "They only do it when they're having a *ball*." "What's a ball?" Mary asks innocently "That's what daddy always says when he talks funny and he smells funny, he says: "*We're having a ball.*" Johnny sits up in bed and looks into the dim nightlight and says: "Mamma's going to have a headache tomorrow." Johnny is a little worried. Mary pipes in: "Daddy will drink lots of black coffee." "They'll be awful cranky so you better be good." Johnny warns Mary. "They'll be 'hanged over!" Mary says and gives up as she walks to her bed.

Johnny and Mary know that tomorrow will be one of those days when everything they do is wrong. The day after tomorrow the same things will pass without even a word.

Johnny and Mary are completely mixed up. They have no idea of anything being either right or wrong in itself, everything depends on how people feel. All they know about their parents is: Get them when they're in the right mood and they can get anything.

Now, take Johnny at the age of nine or ten, he comes to the dinner table with his hands spotted like a leopard.

"Johnny I told you, you could not come to the table until you got all that paint off your hands." Jill screams: "And I've told you that if you ever came to the table with dirty hands again you'd march upstairs without any dinner. Now leave the table." Al howls.

"I can't get this stuff off in a hurry. I was painting something and you didn't call me until dinner was ready and I don't have any

more paint remover."

Before he finishes, Al shouts back, "You heard what I said? Now, don't argue, leave the table!"

Johnny is upset: "Look at Mary, she's got ink all over her face. She can come to the table looking anyway she wants to." "You shut up," shouts Mary. "Shut up yourself." "I will not...!" "Johnny and Mary, both of you leave the table." Al decides. "*She* told me to shut up..." "*He* started."

"One more word out of either of you and you both leave the table. Now stop arguing and eat your dinner." Al is frustrated. "Can't we have one meal in peace in this house?"

Johnny and Mary know that they won't be sent away from the table. They've been through all this before. Father never carries out a threat and very seldom does he ever keep a promise and neither does mother. So they've gradually lost all the power of authority. Johnny and Mary have no respect for the word that is never kept and as they grow older they completely disregard it. They pass from coming to the table with dirty hands to going out with forbidden companions and then coming home in the morning, any hour they please. They're not afraid. Father and mother, don't mean a word they say.

Here are Johnny and Mary on a Sunday morning. Father and mother are still trying to settle a squabble they had last night and all that the children hear is "the least you could do is to take them to Church." Jill tries to wake Al up.

"Oh, you know, Sunday's the only day I have to rest." "From the golf, and fishing and laying around you do all day

Saturday...Sunday is supposed to be a day of rest."

"Dad if we don't go now we'll be late again." Johnny shouts from his room. "Now don't talk to me, this is your mother's business." Al shouts back. "Just because you haven't been to Church in years, it's a fine example to set the children." Jill tries to be stern.

"Why do they have to go any way, let them decide for themselves when they're older whether they want to go to Church or not." Al decides on another argument. "Then why don't we let them decide when they are older whether they want to go to school or eat vegetables, or wash their faces," she's frustrated too. "Ah we've been through all this before. You know what I feel about it."

"Then why don't you take them to Church? You don't go to Church yourself half the time." "Well, at least I know I should go, that's something," Jill thinks she's right.

"Listen, I'm better than half the fellows who go half the time. I've seen some of the biggest crooks in town in the front pews of that Church." "Well, they do at least one good thing every week. You think not going makes you any better?"

John and Mary are watching this from the door and Mary asks: "Daddy, take me to Church, so I can see the crooks in the front pew!" "There, there! You see the ideas you put in the children's heads?" Then Mary comes out of their room and tells the children half hesitantly and half embarrassed: "Never mind, Mary, you and Johnny go by yourselves. I have a headache. Here Johnny,

take this money for the collection."

A few more Sundays like that and Johnny and Mary walk right past the Church. They contribute the change to a candy store. They can't decide who is right, mother or father and if mother is right, why doesn't she go to church? Later on, Johnny and Mary will take the easy way: Saturday is for fun - Sunday is for sleep.

For Johnny and Mary a chair at the dinner table can turn into a ringside seat for any number of rounds and no holes barred.

"I asked you for five dollars, not five hundred" starts Jill.

"You asked me for five dollars yesterday. Do you think five dollar bills grow on trees?" "No, not in your yard, they don't." "Don't get sarcastic." "I'm not getting sarcastic. I'm just sick and tired of you always fighting about money." "I'm not fighting!" "Oh! Of course not, you're perfect, you..."

"Oh, you're going to start that again." Al knows what's coming.

"Go on. Go ahead and leave. You don't want to eat here, you don't have to." "You're right, I don't have to! There are plenty of places I can go where somebody has a decent word to say instead of this 'yak,yak,yak.'" "Go right ahead, you don't care a thing about your family anyway. I'm just the cook and the wash woman and the housekeeper. And I don't even get paid for it!" Jill is already on the verge of tears.

"It's too darn bad that you didn't marry that fat head with money that used to hang around your house."

*(Continued on pg. 30)*

# INFLUENCES ON THE EDUCATIVE METHOD OF DON BOSCO

## 2

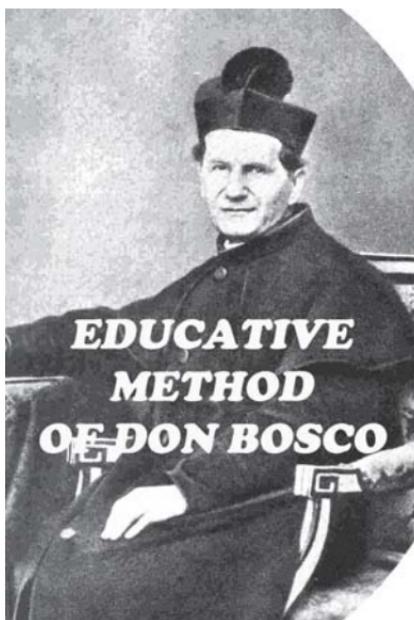
by Fr. Elias Dias

The spirit of a man is shaped by the culture, the history and the relationships of his time. Don Bosco was the product of his time; he was influenced by many factors, circumstances and personalities in which he lived.

**Socio Political situation:** The Socio-political conditions in which Don Bosco was born and brought up influenced his own future life. Napoleon himself ran over Italy twice but after his exile the Congress of Vienna took place in 1814-1815 and the Kingdom of Sardinia was returned to the king. The era was called the "Restoration Period" in Italy.

The economic historians place the centre of the 19<sup>th</sup> century - Industrial Revolution in Italy in Piedmont region and in particular, Turin. The exodus of the country people, especially the artisans and their children, the young, the poor and illiterate flocked to the city in search of work.

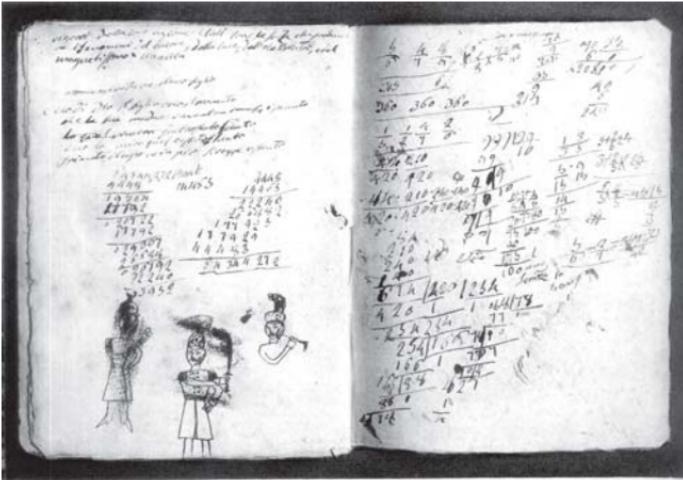
The decade 1852-1861 was dominated by Camillo Cavour who formed the government with the help of the right wing democrats headed by Urbano Ratazzi. The constant conflicts between the church and the state brought in unemployment, famine and epidemics. Such a political and economic situation at Piedmont produced the usual ills, youth, juvenile crimes and prisons



full of delinquent youth. Don Bosco's work began and continued amidst this.

**Education before Napoleonic period:** Before the Napoleonic period there had been no compulsory public education in the Kingdom of Piedmont. But in the Restoration period, King Charles Felix promulgated an educational act "Regie Patenti." This law decided to put all the schools, primary and secondary under one unified system. A general reorganization of public education was effected. Don Bosco as an educationalist learnt and found out the implications of these laws of his country.

**Influence of Mama Margaret:** After the death of Francis Bosco in 1817, Margaret Occhiena took up the reign in the house. The financial situation was deteriorating, there was continuously two years of drought and famine. Margaret is described



One of pages of John's notebook when he was a school boy

as a saintly woman. Many examples of Margaret's spirituality and devotion are recorded in her biography. She was a strong Christian woman of character, fully devoted to the children and to the service of God and neighbour. But the biographer gives particular attention to her action as a Christian educator. She saw to the religious upbringing of the children, taught them their catechism, took them to church, and prepared them for the sacrament and above all she devoted her best efforts to their development as persons. She sought to give her children a moral character and inner spiritual resources for life. She turned them to sense God's presence and trust in God's loving providence. She instructed them to honesty, integrity, love for hard work, fidelity to duty, and sensibility to other people's needs; expressed concrete acts of service, Christian optimism and a lively hope in God's ultimate reward. She herself lived these basic values and passed

them on to the children, to John in particular.

**Influence of the village:** The surroundings also affected the life of John Bosco. The character of the Piedmontese, the peasant in particular was an industrious, hard working

and persevering achiever. Catholic religious traditions were deeply rooted in the people, nourished by the parish as the centre of religious and social life. John was influenced by many of these traditions.

**Influence of the persons in the life of Don Bosco:** John Bosco's entire public education, as child and teenager, took place during the historical period of Restoration. His first education was started with Father Calosso who taught him Latin and later there were other teachers who helped him and who made a deep impression him among whom were Fr. Emmanuel Virano, Fr Hyacinth Giusiano and Father Pietro Banaudi was his teacher.

Don Bosco's spiritual and moral structure was strengthened by his study of Philosophy and Theology at Chieri (1835-1841). He was impressed by the disciplinary organization of the seminary. He deepened his love for daily duties, prayers and exercise of practices of piety. He also had particular

taste of Ecclesiastical History. All these elements flourished his pragmatic pedagogy.

Several times Don Bosco wrote about the "Convitto". He stressed its character of practical and pastoral aspect in the priestly mission. He devoted his time in reading, meditating and attending two conferences daily. He enjoyed the priestly ministries given to him. In Convitto, Don Bosco found a Master not only in moral theology but also of spirituality of life. Don Cafasso directed Don Bosco to the activities typical of educational work, especially among the prisons and reformatory boys. He taught catechism to immigrants from the countryside and hills. Don Bosco learnt many things from Cafasso - Christian hope, trust in God rather than fear Him, the sacramental practice in pastoral action, fidelity to the Church and the Pope, Apostolic orientation towards abandoned youth and preparation of happy death. Above all he learnt from St. Alphonsus de Liguori's moral, theological and spiritual aspects of life. Convitto Ecclesiastico developed in him a spiritual pedagogy. He remembered the institute with love and was constantly attached, particularly at the time of Don Cafasso and his immediate successor Canon Eugene Galletti.

**Influence of Catholic Reformation period:** The pedagogy of Don Bosco was certainly influenced by the personages of the Catholic "Reformation". In the wake of the Council of Trent an intense zeal was shown by great number of evangelical workers among whom

were St. Philip Neri, St. Francis de Sales and Alphosus de Liguori. He put his first oratory under the patronage of St. Francis de Sales. He was also moved by the life of St. Vincent de Paul and was influenced by his life and works.

**Influence of existing system of education in Turin:** The pedagogy of Don Bosco was certainly influenced by the personages of the Catholic "Reformation". In the wake of the Council of Trent an intense zeal was shown by great number of evangelical workers. Don Bosco was impressed by the example and preaching of St. Philip Neri, St. Francis de Sales, St. Vincent de Paul and Alphosus de Liguori. Don Bosco preached a panegyric at Alba in May 1868. In his panegyric he said that God sent Philip for the young. He treated them with kindness, to some he would give souvenirs, others food. After getting close to them he would play with them and amuse them in every way. He would teach them Catechism and discuss with them about the Bible. He would do any sacrifice in order to gain the soul. St. Francis de Sales had similar temperament and views on the style of human relationships as Don Bosco which influenced the educational relationship. God sent him to the people of the Chablais armed with patience, kindness, calmness and meekness. Don Bosco chose this Saint to be his model because of the qualities which were essential in his work of education. He put his first oratory under the patronage of St. Francis de Sales. St. Vincent de Paul was a man of charity. In every calamity and need he was present, led by a true spirit of charity. His fatherly

charity is tasted by licentious youths, girls in danger, poverty stricken people, fallen women, galley slaves, sick people, insane and beggars. Don Bosco was influenced by his life and works.

As a Catholic priest who did his philosophical and theological studies in a regular seminary, he was influenced by the Church's ideas on human nature and education.

Don Bosco was influenced in his philosophy of education by the philosopher Anthony Rosmini, who was his great friend and helper in his work for the education of the poor and neglected youth of Turin. He adopted the four principles of Rosemini in his system of education as Reason, Religion, and Loving-kindness which formed the basic elements of his method of education.

Jansenism also influenced Don Bosco's educational system which was strong in Piedmont at his time. According to Jansenists, human nature a masterpiece of God's creation was totally corrupted by original sin. However, the grace brought by Jesus Christ is infallibly victorious over sin. Don Bosco spent a good part of his time and energy in fighting the Jansenists. At the same time contrary to their pedagogy, Don Bosco wanted his boys to divert themselves and express themselves in thousand ways and corrected them when it was required.

The philosopher **Rousseau** had a totally different idea of human nature from the Jansenists. Man is born good and it is society that makes him bad. Education is the art of respecting the child's nature and of letting it develop as it pleases by being satisfied with defending it against the pernicious influence of the society.

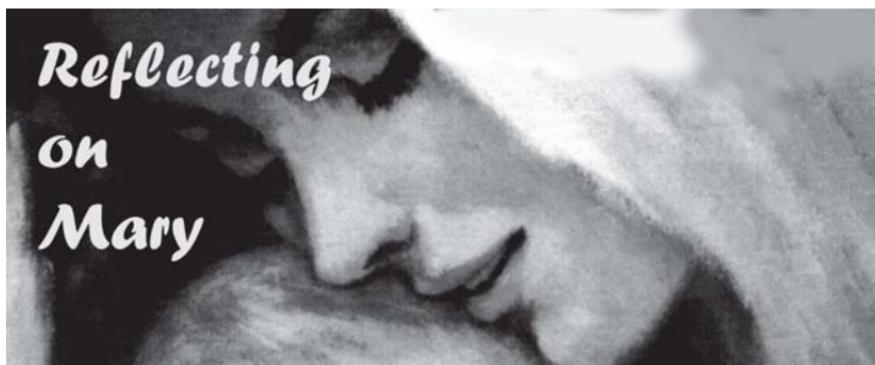
As a child grows up, the master must not think of teaching the child, but of providing conditions wherein he will be able to learn.

Don Bosco, while accepting the Christian doctrine of Original Sin saw beneath it the grandeur and beauty of God's original plan. In this he perhaps imitated the naturalist philosopher Rousseau. But unlike Rousseau he refused to believe that man is naturally good and automatically inclined to truth and goodness.

Don Bosco was an activist who was occupied in the practice of education. He was not concerned very much about the theories of education. Yet in his time educational theories were held in great esteem. It is, therefore reasonable to infer that Don Bosco accepted and incorporated into his system the contemporary movements in educational thought which he had time and occasion to acquaint himself with it.

Don Bosco intimately connected with most of the professors of the University of Turin. They often visited his Oratory and held their own special classes there. Prof. Rayneri, the most distinguished member of the Department of Pedagogy at the Royal University was an enthusiastic admirer of Don Bosco. When lecturing to his own students, he often told them, "If you want to see pedagogy in action, go to the Oratory of St. Francis of Sales and watch Don Bosco".

Don Bosco was a man of his own times and his system of education often reflected the various influences of the different educational trends, currents, and persons he encountered in his native Piedmont. □



8<sup>th</sup> April, 2013 - The Annunciation of the Lord

## THE ANNUNCIATION TO MARY

by Gianni Sangalli

**L**uke's account of the Annunciation of the Lord to Mary (Luke 1:26-38) is, without a doubt - the most important of all the New Testament texts. It is also perhaps, the best known and loved text of the Christian tradition. Even though we have heard this passage countless times, this page of the Gospel always moves and fascinates us. The liturgy does not cease to propose it for our reflection because it is an inexhaustible inspiration along the path of Christian life.

Mary is presented as a living parable of the encounter between a creature and the plan of God. She demonstrates what happens when the Word of God meets an attentive believer who practices it.

This passage speaks of the wonders that God has worked in the Virgin Mary. It is the central event of Salvation history expressed in a few verses: Mary, a humble Jewish country girl received an overwhelming message from an angel that she

is about to become the mother of the Messiah! The Messiah of whom the prophets had spoken, the Messiah awaited for centuries by the Jewish people.

Mary believes in the announcement and offers God the total gift of herself: "*Behold the handmaid of the Lord: let it be with me according to your word.*" Those are words of faith, of availability and of love. They were words of faith and love because Mary believed in the extraordinary announcement.

The Holy Spirit descended upon Mary and the 'Most High' overshadowed her.' The One to be born of her will be called Holy, the Son of God. Just as the light which surrounds a person does not harm her, like the dew makes the earth fertile without upsetting it, so the Spirit descended upon Mary and the Son to be born of her would be hers, because "*nothing is impossible with God.*" "*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*" "*God from God, Light from*



*Light, true God from true God."*

Thus does God manifest the wonders of his love!

As we reflect on the marvels that God worked in Mary, we are assisted to grow in our devotion. Devotion to Mary is a serious matter and a duty just as it is a duty to love one's mother. Because of Jesus we have his mother as ours too. *"You cannot be a Christian, if you are not Marian,"* said Paul VI.

Devotion to Mary must form the deepest part of our spiritual life and we must avoid veering into a devotion that is too vague, generic or purely sentimental.

One thing we must always bear in mind, that the Madonna is a woman. In our speech or in our prayers the image of the Mother of God threatens to get wrecked in a sea of evanescent fog blurring all boundaries. She then comes across as a luminous fantasy and nothing more. The Virgin Mother was and is a woman, even now that her body has been resurrected and assumed, she possesses the qualities of the glorified body of Christ. The Virgin Mary is one of us: we feel close to her and so we turn to her as the Seat of Wisdom.

We want to be able to understand. Today we experience a confusion of tongues around us, a Babel of a hundred masters stuns us and we are tempted to lean towards skepticism which can be discouraging. We would tend to believe that it is wiser to doubt than to affirm a truth such as this and so we become indifferent to the supreme truth thus making us victims of every utopia and opportunity.

Around us today we hear dogmatic statements by foreign masters. We see so many youngsters following doctrines that only fan the energy of hatred and denial. We seek, in our world, a need for safe, humane and innovative ideas.

Let us turn to Mary the Seat of Wisdom. She is someone who understands us.

We need that inner illumination. We need the truth. We need principles and we need a sense of certainty.

We fail so often; we believe that we know we are mistaken.

St. Augustine, speaking of himself says to us: "I had my back to the light and my face towards the things enlightened, so even when I discerned things enlightened, my face itself was not enlightened" (Confessions, IV, 16).

Mary comforts us with the truth. Mary defends us from error: Mary renders our souls clear, so that we may comprehend. She purifies our eyes that we may see. She gifts us with joy and wisdom. She teaches us to admire, to meditate and ponder well in our hearts the light of Christian truth. ▣

*(Continued from pg. 23)*

"Well, I would have been a lot smarter than marrying a fat head without money." "Alright, if that's the way you feel about it, you won't be bothered with me for the rest of the evening. Maybe not tonight, nor tomorrow either!"

"That's perfectly alright with me." Jill is already crying.

"Daddy don't go," Johnny is pleading. "I have to, Johnny, your mother doesn't want me." "I want you daddy!"

"Go on and don't ever come back and see if I ever care." Jill screams. "Well, if it wasn't for the children I would." Al stomps out of the room.

"Mommy, don't cry," Mary is consoling her mother.

"We can't put up with this any longer, we'll go away, that's what we'll do. We'll go away. We'll go some place where he'll never see us again. Then he'll learn to appreciate us."

Johnny and Mary have lived through one crisis after another. But every time they are in terror that they might lose their father or their mother. They live holding their breath, tense and suspicious. Every happiness is spoiled by the fear that at any moment it might

slip out of their hands. Their home has no foundation of secure love.

The mistakes made by the parents of Johnny and Mary Smith, are repeated in too many other families. These mistakes all spring from one root, selfishness. Because they are selfish, the mother and the father can't be bothered with answering the children's questions, giving them a sense of values; of teaching them reverence for authority. For the same reason they won't take the trouble to exercise patience and charity with one another or to give God more than a second rate place in their life.

Before a man and a woman can be good parents, they must be good people. Before they can raise children who can act like Christians, they must be Christians themselves. They must realize that having children is not only a God given privilege but also a God given responsibility. Children always belong more to God than to their parents. He lends them to fathers and mothers and he expects them to be so trained in mind and heart, body and soul, that they will be fit to return to him. Someday God will ask every father and mother: "What did you do with my child?" □

*(Continued from pg. 7)*

the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly into the desert where she would be looked after." (Rev 12:14)

An Eagle in the heraldic language stands for fortitude and power. The figure of the Eagle on the stand from which the Word of God is proclaimed is a symbol of the power of the 'Word of God' which has the power to raise us up

on eagle's wings and bring us to heaven.

Because it soars upward, the eagle is also a symbol of the resurrection or ascension of Christ. By extension, the eagle symbolises baptised Christians who have symbolically died and risen with Christ. - The eagle is also a symbol of John the Evangelist. The eagle represents John because of his lofty and 'soaring' gospel. □

## NEWSBITS

### LONDON

British daily newspaper *The Guardian* published an article today on the list of prestigious Vatican properties in London. From the Bulgari store on New Bond Street to a building on the corner of St. James' Square and Pall Mall. The real owners of these extremely valuable London properties are not easy to trace as the individuals identified as reference points for getting information on the identity of the buildings' owners hid behind the right to keep this information confidential when the newspaper asked questions. The *Guardian* article went on to list a number of similar properties in Paris, suggesting that this real estate empire was built using millions of lira (the equivalent of 65 million Euros in today's money) "originally handed over by Mussolini in return for papal recognition of the Italian fascist regime in 1929," as compensation for the properties the Italian State confiscated from the Pope 59 years prior to this. Thanks to this money which was invested by those in charge of the Vatican's finances at the time, the Vatican now finds itself in possession of 500 million pounds sterling, according to *The Guardian's* estimates.

### ROME

After John Paul II's beatification in 2011, he could become a saint next year. Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, Prefect Emeritus of the Congregation of Bishops, was a close collaborator of Pope John Paul II for many years. The cardinal gave a speech during the

presentation of the show "Il Papa e il poeta" ("The Pope and the poet"), written by Vatican correspondent Mimmo Muolo, a multimedia recital that goes on stage tomorrow at Rome's Conciliation Auditorium.

"I know that there is important evidence of grace being granted and miraculous healings being performed by the Blessed John Paul II - the cardinal told *Vatican Insider* - and that four or five of these cases are very serious. But one of these updates dates back to about a month ago and I don't know whether one of these cases has been presented to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. In any case, given that it usually takes at least a year from the moment the miracle is presented to the dicastery to the end of its assessment and the Pope's decree, I think it is unlikely Pope Wojtyla will be canonised in 2013."

### TAIZE

They are on their way to Rome, they are many thousands, and they bring hope. They sing and pray and walk. For decades they have engaged in building a more Christian and human world, through dialogue and respect. They are the young people, also joined by the adults and the families, who are nourished by the monastic community of Taizé. A community that took its shape in the heart of France thanks to the intuition of Brother Roger Schutz during the dark World War years, and that today continues its journey. The faith of the young and the need for unity, spirituality in

the post-modern world, and the prophecy of forgiveness; these are the horizons of the young people who are preparing to celebrate the pilgrimage of trust on earth (December 28th - January 2nd) planned in Rome, with tens of thousands of young people who will meet Benedict XVI.

To narrate and explain what inspires this inner search and commitment in favour of humanity, a great book by Brother Alois of Taizé has been published: *Pilgrims of trust*. The journey of communion followed by Taizé, published by the Editrice Missionaria Italiana, which describes "a beautiful experience of Christian friendship" as the Pope said on Sunday during the Angelus.

#### VATICAN CITY

The Filippino cardinal was in tears as a group of Nigerian nuns prayed with their hands raised towards the sky and Indian pilgrims knelt down around the obelisk gripping their rosaries. Emotions and fragments of a special and unprecedented day. For the first time in history, a batch of cardinals that come from countries outside Europe. St. Peter's Square, packed as it was with faithful from emerging countries, was the prophesy of a global Church of the third millennium. With today's mini Consistory, Benedict XVI pointed towards an exit from the Vatileaks scandal, he "purified" the ecclesiastical hierarchies corrupted by scandal and outlined the characteristics of his successor: non-European and a pastor of persecuted communities.

The Pope essentially renewed

the Church's hierarchy and changed the face of his "senate". "What makes the Church catholic is the fact that Christ in his saving mission embraces all humanity" and Christian Messianism proposes "a mission directed to the whole man and to every man, transcending all ethnic, national and religious particularities" the Pope explained in the homily pronounced during the Consistory for the creation of six new cardinals, his main collaborators in the Church government. "It is by following Jesus, - Benedict XVI remarked - by allowing oneself to be drawn into His humanity and hence into communion with God, that one enters this new kingdom proclaimed and anticipated by the Church, a kingdom that conquers fragmentation and dispersal."

The College of Cardinals, the Pope stressed, "presents a variety of faces, because it expresses the face of the universal Church." "In this Consistory, I want to highlight in particular the fact that the Church is the Church of all peoples, and so she speaks in the various cultures of the different continents," Benedict XVI said. "She is the Church of Pentecost: amid the polyphony of the various voices, she raises a single harmonious song to the living God." At the start of the Church's journey, the theologian Pope highlighted, "the Apostles and disciples set off without any human security, purely in the strength of the Holy Spirit, the Gospel and the faith. This is the yeast that spreads round the world, enters into different events and into a wide range of cultural and social contexts, while remaining a single Church." □

## THE DEVOTION OF THE THREE HAIL MARYS



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

Thank you dearest Mother for always being with us in our many needs and for the comfort you give us. Our requests through the devotion of the 3 Hail Marys are always answered. Please continue to protect us, particularly our children. *RA, Canada*  
On 29<sup>th</sup> August 2012 in the afternoon, just as I was having my lunch and I wanted to feed my pet cat, I went with a little food. It was raining heavily. As I stepped out into the verandah I slipped and fell, knocking my head on the floor. On hearing the sound my family members rushed to my side. I regained my strength and stood up. This would not be possible if it were not for the loving protection of Jesus and Mother Mary. I always pray the three Hail Marys before I begin my work.

*Gabriel Arokiam*

Two years back I was operated for my left eye for cataract, and now for my right eye. After the operation before completing a month I started getting pain at the side of my eye and also in my other eye. I started feeling some uneasiness which I really can't explain. With all my faith and trust, I started my devotion of Three Hail Marys pleading with Jesus and Mother Mary for cure of both my eyes and that my vision may not be affected. My Jesus and my Mother really helped me and also for two other things. I will always continue to pray with faith the Three Hail Marys. Thank You Mother Mary for hearing my prayer.

*Mrs. Belia Prazeres,*

Goa During the 8 years of our marriage we lost 5 children through miscarriages. After being introduced to *Don Bosco's Madonna* in 2009 we started sending our intentions with the hope that we would be blessed with a child one day. Thanks be to God, to Our Lady Help of Christians and St. Dominic Savio whose miraculous scapular I wore during my early pregnancy and during the delivery day 13/08/2012, I gave birth to a healthy son. He is now nearly four months old. We usually pray the three Hail Marys everyday and also the novena as scheduled on the prayer cards. *John and Maryanne Waruruai, PNG*  
Being a diabetic, a minor hurt on my toe resulted in gangrene. Subsequently it had to be amputated but yet my foot would not heal. I started praying the three Hail Marys and today I am glad to say my foot has been healed.

*C. Joel Mascarenhas, Margao, Goa*

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

My most sincere thanks to Our Lady and all the saints for hearing my prayers and keeping me safe always. Please continue watching over us.

*Sharon Shalini Sivanesan, Malaysia*

Thank you dear Jesus, Mother Mary and Don Bosco for helping me to get a temporary job after struggling to find one. I also said the prayer for protection through the precious blood of Jesus. Since this was my first job, I had no problem and enjoyed working. I know that Our Lady was always there at my work place and I never got tired of working. I am hoping to get a permanent job soon. Thank you Mother Mary for so many favours received. *P. D'Souza*  
Our sincere and heartfelt thanks to Jesus, Mother Mary, Don Bosco and all the saints for the numerous favours received and blessings bestowed on our families. Do continue to bless our families.

*Gladson and Arlene Pinto*

I sincerely thank you dear Mother Mary, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the safe and normal delivery of my daughter-in-law Nicole and for the gift of a cute little baby girl and for many other favours received. Guard and protect us always and keep us all under your mantle blue.

*Philomena D'Souza, Mumbai*

Our sincere thanks to Our Blessed Mother for protecting our family.

*Lloyd D. Parakh and Family*

**LOVING CHILDREN TO  
THEIR LOVING MOTHER**

My sincere and heartfelt gratitude for the favours and blessings received through Mother Mary. Mother Mary please continue and intercede always for me and my family.

*Alda Da Silva, Mumbai*

My sincere thanks to the Infant Jesus and Our Lady for the special favours received.

*Mrs. C. Rodrigues*

Thanks to the Divine Mercy and Our Lady for good health of my family members.

*June Monteiro and Family, Mumbai*

Our heartfelt thanks to Mother Mary Help of Christians for the great favours received.

*E. Maria Menezes, Mumbai*

Our sincere thanks to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Our Lady and Don Bosco for the most wonderful gift of a healthy baby boy you gave to our daughter and thanks for the good health to our family. Do continue to bless our family always.

*Mr. Denis and Arlene Kana, Mira Road*

Our sincere thanks to Mother Mary for interceding for us and granting our requests.

*Jude L. Mumbai*

My grateful thanks to Our Lady for granting my daughter and her husband a flat of their own where they can live in peace.

*Shobo, Mumbai*

My sincere thanks to Mary Help of Christians and Dominic Savio for the safe delivery of my daughter and the gift of a baby boy through faithfully praying the three Hail Marys.

*Bernadette, Chennai*

## THANKS TO DEAR ST. DOMINIC SAVIO



My sincere and grateful thanks to all the saints. As I was very sick for the past one year I even lost my job due to severe tension. I had no interest in anything. This all happened due to a severe tension and stress in my office because of which I had to resign. I was at a loss and in much difficulty. I prayed to Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and St. Dominic Savio and I am now healed.

*Mrs. Juliana Dias, Mumbai*

Our belated but sincere thanks to Mother Mary, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the safe delivery and the gift of a healthy baby boy despite having lots of problems during my pregnancy.

*Mrs. Lynette Fernandes, Goa*

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

*Neves D'Souza, Goa*

My belated but sincere thanks to the Infant Jesus, Mother Mary and St. Dominic Savio for the innumerable graces and blessings bestowed on us. Please continue to bless us.

*A. D'Cruz, Mumbai*

Our sincere thanks to Our Lady, Don Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for all the blessings received and especially for the gift of a healthy bonny baby girl.

*Wilma Fernandes, Goa*

Our sincere and heartfelt thanks to the Most Holy Trinity and Mary Help of Christians and St. Dominic Savio for the innumerable graces and blessings bestowed on us. Mother please continue to intercede for us and our family.

*Quinton and Linda Pereira, Mumbai*

My sincere thanks to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, Mother Mary, St. John Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for all the blessings bestowed on our family.

*Jennifer Murray Martins, Mumbai*

Our sincere thanks to Jesus, Our Lady, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the safe delivery of my daughter.

*Angelina Leitao, Kalyan East*

Our grateful thanks to Our Lady Help of Christians, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for helping my sister have a safe delivery and the gift of a beautiful baby boy. Always keep them under your protection.

*Mrs. Martha D'Silva, Goa*

### **APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER**

APRIL 2013

**Holy Father's General Intention:** *That the public, prayerful celebration of faith may give life to the faithful.*

**Missionary Intention:** *That mission churches may be signs and instruments of hope and resurrection.*

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## **MARY WAS THERE**

On 18th July 2012, my family and I were travelling by car to attend the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary Mass of a relative. We had to pick up my cousin at the station as she would be joining us. When we reached the station I opened the door of the car for her but she had already come from the other side. So I closed the door, not realizing that it was still ajar. I usually lean on the door of the car. A little later a small boy with his mother called out to me because the door was still ajar. We were approaching a dangerous turn. Had it not been for our blessed Mother's quick intervention, I would have been thrown out from the car. My mother always prays the rosary inside the car and we never leave home without praying. Thank you dear Mother.

*Rini Aranha, Mumbai*

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.

To help a poor lad to reach the priesthood, is a privilege

You can help by establishing a Perpetual Burse with:

Rs 5000/-, 10,000/-, 15,000/- for a boy studying for the priesthood;

But any amount, however small, will be gratefully received.

Send your offerings by Payee cheque or Draft on Mumbai banks;

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Please address all correspondence to:

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