

DON BOSCO'S MADONNA

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*May the venerable
intercession of the
glorious Virgin Mary
come to our aid,
we pray, O Lord,
so that fortified
by her protection,
we may reach
the mountain
which is Christ.*

*(From the Opening Prayer of
the feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel)*

Cover: **"He puts it on his shoulders
and carries it back home." Lk 15,5**
John Walter

From The Editor's Desk

EVIL THAT FRUSTRATES US

Why do the wicked prosper? The Psalmist cried about it to God, and the question still haunts us. It haunted Jesus: *My God, why have you forsaken me?* When he looked down on Jerusalem, his religious capital, before his Passion, he had the same sickness of heart. *Why could you not use your opportunities while you had them?* He foresaw the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and knew he could do nothing to stop it. If Jesus felt impotent in the face of evil, so do we.

Sometimes you watch something happen to you, in your life, in the life of your family or the church, the parish and, for good reason, you are unable to act. It is the central suffering of the Passion whether the passion of Jesus or any of us. And it can happen in many different ways.

For instance, you are accused in the wrong behind your back, and you know that people you love are hearing lies about you. It takes more than wisdom to sit tight and listen to advice. It is also the most painful.

We have a strong urge to act out, to run away from the anger that engulfs us by working it out in action. We watch it in our children: how they want to hit out when they are hurt. They find it unbearable to feel their pain or anger and do nothing. Sometimes they take it out on a sister or a brother, or even on the dog or cat.

Sometimes it is very painful to watch your children enduring hurt and pain at the hands of bullies, and often a parent's hands are tied. In many cases intervention on the child's behalf may make things worse. Children learn so much by making their own mistakes and learning from what happens: but it is hard for a mother to stand by and watch.

It is destructive of yourself, to turn your anger on yourself and sometimes without realising it. You may be facing the insoluble problem – as in the case of the person wrongly accused, or the mother suffering at her child's pain – but by turning it in on yourself you are only adding to the trouble.

We can pray. If that seems an unlikely solution, look at a few examples. King David in the Psalms is constantly giving out God, in a mood that blends anger and frustration with childlike trust.

Why, O God, have you cut us off, forever?

How long O God, is the enemy to scoff?

Is the foe to insult your name forever?

Why, O Lord, do you hold back your hand?

Prayer can do more than give vent to frustration and anger. It can open us to our enemies in ways we do not expect. Being helpless in the face of pain and sorrow throws us on to the heart of God who is our sure refuge against the storm!

Fr. Ian Doulton sdb

TO A CHILD LOVE IS SPELLED T-I-M-E

Fr. Erasto Fernandez, sss

Mac Anderson and Lance Wubbels tell the story of a shattering discovery made by an elderly man on a bright summer day. In the faint light of the attic, the old man, tall and stooped, bent laboriously as he made his way to some boxes that were stacked near one of the little half-windows. Tilting the top box toward the light he carefully lifted out one old photograph album after another. Eyes once bright but now dim searched longingly for the source that had drawn him here.

This expedition had begun with the fond recollection of the love of his life, long gone, and somewhere in those old dusty albums was a cherished photograph of her that he hoped to rediscover. Silent as a thief, he patiently opened the long buried treasures and soon was drowned in a tumultuous ocean of memories. Although his world had not stopped its routine daily swirling when his wife suddenly exited it, yet the past was more alive in his heart than his present nagging loneliness.

Setting aside one of the ancient albums, he tugged at what appeared to be a journal from his grown son's childhood. Unable to recall ever having seen it before, or that his son had ever kept a journal, he mused to himself, 'Why did Liz always save the children's old junk? Curiosity getting the better of him, he opened the yellowed pages one by one when suddenly, his gaze was riveted over a short entry, and his lips curved in an unconscious smile. His dimming eyes brightened as

he read the words that spoke clear and sweet to his soul. It was the voice of the little boy who had grown up far too fast in that very house, and whose voice had grown fainter and fainter with each passing year. In the deafening silence of the attic, the words of a guileless six-year-old spun a magic web around him, carrying the old man back to a time almost totally forgotten.

Fascinated by that one entry, he realized that it had inevitably brought back vividly the memory of that day. He was surprised to realize that his own memories of that day seemed to be so different from his son's recording. Reminded that he too had kept a daily journal of his business activities over the years, he closed his son's journal and headed down hurriedly a carpeted stairway that led to the den.

Opening a glass cabinet door, he reached in and pulled out an old business journal. Turning, he sat down at his desk and placed the two journals alongside each other. His was leather-bound and engraved neatly with his name in gold, while his son's was tattered and the name Jimmy had been nearly effaced from its surface. He ran a long skinny finger over the letters, as though he could restore what had been worn away with time and use.

As he opened his journal, his already dimming eyes fell upon a brief inscription that stood out because of its brevity in comparison to other days. In his own neat handwriting were these

words: *Wasted the whole day fishing with Jimmy. Didn't catch a thing!* With a deep sigh and a trembling hand, he took Jimmy's journal and found the boy's entry for the same day, June 4. Large scrawling letters, pressed deeply into the paper, read: *Went fishing with my Dad. Best day of my life!* A refreshingly different perspective altogether!

Achievement or Fruitfulness?

It is not surprising at all that in his teaching Jesus seems to prefer the perspective and attitudes of little children to those of ambitious elders as far as the Kingdom of God is concerned. For he warned his disciples, "Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me. Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea" (Mt 18:3-6). Especially for people of our times, life seems to be measured in terms of achievements, conquests, goals attained and projects completed. In fact, we even measure our self-worth in keeping with our achievements and conquests. And generally these all lie on the material or terrestrial plain – attainments that do not really serve us when we seek to fulfill our God-given purpose in life.

And underneath it all is seen the masked domination of the Ego deeply entrenched in our beings.

This Ego is the driving force that keeps us working relentlessly all through the day and often well into the night. For hardly has one project been accomplished than the next pops up almost magically, demanding again our full attention and energies. In the bargain more important (though often taken as being unimportant and not urgent at all) commitments generally involving persons near and dear to us are callously neglected! How often does it not happen that while one gives the best of one's time and energy to office work, matters on the home front are relegated to the back burner till, as full-blown problems they demand one's full, immediate and serious attention! While numberless books and articles have been written and will continue to be written on the subject of how important people and healthy relationships are in our human lives, yet the daily experience of most people is the opposite.

Our involvement with Nature and Mother Earth, with the more aesthetic pursuits of art, literature, the fine arts and the like are consigned to the 'odd person' who seems to have a flair for these kinds of things, while we busy ourselves with more mundane pursuits. Many though are waking up to this serious imbalance in the way we live as cultured human beings and are making heroic efforts to achieve a minimal balanced approach to the various facets of human living. Many more in our day have woken up to the hazardous way in which we neglect our physical well-being, making do with a minimum of physical exercise, fresh air and a healthy balanced diet.

Qualities of Children

Not all qualities possessed by children are in keeping with the ideal of the Kingdom. One key gift of little children, though, is their sense of admiration and wonder at almost everything they come across. To the little child, everything appears as so big and powerful. Linked with this is their readiness to believe and accept everything that elders tell them. Further, because the world around is full of mysteries, children are more often than not full of questions. And when an elder offers him some kind of an explanation, the trusting child accepts it as unquestionably true. Again, linked with its innate ability to trust others, the child generally does not hold grudges, though fear of the other might make him keep his distance. Generally s/he soon forgets the pain received from that particular person, and he is back in the relationship as if nothing had happened.

It is usually these wonderful qualities of little children that adults tend to shed as they grow up into more realistic and hard-headed grown-ups. Nevertheless, Jesus asks us to retain at least some of these basic childlike qualities if we are to belong to the Kingdom of God. The main reason for this could be that God's world is full of mysteries. Unable to solve all these, what we humans can do at most is to stand in awe before them, marveling at God's greatness. It is generally the person who has experienced God's goodness deeply and consistently, who is secure within him/herself that is capable of retaining these childlike assets well into adult life without becoming cynical.

Eucharist, School of Selfless Giving

However, if we wish to imbibe the prime quality of Jimmy as he made that entry in his diary, we would need to learn to be grateful people. Gratitude is not just a question of saying a 'thank-you' or of returning the favour received. It means forging a deep bond with the giver, because one has experienced the love behind the gift. Once this happens, the receiver is ready to become the giver. Love thrives only in an atmosphere of mutuality – if one chooses to remain always on the receiving end only, that relationship cannot last for a long time. There seems to be too much of self-centredness and insecurity in the receiver with little or no thoughtfulness of the other.

And this kind of mutuality is what we need to learn from the Eucharist when we approach it in a deeply contemplative mood or atmosphere. As has been said several times, the entire purpose of the Liturgy of the Word is simply that we answer honestly and deeply the question God puts to us when it has ended: "Have you seen how much I love you?" If one can regularly answer this question in the affirmative and that too sincerely and preferably on the emotional level, then one is ready for the next level: and now "will you give yourself to Me as I have given Myself to you... totally, lovingly and mutually"? There is undoubtedly something terrifying in the idea of letting our entire life go into the hands of the Almighty and All-powerful God. Yet, when time and time again, he shows us how madly he is in love with us, personally and individually, that fear has to evaporate, leading us

to a reciprocal and total self-giving.

The beauty of this kind of a relationship with God is that it takes only a few instances of trusting God totally for us to realize how utterly faithful he really is. It seems as if recognizing our innate distrust that God gives us so many examples of his absolute trustworthiness when dealing with us. Returning to Jimmy's comment on his fishing trip, it seems to me that he interpreted it like this: "In spite

of not catching a single fish, Dad was ready to spend the entire day out with me, just for my sake!" Doesn't that view make it sound great, even if that was not totally Dad's idea and intention? That is the greatness and the trustful attitude of a child – and incidentally it is the same of any lover as well.

Could we learn how to develop this important yet difficult quality from the way we celebrate the Eucharist each day? □

walking with the Church



Praying For Healing

From St. Martin's Messenger, Ireland

SEGNA VIA DELLO SPIRITO

ALTERITA

«Amerai lo straniero come te stesso» (Lc 19,24)

Carmine Di Sante

Un giorno un dottore della legge si avvicinò a Gesù per chiedergli quale fosse la cosa

più importante contenuta nelle scritture sacre, e Gesù gli rispose: «Amerai il Signore Dio

tuo con tutto il cuore, con tutta la tua anima e con tutta la tua mente. Questo è il più gran-

de e il primo dei comandamenti. Il secondo è simile al primo: amerai il prossimo tuo come

te stesso. Da questi due comandamenti dipende tutta la legge e i Profeti» (Mt 22, 36-40).

Rivindicando l'amore al prossimo come il più importante dopo quello dell'amore a Dio,

Gesù non fa un'affermazione innovativa, ma assume e

ribadisce quanto già prescriveva il le-

vitico: «Amerai il tuo prossimo come te stesso». L'amore al prossimo non è un precetto cristiano ma ebraico e lo novità di Gesù, se di novità si vuoi parlare, è di averlo collegato di-

rettamente al primo, facendo dell'amore al prossimo il segno oggettivamente rive/ativodell'amo-

re a Dio, come vuole Giovanni il quale scrive: «Se uno dicesse: 'io amo Dio', e odiasse il suo

fratello, è un mentitore. Chi non ama il proprio fratello che vede, non può amare Dio che non vede. Questo è il comandamento che abbiamo da lui: chi ama Dio ami anche il suo fratello»

(1Gv4, 19-21). Se è possibile amare il prossimo senza amare Dio, perché oggettivamente

«chi fa il bene è da Dio» (3Gv 111, anche se a sua insaputa, per

Giovanni non è possibile il contrario, amare Dio senza amare il prossimo, perché chi dice di amare Dio ma non ama il prossimo è semplicemente un

ONE OF THOSE DAYS

by Kevin O'Higgins, S.J.

There are days in our lives when absolutely every thing seems to go well. You can just sit back and let things happen under their own steam. Formerly intransigent problems suddenly appear to solve themselves. Everyone seems to be in good humour. Even the weather cooperates and contributes to the general feeling of well-being. We all need days like that in order to keep us going.

Normality

It is easy enough to feel hopeful and optimistic when the sun is shining and all is well with our world. But the sky is not always blue.

Sometimes, there may be just a few scattered clouds, and it is still possible for a little sunshine to filter through. The balance still manages to come out on the positive side. For most of us, that is what is called 'normality'. Whatever minor tensions the day may have generated do not prevent us from having a good night's sleep and recharging the batteries for the following day's tasks.

Storm Clouds

There are also moments, however, when storm clouds gather and the world becomes dark and ominous. Those are the times when absolutely everything seems to go badly. Plans fall through, machines break down, tempers flare. The surrounding turmoil can evoke similar feelings within us. Most of us have experienced days like that, at least occasionally, and they usually

leave us wanting to run for cover.

Experience teaches us that both the bright sunny days and the dark gloomy ones form part of the single whole that we call 'life'. Permanent bliss is an illusion, fed to us by television and glossy magazines. Even the rich and beautiful have to face the realities of life. Sickness, failure, bereavement and all the other experiences we would prefer never to have to face, all form part of life's tapestry. It is an observable fact that some people manage to cope with an extraordinary amount of pain and hardship, while others appear to break under the slightest strain.

The difference has to do with our basic attitude towards life. For those who feel that life is basically rotten, almost every experience will tend to confirm their hypothesis and make them feel even worse.

Basic Attitude to Life

Recently, a talented student who did badly in an examination told me that she had been feeling very depressed of late. When others assured her, she felt that they were being insincere and were only trying to cheer her up. For someone locked into such a negative frame of mind, life is bound to be full of trials and tribulations.

For those who have a more positive outlook, even the heaviest of burdens will be made to seem lighter. People with a healthy self-image will not need others to confirm their worth. They will be pleased to hear that they are appreciated, they will evaluate negative criticism and carry on

with the important tasks in hand.

If we want to go through life without ever annoying anyone, we would do well to hide away and never risk provoking disapproval.

Faith Makes a Difference

Obviously, religious faith can make a huge difference here. If the Creator is good, then creation cannot be bad. If we accept that God loves each of us personally, so much the better.

At some stage, we need to experience what is sometimes called a 'conversion to reality', letting go of our wishful thinking about what life ought to be like, and facing up to what it actually is like.

The simple fact of being alive means that we are part of a fantastic drama of opposites - birth and death, joy and sorrow, light and darkness.

If we waste too much precious time raging against the darkness, we may well end up not having enough time to enjoy the light.

On the other hand, it is wonderful to meet people who can honestly say that they have no regrets, just lots of good memories. It is not that they have never experienced pain or disappointment, but they have managed to take them in their stride and get on with the business of living.

A Better World

When Mother Theresa was asked how she avoided becoming disheartened by the immensity of the world's problems, she replied that although her contribution only represented a drop in the ocean, it was important to realize that the ocean is actually made up of tiny drops of water, and every drop counts.



We may not be able to wave a magic wand and change the whole world, but each and every positive action means that the balance between good and bad is slightly altered for the better. If each of us was willing to show a little love and concern for just one unfortunate person, the world would be a much happier and more hopeful place.

Instead of waiting for things to be better, we can decide to make them better. We could begin by spending a few moments reflecting on our own homes, our neighbourhood, our workplace, and asking ourselves whether there is some small positive gesture that is within our possibilities.

Thinking Ahead

We can also think forward, and instead of letting tomorrow surprise us with unexpected problems, we can actually plan to make the balance positive.

Hopeful people make good things happen. The realization that life is more controllable than we might previously have suspected is one good reason to be hopeful. □

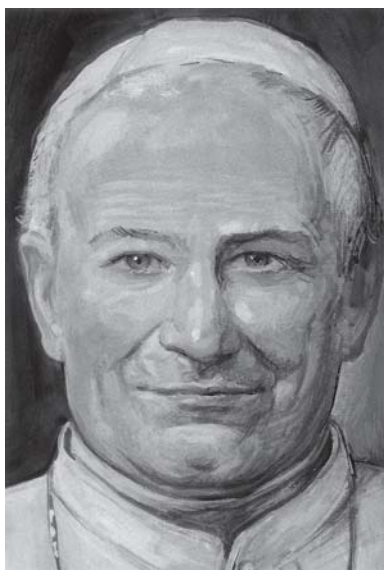
PIUS IX 1792 - 1878

Giovanni Maria Mastai Ferretti (Pio IX) was the ninth child of Count Girolamo and Caterina Sollazzi. He was born in Senigallia 13 May 1792. Wanting to become a priest he had to interrupt his studies because of sudden attacks of epilepsy. In 1815, at Loreto, he obtained the grace of a full recovery. In 1819 he was ordained priest. In 1823 he went as a missionary to Chile for two years.

At just 35 years of age he was appointed Archbishop of Spoleto, then in 1832, of Imola. In 1840 he was created Cardinal and on 16 June 1846, on the fourth vote, with 36 votes out of 50 Cardinals at the Conclave, was elected Supreme Pontiff at just 54 years of age. As soon as he became Pope he undertook a number of reforms, but when in 1848 he refused to support the war against Austria his "persecution" began.

St. John Bosco had his first audience with Pius IX on 9 March 1858. It was he who suggested calling it a "Society" in step with the times, of having vows, but not solemn vows, and he suggested a simple habit and an intense but not too complicated practices of piety. He convinced Don Bosco to write his memoirs to leave the Salesians a spiritual legacy.

During his Pontificate he approved the Constitutions and the Salesian Society, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help



of Christians and the Pious Union of Salesian Cooperators, and was amongst the first to enrol as a member. Don Bosco had great love for Pius IX and accepted all his advice, even when it cost him great sacrifice: "I am ready to face any difficulty", he would say, "when dealing with the papacy and the Church". But the Pope too had great esteem for Don Bosco and called him to Rome often to ask his help on delicate issues.

On 8 December 1854 he defined the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. In 1869 he called Vatican Council I, and on 8 December 1870 proclaimed St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church. On 16 June 1875 he consecrated the Church dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He died on 7 February 1878, after 32 years of Pontificate. John Paul II beatified him on 3 September together with Pope John XXIII. □

**BR. DAMODAR WANKHADE, SDB**

*Salesian Lay Brother,
by Fr. Parvin Makwana ,sdb*

As Damodar celebrates 25 years of his Salesian religious life, he can truly say: "For the last 25 years, I have been receiving grace upon grace from God".

Damodar, or Damu as he is popularly known, is God's special child. He was born on 6th June, 1958. He was brought up by the Missionaries of Charity (Mother Theresa's Sisters). Even today, the Missionaries of Charity continue to be his 'first-family' and he feels that every M.C. house is his home.

After the completion of his schooling, Damu was adopted by Mr. P.K. Gaikawad and his wife Malti Gaikawad from Pune. They had two children of their own. They accepted Damu as their third child. Here, once again he received abundant love and care. He is immensely grateful to God for blessing him with a family, where he has received a lot of affection and support.

After long years of prayer, he felt that God was calling him to join religious life. He was touched by the warm reception he received from Fr. Romulo Noronha, the Rector of St. Joseph's, Kurla and was especially impressed by the Salesian Brothers that he met there. He recalls that they were extremely hardworking, cheerful and prayerful. He entered the Novitiate at Nashik on 24th May 1986, and under the guidance of his novice master Fr. Joseph Casti, he further grew in his understanding of Salesian life. On 24th May 1987 Damu made



his First Profession at Nashik, and a few years later, on 24th May 1994 he made his Perpetual Profession at St. Joseph's Technical Institute Kurla -the same house where he had begun his Salesian journey ten years earlier.

All through his Salesian life, Damu has been actively engaged in the technical schools of the province. Thanks to the hard work he put in, the technical institutes rose to a high standard. Later, Damu went to Shillong to do a one year course in theology.

Now, 25 years as a Salesian Brother, he reiterates that all that has happened in his life is the work of God. Faith, simplicity, cheerfulness and dedication to his work for poor youth, have characterized Damu all through his Salesian life. About his plans for the future, Damu simply states, "I don't know, God knows, I will do my best to fulfil His plans". Definitely an outstanding example - of a wonderful Salesian Brother. □

Witnesses in & for Our Times



ST. OLIVER PLUNKET (1629 -1681) (JULY 2)

Oliver Plunket was the Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of all Ireland. He was born at Loughcrew near Oldcastle, Co. Meath in Ireland in 1629. He died on 11th July, 1681. His is the brightest name in the Irish Church throughout the whole period of the persecution. Till his sixteenth year, his education was attended to by Patrick Plunket, Abbot of St. Mary's in Dublin. He witnessed the first triumphs of the Irish Confederates, and, as an aspirant to the priesthood, set out for Rome in 1645, under the care of Father Scarampo, of the Roman Oratory. As a student of the Irish College of Rome his record was particularly brilliant. The Rector, in later years, attested that he *"devoted himself with such ardour to philosophy, theology, and mathematics, that in the Roman College of the Society of Jesus he was justly ranked amongst the foremost in talent, diligence, and progress in his studies, and he pursued with abundant fruit the course of civil and Canon Law at the Roman Sapienza, and everywhere, at all times, he was a model of gentleness, integrity, and piety"*. He was ordained to the



priesthood in 1654, Dr. Plunket was deputed by the Irish bishops to act as their representative in Rome. On 9th July, 1669 he was appointed to the primatial See of Armagh, and was consecrated, 30th November that year at Ghent, in Belgium, by the Bishop of Ghent and he was granted the pallium in Consistory of 28th July, 1670.

Dr. Plunket lingered for some time in London, using his

influence to mitigate the rigour of the administration of the anti-Catholic laws in Ireland, and it was only in the middle of March, 1670, that he entered his See at Armagh. From the very outset he was most zealous in the exercise of the sacred ministry. Within three months he had administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to about 10,000 of the faithful, some of them being sixty years old. To bring this sacrament within the reach of the suffering faithful he had to undergo the severest hardships, often with no other food than a little oaten bread. He had to seek out the abodes of his flock on the mountains and in the woods, and as a rule, it was under the broad canopy of the heavens that the Sacrament was administered, both flock and pastor being exposed to the wind and rain. He made extraordinary efforts to bring the blessings of education within the reach of the Catholic youth and started a school for them at Drogheda. He invited the Jesuit Fathers from Rome to take charge of it and very soon it had one hundred and fifty boys on the roll, of who no fewer than forty were sons of the Protestant gentry. One incident of his episcopate merits special mention: there were a considerable number of so-called Tories scattered through the province of Ulster, most of who had been despoiled of their property under the Act of Settlement. They banded themselves together in the shelter of the mountain fastnesses and, as outlaws, lived by the plunder of those around them. Anyone who sheltered them incurred the

penalty of death from the Government, anyone who refused them such shelter met with death at their hands. Dr. Plunket, with the sanction of the Lord Lieutenant, went in search of them, not without great risk, and reasoning with them in a kind and paternal manner induced them to renounce their career of plundering. He moreover obtained pardons for them so that they were able to transfer themselves to other countries, and thus peace was restored throughout the whole province.

The storm of persecution burst with renewed fury on the Irish Church in 1673; the schools were scattered, the chapels were closed. Dr. Plunket, however, would not forsake his flock. His palace thenceforward was some thatched hut in a remote part of his diocese. As a rule, in company with the Archbishop of Cashel, he lay concealed in the woods or on the mountains, and with such scanty shelter that through the roof they could at night count the stars of the sky. He tells their hardship in one of his letters: "The snow fell heavily, mixed with hailstones, which were very large and hard. A cutting north wind blew in our faces, and snow and hail beat so dreadfully in our eyes that up to the present we have scarcely been able to see with them."

Writs for the arrest of Dr. Plunket were repeatedly issued by the Government. At length he was seized and cast into prison in Dublin Castle, 6 Dec., 1679, and a whole host of perjured informers were at hand to swear his life away. In Ireland the

character of those witnesses was well known and no jury would listen to their perjured tales, but in London it was not so, and accordingly his trial was transferred to London. In fact, the Shaftesbury Conspiracy against the Catholics in England could not be sustained without the supposition that a rebellion was being organized in Ireland. The primate would, of course, be at the head of such a rebellion. His visits to the Tories of Ulster were now set forth as part and parcel of such a rebellion. But there was no secret as to the fact that he being a Catholic bishop was his real crime. Lord Brougham in "Lives of the Chief Justices of England" brands Chief Justice Pemberton, who presided at the trial of Dr. Plunket, as betraying the cause of justice and bringing disgrace on the English Bar. Sentence of death was pronounced as a matter of course, to which the primate replied in a joyous and emphatic voice: "*Deo Gratias*" (Thanks be to God!)

On Friday, 11 July (old style the 1st), 1681, Dr. Plunket, surrounded by a heavy military guard, was led to Tyburn for execution. Vast crowds assembled along the route and at Tyburn. As Dr. Brennan, Archbishop of Cashel, in an official letter to Propaganda, attests, all were edified and filled with admiration, "because he displayed such a serenity of countenance, such a tranquility of mind and elevation of soul, that he seemed rather a spouse hastening to the nuptial feast, than a culprit led forth to the scaffold". From the scaffold he

delivered a discourse worthy of an apostle and martyr. An eyewitness of the execution declared that by his discourse and by his heroism in death he gave more glory to religion than he could have won for it by many years of a fruitful apostolate. His remains were gathered with loving care and interred in St. Giles' churchyard. In the first months of 1684 they were transferred to the Benedictine monastery at Lambspring in Germany, whence after 200 years they were with due veneration translated and enshrined in St. Gregory's College, Downside, England. The head, in excellent condition, was from the beginning, enshrined apart, and since 1722 has been in the care of the Dominican Nuns at their Siena Convent at Drogheda, Ireland. Pilgrims come from all parts of Ireland and from distant countries to venerate this relic of the glorious martyr, and many miracles are recorded.

The name of Archbishop Plunket appears on the list of the 264 heroic servants of God who shed their blood for the Catholic Faith in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which was officially submitted for approval to the Holy See, and for which the Decree was signed by Leo XIII 9 Dec., 1886, authorizing their Cause of Beatification to be submitted to the Congregation of Rites. For a few years the blessings of comparative peace were restored to the Church of Ireland. Oliver Plunkett was canonized by Pope Paul VI on October 10, 1975. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12169b.htm> □

IN A CHEERFUL MOOD

Positively Wrong

A linguistics professor was lecturing his class.

"In English," he explained, "a double negative forms a positive. In some languages, such as Russian, a double negative is still a negative."

"However," the professor continued, "there is no language wherein a double positive can form a negative."

A voice from the back of the room piped up. "Yeah, right."

10 Most Wanted

Little Sammy's kindergarten class was on a field trip to their local police station. There they saw pictures tacked to a big bulletin board. The label clearly read, "The 10 Most Wanted."

One of the youngsters pointed to a picture and asked if it really was the photo of a wanted person.

"Yes," said the policeman, "the detectives want him very badly."

So Little Sammy asked, while tugging on the man's belt, "Um, mister, why didn't you keep them when you took their pictures?"

Aging

- Maybe it's true that life begins at fifty. But everything else starts to wear out, fall out, or spread out.

- There are three signs of old age. The first is your loss of memory. I forget the other two.

- You're getting old when you don't care where your spouse goes, just as long as you don't have to go along.

- Middle age is when work is a lot less fun – and fun is a lot more work.

- You know you're getting on in years when the girls at the office start confiding in you.

- Middle age is when it takes longer to rest than to get tired.

- By the time a man is wise enough to watch his step, he's too old to go anywhere.

- Middle age is when you have stopped growing at both ends, and have begun to grow in the middle.

- A man has reached middle age when he is cautioned to slow down by his doctor instead of by the police.

- You know you're into middle age when you realize that caution is the only thing you care to exercise.

- You're getting old when you're sitting in a rocker and you can't get it started.

- You're getting old when you wake up with that morning-after feeling, and you didn't do anything the night before.

- The cardiologist's diet: if it tastes good, spit it out.

- Last Will and Testament: Being of sound mind, I spent all my money.

- When you lean over to pick something up off the floor, you ask yourself if there is anything else you need to do while you are down there.

- You find yourself in the middle of the stairway, and you can't remember if you were downstairs going up or upstairs going down. □



AN OPPORTUNITY NOT TO BE SQUANDERED

(Matthew 21, 28-22,14)

by Marco Rossetti

Children who delay in responding to their parents by dragging their feet are like the devious tenants who, having been invited to the wedding feast, refuse to accept the invitation. Here are three parables that speak of an invitation refused (Mt. 21:28-22:14) but not withdrawn.

What teaching does Jesus draw out of these parables as he discourses with his listeners as he sits on the temple steps?

“Hear another parable: There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country (v.33).” That is how the second parable begins. He tells the story of a man whose generosity and trust are spurned by the increasing arrogance of the tenants to whom he has entrusted his vineyard. Their only aim was to take possession of the vineyard. Because of this they did not hesitate to kill the servants who came collect the fruit. That was why the master

decided to take the ultimate step of sending his own Son, his heir, hoping that they would respect him. But that was not the case. Matthew offers us a wonderful example of how Jesus re-reads and fulfils the First Covenant in himself: the landlord, God himself, offers his own vineyard which is a figure of the Kingdom of God. The tenants were in some part the Jews who rejected Jesus. The servants who were sent and who were beaten and killed were the prophets whom the people rejected or rarely listened to. The Son who was dragged out of the vineyard and assassinated was Jesus who was dragged outside Jerusalem and killed.

An opportunity for whom?

At this point the story takes an abrupt turn (v.14). Jesus does not finish the story but asks the leaders of the people and the Pharisees to do so. Their response contains a severe indictment against the tenants. They quickly realise that the sentence they pronounced was the sentence that would be turned against them. Jesus immediately lets them know that the sentence they pronounced was levelled at them. He makes them understand that they behaved just like the tenants by scheming conspiracies to capture him.

There still remains the suspended question: What will the master do to the spurned vineyard? In short, what would the God of the refused kingdom do? Would he rescind his offer? No, the refusal of some becomes an opportunity for others. The plan goes ahead: “The kingdom



Everything is ready for the banquet, only the guests are missing. The parable challenges each of us, inviting us to a relationship with God that does not end in external practices.

of God will be taken away from you and given to others who produce the fruits of it." (v.43) These "others" are those who throughout the ages welcome in Jesus and the Kingdom of God.

Our Opportunity

It is a parable of a refusal and an opportunity 'relaunched'! Obviously the parable of Jesus was directed to the scribes and the Pharisees but rereading that each member of Matthew's community were required to question themselves about their own acceptance of the Kingdom in which - God says - we are.

Just as the relationship between the master and the tenant farmers reached a point of no return with the sending of his Son, so also with the coming of Jesus we find ourselves in a situation where we have to make a decisive choice. So, as the sending of Jesus, the Son, is considered by God as his act of

supreme and conclusive love, in the same way our response is considered as the ultimate decision. The parable teaches us that in the face of the coming of the Kingdom and Jesus who brings us this Kingdom, it is no longer possible to delay and hesitate to make a decision. Taking a stand would not mean ruin. The behaviour of the tenants will always remain as the indelible example of non-acceptance. All this must be re-interpreted as a welcome invitation! Therefore the decision of acceptance now must be firm but there must also be a firm awareness that in the case of our refusal the Lord will take us at our word. But he is so passionate about his plan that he will not to rescind his invitation. Christ, the Kingdom and Salvation are precious gifts. There are others waiting and God will offer them an invitation too. ▣

GOD'S TIRE

by His Holiness

The First Angelus mess

After our first meeting last Wednesday I am able to greet you again.. I am happy to be able to do it on a Sunday, the Day of the Lord. It is beautiful for us Christians to meet on a Sunday; to greet one another, like we are doing in this Square. The Piazza is a place - thanks to the Media - the size of the world.

On this fifth Sunday in Lent, the Gospel presents us the episode of the adulterous woman (cf. John 8:1-11) where Jesus saves her from condemnation and death. Notice the attitude of Jesus. We do not hear words of condemnation but only words of love, mercy and an invitation to conversion. "Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more!" (v. 11) Yes, brothers and sisters, the face of God is that of a merciful Father who is always patient. Have you ever thought of God's patience...the patience that he has with each of us? That is his mercy: always patient, patient with us, understanding us, waiting for us, never tired of forgiving us if we come to him with a contrite heart. "Great is the mercy of the Lord!" says the Psalm.

In these days I have been reading a book by a Cardinal - Cardinal Kaspar, a theologian, a good theologian - on mercy. That book has done me much good; but don't think I am making publicity for the books of my cardinals! That is not so! It has done me much good... Cardinal Kaspar said that to hear the word mercy, changes everything. It is better that we hear it and change the world. A little mercy makes the world warmer and more just. We need to understand well this mercy of God, this merciful Father who has such patience... We recall the Prophet Isaiah, who affirms that even if our sins are scarlet red, the love of God will render them white like snow. That is so wonderful about mercy! I remember when I was Bishop in 1992 and the Madonna of Fatima came to Buenos Aires, there was a great Mass for the sick. I came there for confession and near the end - I had to go to administer confirmations. Later, an elderly lady approached me - she was humble, so very humble, more than eighty years old. I looked her, and said: 'Grandma' - where I come from, we call the elderly grandma and grandpa, 'would you like to make your confession?' 'Yes' she said, 'and I said, 'but if you have not sinned...' and she said, 'we all have sinned.' (I replied) 'if perhaps he should not forgive you?' and sure she replied, 'The Lord forgives everything.' I asked, 'How do you know this for sure, my good lady?' and she replied, 'If the Lord hadn't forgiven all, then the world wouldn't

LESS MERCY

by Pope Francis

preached on 17th March 2013

still be here.' And, I wanted to ask her, 'Grandma, did you study at the Gregorian (the Pontifical Gregorian University, founded in 1551 by St. Ignatius Loyola, the oldest Jesuit university in the world)?' - because that is wisdom, which



the Holy Spirit gives - interior wisdom regarding the mercy of God. Let us not forget this word: God never tires of forgiving us! The problem is, we tire, we don't want to ask, we get tired of asking for forgiveness. We should never get tired of asking for pardon. But he never gets tired of forgiving us! He is a loving father who always forgives. He has a merciful heart, a merciful heart for all of us. Even we should learn to be forgiving, to be merciful towards everyone. Let us invoke the intercession of the Madonna who has in her arms the Mercy of God made man. Now let us pray together.

(The *Angelus* with the faithful)

I extend cordial greetings to all the pilgrims. Thank you for your welcome and your prayers. I request you to pray for me. Once more I embrace the faithful of Rome and I extend to you all who have come from various parts of Italy and the world as well as those who are joining us through the media. I chose the name of the patron saint of Italy, St. Francis of Assisi, and this strengthens my spiritual connection to this land, where - as you know - are the origins of my family. But Jesus has called us to be part of a new family: his church, in the family of God, to walk together on the path of the Gospel. May the Lord bless you, Our Lady protect you. Do not forget this: the Lord never tires of forgiving you! It is we who get tired of asking for forgiveness. Happy Sunday and a good lunch..□

BRIGHTEN EVERY CORNER

From Fr. Ian Doulton's Collection of Short Stories

At approximately 10.17 on the morning of May 3, Sr. Mary Martha, 72 of the Order of Our Lady of Peace went home to God. The journey took four years, three months and eleven days from the time she left the convent of the College of Our Lady of Peace and went to the Mother House to wait...to die. It was as quiet and as simple an event as that. She packed what few belongings were hers personally, borrowed Sr. Mary Elizabeth's umbrella, because it was a morning of dripping gray mist and her own umbrella had been lent to a lay faculty member two years previous and was not returned. She went down the five steps of Charity Hall into a student-driven car and rode the half-mile in silence. There were no tears except for the splashing drizzle on the windshield, no farewells, no sadness. The students who would be interested, and there were a few remaining, found out only after her departure and to the other nuns who understood this journey, it was merely the beginning, of the beginning.

Among those who knew her were **Jacob Eugene Bankcock - Her Father:** He was 89 and a farmer. He hadn't spoken to her since that day she entered the convent. He survived Sr. Mary Martha, who was born, Martha Louise Bankcock, of Forest City. Sitting in his porch on a rocking chair with his white hair blowing in the evening breeze, this was how he received the news: "I sow my one hundred and ninety acres with my five sons and silently bitterly curse the living

memory of the God who stole my firstborn. Who reached into the sanctity of my family and took for himself, the gentlest, the most affectionate, the dearest of my six children. Therefore for me, Jacob Bankcock, Martha died a young girl, with deep brown eyes and sandy hair. To me, faith, hope and my daughter lie in one tomb."

Jean Rose: Sr. Mary Martha, of the Order of Our Lady of Peace, went to her eternal home that morning. A low Mass was offered for the repose of her soul on Thursday at 8.15 in the morning at the request of her girlhood friend Jean Rose. Jean Rose had become Mrs. Robert Savage. This is how she summed up her days with Sr. Mary Martha: "I am, a sweet heart, nurse, housewife, a mother, the source of valuable information, such as why cats can't have puppies, why little children mustn't eat with their hands, who invented pockets? Where did I come from? And what's more important: Where am I going?" I, Mrs. Robert Savage, who was Jean Rose, once walked in the garden of the novitiate of Our Lady of Peace with Martha Louise Bankcock, not yet Sr. Mary Martha. I still remember the evening when we had a conversation that went some-thing like this: "Martha, the convent is a peaceful place. In a sense it solves a great many problems." I said. "Yes Jean," said Mary Martha and she continued: "You follow a set schedule. You always dress alike and eat alike and always have company. You really don't have to think but you

do, Jean!" Jean turned and look straight at her and said: "Being so busy, is it possible to avoid remembering?" Mary Martha looked serious as she said: "But you *must* remember. If only I felt special.... For many, the call to God's service is like a mystic change." Jean tried to joke: "Does it immediately provide the postulant with a halo or pink wings? I remember, a special, a certain boy. If only I could forget him, I'd feel much better. Didn't you have any boyfriends, Martha?" Jean came close and whispered. Mary Martha didn't seem offended at this very direct question. She serenely said: "Of course I did." Immediately Jean asked: "How *do* you forget an old boyfriend?" It was Mary Martha's turn to joke now: "Well, I should imagine it's easier than forgetting a young boyfriend." Jean retorted: "You can't be serious! How do you forget a first love?" Mary Martha looked down the garden path and said simply: "Perhaps it's not the memory or something... I don't know what,...that separates us, you and me." Jean looked at Martha as they walked to the bench near the marble statue of St. Joseph: "You seem richer in your vow of poverty. You're chaste, but somehow you seem to know. You obey, without command." As they sat down Mary Martha just said: "If you live because of love, because you were given to not because you must for the love of giving, then this is home!" Jean held Mary Martha's hand tight as she said: "I can't forget, and I don't want to. I want to cling to the moment of that kiss. The warming memory of that strong arm, the tenderness of those unfamiliar lips,

I don't want to forget!" Martha stood up, as if to make a point, "and you must not! To forget would be to deny the moment. You must not forget the boy or the kiss. You must not forget the present memories!" Jean looked away over the hills and said, as if to herself but for Mary Martha to hear: "Then I am not for this place." Mary Martha was encouraging and rose too as she laid a gentle hand on Jean's shoulder: "Then, take up your search again. It's as simple as that. It takes courage to admit a mistake. It takes a special type of courage to admit God has not called you." It was getting dark and the two walked into the convent as the light began to fade.

So neither had failed; Sr. Mary Martha, 72, of the Order of Our Lady of Peace, died that May 3, happily and Mrs. Robert Savage, born Jean Rose, goes on living the role of sweetheart, nurse, housewife and mother "very happily, thank you!" she likes to say, with a contented smile.

Paul Bannings: A Mass will be said for the soul of Sr. Mary Martha, every week, at the request of the Honourable Paul Bannings, state senator, proponent of the Bannings Bill, champion of the small farmer, president of the chamber of commerce and one time lost soul. When we went to the senator's office and broke the news to him it was the senator who broke the silence: "I remember a nun with a quiet deadly smile. Why did she question me in the first place?"

The senator seemed to look beyond us in his oak panelled office and said: "Going back those

many years I asked the sister: "Sr. Martha, what business is this of yours?" She stood straight in her starched habit, not even afraid of political office and said: "I teach, not students, but people, and people have problems that they bring to class. Being people, they can be hurt, like your daughter." Marianne, Paul Bannings' daughter came to Sr. Martha's office one afternoon before the end of the day and said: "Sister, my father is a good man. He's kind and affectionate. He's successful in business and a pleasant companion. He's well liked, but there are times I wonder - if he died tonight, what would happen...?" Then imitating her father she repeated her father's words when he was inebriated one evening: "50,000 to your mother, a trust fund to you and your sister, 75,000, from a beneficial insurance company." Then Marianne looked like a frightened little bird as she said: "And for my father, sister, should he die tonight, what would that inheritance be?"

Paul Bannings was summoned the next morning to the office of Sr. Martha and in his haughty manner began: "Sr. Martha, I'm an important man." Sr. Martha, not ruffled in the least, said coldly: "You are a proud man." Paul simply retorted: "A man has a right to be proud when he's state senator, proponent of the Bannings Bill, champion of the small farmer" Sr. Martha stood up behind her neat desk and continued in a measured tone: "and master of all he can survey through the tiny windows of his soul so packed with self-esteem that it must be hard for you to breathe." The senator was

offended at this candid appraisal of someone who had too much of the world in his sights: "No one has the right to call me to task for my behaviour." Sr. Martha had heard from Marianne and so she continued: "But a quiet parish priest did, once." Paul looked down and in a conciliatory tone said: "Yes and I pointed out to him that business is business and the Church is the Church. These are separate. That's the American way! Imagine, telling me that?" Sr. Martha seemed to ask the senator to complete the question. With bowed head he said: "That I was to return an investment or I would not receive absolution." Sr. Martha with a winning smile simply continued: "and you haven't been to Mass for the last fifteen years!" The senator didn't know where to look. He got up and walked up and down the small office as he tried to defend himself but in vain: "Well, it isn't that I stole the money." Sr. Martha was a little sarcastic when she said: "Of course not! Fraud, perhaps?" Paul tried to be slightly aggressive: "Fraud! But business is business!"

Today as Paul Bannings heard this he shook his head in disbelief and he said: "That nun with a quiet deadly smile! *Why* did she question me? I'm a man of business. But sometimes only to myself and usually in the dark, lonely, sleepless hours before dawn...words...words," He even recalled Marianne's words: "*and for my father...should he die tonight? What inheritance?*" Paul was serious now as he continued: "I wonder too, sometimes I must admit I lay awake in thought. I'm a man of business. When I find something wrong, I correct it.

Sometimes, it goes against my grain, but I'll do it." He took out his cheque book and wrote out a check for \$300 and handing it over said: "*For my sake, sister, please rest in peace.*"

Tommy Collins: Sr. Mary Martha, of the Order of Our Lady of Peace will not die today or tomorrow or forever in the memory of Tommy Collins. Almost 27 now and he thought: "I'd never make it." He wondered whether Sr. Martha, would remember a skinny kid with too much hair and an equal amount of gall. Tommy's eyes were always on fire with hatred when he came to sister's office for some reprimand or other. Someone screamed through the door and said: "Sister, I saw Tommy cheating in his test" and another: "Sister he stole some money from my locker." Yet another: Sister he slapped me because I wouldn't go with him." Tommy's mind went back to that day when he had finally met his match. This was how it was. Sr. Martha shut the door behind Tommy and said, "Tommy!" Tommy muttered under his breath: "I'll show them, I'm going to show them, I'm as good as they are. I'm better than they are. I'm somebody, me, Tommy Collins..." Before he could finish his adolescent rantings Sr. Martha stood before him and said: "You're what you make yourself." Tommy looked away with his hands in his hip pockets: "No sermons, sis" he muttered. Sr. Martha already began to set him right: "You call me sister, you understand?" "OK, Sis, that's what I call my sister." Sister then took a gentler tone: "I'm sure if you

apologize." Tommy looked up and said sarcastically: "Nuts?" Sr. Martha then asked if he wanted to be expelled. Tommy thought out loud and muttered that he couldn't care less. As Sr. Martha came closer she said softly, "I do care. I see by your record, that you live in one room with your mother, your father and nine other children." He was offended and embarrassed that Sr. Martha knew the state of his home. "So what? That's none of your..." He was cut short and warned not to swear. Sister threatened to slap him: "Tommy if you don't stop that swearing, I'll..." Tommy whipped out a knife and whispered through his clenched teeth, "don't slap me lady that'd be a mistake." Sr. Martha told him to put the knife back but Tommy, with a tremor in his voice simply said: "Make me" She walked behind her desk and said very clearly for Tommy to hear, "A slap would solve nothing... not with a yellow coward like you. Not with a crawling, self-pitying bluff like you." Tommy couldn't bear that. There was a commotion outside the door but this did not worry Sr. Martha, 'stop it, won't you?' Sr. Martha shouted for those outside to hear and walked slowly towards Tommy from behind her desk as she said, "You're so brave aren't you, Tommy? So brave and tough go ahead and use that knife then. Go ahead my brave young man." Tommy was still holding the knife but his head was bent: "I'll say this for you, lady: you've got guts." She simply turned her back and walked to the window looking out to the playfields. "It takes no courage to recognize a

Continued on pg. 30

THE THIRD PILLAR IN THE EDUCATION METHOD OF DON BOSCO: LOVING KINDNESS

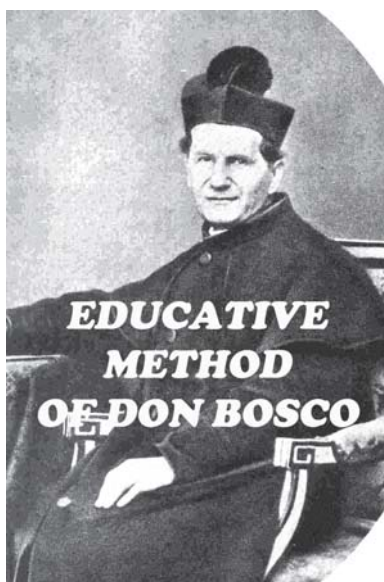
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by Fr. Elias Dias

Love conquers: Don Cafasso, the Director of Convitto Ecclesiastico sent the young priest Don Bosco to minister to the prisoners and especially the juvenile prisoners at the "Generala" prison in Turin. He realized that if they had been helped the society would have had noble citizens instead of these youngsters being confined to the prison. Don Bosco gave 300 young prisoners of "Generala" a retreat and with his gentleness he won over even the most difficult ones. All but one of them approached the Sacraments.

He asked for permission to take the young men for a walk to a place called Stupigini and promised to bring them all back in the evening. The minister Urbano Ratazzi, who had granted the permission could not believe his ears as he heard the account of the day from Don Bosco himself. This incident in the life of Don Bosco shows us the effectiveness of loving kindness. Don Bosco realized that love is the key to education and change of life.

Types of love: Some may wonder what this love is. Eric Fromm a socio-psychologist in his book, 'The art of Loving', mentions five types of love:



1. Brotherly love is the most fundamental of all.
2. Motherly love is the most tender of all love and it is care for the helpless, those wanting to make the loved ones strong and independent.
3. Erotic love is usually allied with sensual experience a "craving for complete fusion" and is what most consider the only kind of love. It is exclusive and inclined towards jealousy.
4. Self-love is the care, responsibility, respect and knowledge of self. Self-love and love for others are intimately connected; one must love self in order to be able to love others.
5. Love of God has the highest value. It is the most desirable good and it emphasizes care, respect, responsibility and knowledge. Love of God is most essential for human existence because man must have something perfect to aspire to.

Educative Method of Don Bosco based on love: Don Bosco's system of education was based on love and he once defined his method as the relationship of confidence, love and affectionate collaboration between the student and teacher. When an educator uses this type of charity based on reason and loving kindness the student will feel confident, show friendliness and offer spontaneous collaboration.

Love is the distinctive characteristic of the Educative system of Don Bosco. He expressed this love as loving-kindness which is in essence supernatural love blended with reasonableness and human paternal and fraternal understanding. It is a teacher-pupil relationship which makes the educator to live the life of his students. Loving-kindness in other words transforms the educative rapport into a filial and fraternal rapport and the environment of education into a family ambient.

Don Bosco often said, "Without love, no confidence, without confidence no education." To gain the confidence of the boys it is necessary to reach to their level and love what they love. What the boys love may depend on the stages of their development as well as on the society and culture of a particular people. Don Bosco was very flexible and spared no effort to see that everyone in the Oratory could have a healthy amusement or occupation which he likes. Don Bosco took this principle of love from the divine love.

Love must be sincere: The educator's love for his pupils

should be sincere, and devoid of sentimentality and selfish motives. It is a holy love. It looks for the good of the young and their spiritual and physical growth. This love is also unconditional. Don Bosco said to the young, "It is enough for me to know that you are young to love you." This love for the young stays on in spite of their faults. This is evident from the way in which Don Bosco spoke about punishment. Every hope was left to the student for easy pardon and reconciliation.

Love them and let them know that they are loved: Don Bosco's love for his boys and the way in which he wanted the boys to be loved by his educators is seen from his mature pedagogical document, a letter written by him from Rome on May 10, 1884. In this letter he gives a dream which he had concerning the state of the Oratory. Don Bosco wrote this letter towards the end of his life. It was intended as corrective to the deteriorating trends he had witnessed in the Oratory. It is very important that the educators have friendly relationship with the educands. One, who knows he is loved, loves in return, and one's love can obtain anything, especially from the young. All this is important for growing youngsters who are inclined to vacillation and insecurity.

Don Bosco used to say that he loves equally all his fingers. It is difficult in our society where we deal with a mass of youngsters and offer them simply our services. According to the mind of Don Bosco our services should go beyond that, it should help

each one to reach their spiritual goal.

The loving-kindness of Don Bosco has very much in common with the love-relationship espoused by these modern psychologists in their respective therapies. Fromm stressed on the love and Carl Roger on empathy. Like Fromm, Don Bosco gives the highest value to the love of God. The genuineness should be a reflection of a virtuous personality and virtue is a permanent habit of behavior.

Steps to strike relationship:

What does this loving-kindness consists in? a) Meeting the boys in their ambient and circumstances. This meeting must be friendly and cordial. Join them in their activities and interest. Create an opportunity to meet them again. Don Bosco always made the first move towards the youth. B) Meet the youngsters and have a dialogue with them about their background and interests, in this way gain their confidence. Don Bosco's encounter always showed this method like his dialogue with Bartholomew Garelli in the chapel of St. Francis of Assisi on 8 December 1841; his dialogue with Dominic Savio in 1854 when he met Don Bosco at Becchi and his meeting and conversation with Mickey Magone at Carmagnola railway station. All these dialogues show that he wanted to relate to the boys in order to gain their confidence and trust. C) Once he gained their confidence and trust he would propose to them higher level of life - a growth in happiness or sanctity. This was

not a very easy task for the wayward children and young people condemned to prison cell. D) He accompanied them by his presence in the arduous journeys. He was emphatic and understanding towards them. He listened to them and their problems and offered them suggestions and advice and above all encouraged them to achieve the goal "To be honest citizens and good Christians."

Challenges to loving kindness: In today's society due to youth situation the Salesian loving kindness may face some challenges. Today our institutions are frequented by a mass of youngsters and there is a primacy of functional rather than personal relationships. Today youngsters experience a deep lack of affection, loneliness and a craving for communication. They are always on the cell phone or on net but do not communicate.

To meet these challenges, the practice of Salesian loving-kindness as our method of education must lead us to: a) **Personalize our relationships with the young:** It is not enough to give them book knowledge and offer them other services but it is important to pay attention to the life and person of each youngster. b) **Do away with masks and institutional barriers:** Young people are looking for I-Thou relationship. Don Bosco used to teach his boys to live rather than to merely carry out the regulations. c) **Offer signs of mature affection:** To counteract the loneliness and lack of affection we must show them an understanding attitude

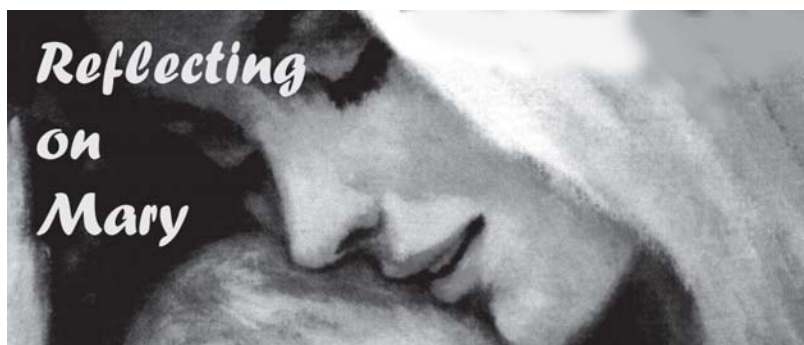


One, who knows he is loved, loves in return, and one's love can obtain anything, especially from the young. All this is important for growing youngsters who are inclined to vacillation and insecurity.

and patient acceptance of their rhythm of growth. d) **Help the youngsters in their autonomy and independence:** We must not limit the practice of our Salesian loving-kindness to only a matter of the attitudes and behaviour of the educator but extend it to other areas creating a pedagogical climate, in such environment, the youngsters are not only at the receiving end but they are active and responsible subjects where they have both to give and to receive.

It is not easy to love: It is not very easy to practice this type of love. It entails mortification, self denial and sacrifice. It means to look after your family when you have headache and heart ache. To take care of the needy in spite of your inconveniences, this is the meaning of real love. In short love means sacrifice." Real love means sacrifice.

Be ready to kill your Isaacs: In the Bible, Abraham had only one son Isaac. Abraham loved God very much. To test this love, God commanded him to kill his only son Isaac. Abraham was ready to sacrifice his son. He took the boy on the mountain to sacrifice him for the love of God; the Isaacs of selfishness, comforts, pleasure, treasures, leisure, emotional attachments and many other things. In this way we will reach to mature love. Don Bosco left us this rich heritage loving-kindness. Some of you must have seen a statue of Don Bosco with his left hand on the heads of the young while his right hand points up to heaven. This exactly he means to love the young in order to reach them to heaven. Today our great leaders tell us, "Listen what we say but do not do what we do." But Don Bosco tells us "Do what I have done." ▢



IN THE SWEET NAME OF MARY

by Roberto Spataro

Santa Caterina da Siena

The XIV century was a turbulent century in the history of the Church. Almost everything was in decline: theology, consecrated life, the religious instruction of the people and the moral life too. The whole of Europe was bloodied by wars. People were decimated by natural calamities and epidemics and Islam had overrun many countries that were originally Christian. The Pope did not reside in Rome but at Avignon under the influence of the king of France.

However, in such moments of terrible difficulty, the Lord blesses his Church by raising up saints who will shake up and provoke conversion and renewal. Such a one was Catherine Benincasa who lived, like Our Lord on this earth, for thirty three years. She was born in 1347. At the age of 16 she entered the Third Order of the Dominicans. There she received the white habit and the black cape. We see her in this habit kneeling together with Saint Dominic before the Madonna of the Rosary, in the popular picture we know so well. While she was a teenager, remaining in her family, she took



Saint Catherine of Siena with the Crucifix and lilies, in a XVII cent. painting in the Duomo of Siena

the vow of virginity and dedicated herself to prayer, penance and works of charity especially towards the sick.

The self-tutored “Doctor of the Church”

When the fame of her sanctity spread she became a protagonist of an intense apostolate of spiritual direction for every category of

persons: monastic monks and nuns, nobles and ordinary people, politicians, clergy even the pope read her letters with much interest. She travelled extensively to preach interior reform of the Church and promoted peace between states. She died in 1380 and was canonized in 1461. Pope Pius XII named her "Patroness of Italy," Paul VI declared



The Madonna and Child with Catherine and Dominic a painting by Pompeo Batoni (1708-1787) and preserved in the Civil Museum of Pistoia

her a Doctor of the Church together with Teresa of Avila. Later John Paul II named her "Co-Patroness of Europe."

The teachings of Catherine, who learned to write as an adult, are in fact a treasury of extraordinary richness. Her "Dialogue of Divine Providence" is a masterpiece of spiritual reading for all time. A fundamental characteristic of her spirituality is represented in her mystical espousal with Jesus, an episode that is often represented in her iconography. An unforgettable vision that was indelibly etched on her heart and mind was of the Madonna presenting her Son to her in a mystical marriage. The ring was only visible to her. From that moment, Catherine always associated the Son with the Mother. When her spiritual children wrote letters to her they called her "mamma", even if they were elderly they introduced themselves with these words: "In the name of Jesus Crucified and Sweet Mary."

Jesus, bread of life kneaded by Mary, the most pure "flour"

Catherine was endowed with supernatural charisms: she often went into ecstasy. Like all mystics, she adopted figurative language to illustrate the mysteries of the faith. A symbol that Catherine adopted was that of bread and flour: "Today you have given us your flour. Today, divinity is united and kneaded into our humanity so strongly that this union can never be separated not by our death nor by our ingratitude". In the synagogue of Capernaum Jesus called himself the Bread of life. And Catherine, for example, said that this divine bread was kneaded with the most pure "flour" of Mary who gave Jesus his body so that he could save us.

To these hints of genius, Catherine adds other relevant doctrinal considerations. She mentions that the consent of Mary's will to the work of the Incarnation was necessary that it might be fulfilled. From this observation Catherine makes a

'This divine bread was kneaded with the most pure "flour" of Mary who gave Jesus his body so that he could save us.'

fundamental deduction: every soul has at its disposal an extraordinarily important gift, its

own freedom. Only it can freely correspond to the action of grace just as Augustine taught: "He who created you without you will not save you without you." To collaborate freely and joyfully with the initiatives of God is possible and in a certain sense, very simple, notwithstanding the trials and weaknesses of every soul: it is sufficient to cultivate a great devotion to the sweet name of "Mary" to her name and her heart. □

BRIGHTEN EVERY CORNER *continued from pg.23*

coward for what he is. So, you've got courage to waste racing a car, or pushing a girl or a smaller boy around? Or starting a fight with a gang at your back..." she smiled and sat down. Tommy said falteringly, "I ought to kill you, lady. I ought to." Sr. Martha did not get up, she simply said, "Go ahead, Tommy, go ahead..." there was a brief pause and sister continued, "you see, I'm stronger than you are, I'm not afraid to die. Give me the knife Tommy." She put out a gentle white hand and said, "Give me the knife..." Shamefacedly he threw the knife on the table and muttered: "Oh God! Blast you...here take it, sister, take it..." and then the sobbing began as he crumpled into a heap onto the chair nearby.

Tommy, now a promising young man looked through his little window as he said, as if to himself: "I don't know where you are now, Sr. Mary Martha, but dead or alive, rest in the knowledge that somewhere there is a man who measures his manhood in what he knows, in what he can give, in who he is, me,

Tommy Collins!

Somewhere, Sr. Martha, there is a young mother who knows now that love goes beyond parked cars and dark hallways, that sex is not a dirty word, but a dirty faced little boy in blue overalls who just finished planting mummy's roses upside down in the driveway. Somewhere there is a teacher who watched you and came to realize that you don't teach young minds alone, but strengthen young hearts and broaden horizons so they educate themselves and somewhere there is a convent that will always remember the little sister who at 70 broke her leg dancing the Irish jig for them, who every Christmas made too much brandy fruit cake so that it reached through to Easter. Who laughed and lived, thank God!

Sr. Mary Martha, 72, of the Order of Our Lady of Peace born Martha Louise Bankock, of Forest City, lives today, tomorrow and forever and you may hear her add in a whisper something that would go like this: 'and very happily thank you.' □

Aberdeen



An Episcopalian priest has made headlines in the UK and India by opening the doors of his Scottish church to Muslims for prayer, reports Ucanews.

The Rev Isaac Poobalan allowed Muslims to use St John's church in Aberdeen for prayer after he saw worshippers praying "on a bitterly cold day" outside a nearby mosque because it was too small to accommodate them.

Up to 100 Muslims now pray in the main chapel at St John's every Friday – and the church hall is being converted for the exclusive use of Muslims.

"The mosque is in fact in a former diocesan office in the church grounds which was sold by the diocese to a Muslim businessman. He opened it as a mosque but it only holds about 50 worshippers," Poobalan told ucanews.com.

The opening of the church has featured in *The Guardian*, *Daily Mail* and *The Sun* in the UK and the *Indian Express* and *Times of India*.

Poobalan, 50, grew up in July 2013

Vellore, Tamil Nadu, and his father was a member of the chaplaincy team at Christian Medical College Vellore Hospital.

"I saw people from all religions praying in the hospital chapel," he said. "It taught me that prayer transcends religion. We all pray to essentially the same God." *UCAN*

Madagascar



An elderly French missionary sister was killed in the village of Mandritsara in the north-east of Madagascar, on 1 March. Sister Marie Emmanuel Helesbeux, 82, was attacked by three people who hit her with a stick and then strangled her. Three people have been arrested and confessed to the crime.

Fr Luca Treglia, Director of Radio Don Bosco in Antananarivo said it seems they owed the owed her money. The killing has caused an outpouring of emotion in the community.

Fr Luca said: "Upon hearing of the death of Sister Marie Emmanuel people took to the streets wanting to get justice. The religious was much loved and

Don Bosco's Madonna

respected in Mandritsara for her works of charity. The authorities have appealed for calm. "

Sister Marie Emmanuel Helesbeux of the Soeurs de la Providence (also known as 'Soeurs de Saint Therese d'Avesnes) was 82 years old, 42 of which she spent on mission in Mandritsara, Madagascar. *Fides*

Ho Chi Minh City



Three years ago, Hoai Anh terminated her 14-week-old pregnancy after an ultrasound scan showed the baby would be a girl. "I feel thoroughly miserable for having taken away my child's life. If my parents had also had gender-selective abortion, I would not exist," the Catholic woman said, in tears.

Pale and thin, she says she has not slept well and lost five kgs. since she had the abortion. Hoai Anh, 37, has been seeking medical treatment to help her give birth to a boy since last year. Vietnamese people traditionally give preference to male heirs, who are expected to look after their parents when they are old.

The cultural practice of valuing sons over daughters is considered the main reason for

gender-selective abortion. The Health Ministry reports Vietnam records 1.5-2 million abortions each year, but pro-life activists estimate the number is closer to three million.

Hoai Anh's husband is a high-ranking Communist Party member, so they cannot disobey the government's two-child policy. They already have a nine-year-old daughter.

Already, official statistics show there are 112.3 boys born for every 100 girls in Vietnam. It is estimated that this rate will be 125/100 by 2020, and there are expected to be between 2.3 and 4.3 million more men than women by 2049.

Hoai Anh, who works as an accountant in Ho Chi Minh City, says she has no freedom. She cooks and cleans for the whole family; duties of a daughter-in-law. "It is hard to fine doctors who reveal gender identity because they often use 'giong me' [the fetus is like a mother] or 'giong cha' [it is like a father]. They do not violate the law."

But Hoai Anh says if strict regulations on gender selection are not issued soon, there will be more victims like her. For now, her mother-in-law ignores the unenforced laws.

"She does not care about abortion that means killing a child, and she ignores my suffering caused by her strong preference for a male child," Hoai Anh said.

"If I have no male child, I will return to live with my parents and never marry again." □

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.*

I am grateful to Our Lady for granting me a safe trip to Pakistan, good health to my mother and for giving Avil a successful future through faithfully praying the 3 Hail Marys. *Joan Nisari, Australia*
I am grateful to Our Lady, Mary Help of Christians for giving an excellent job to my nephew, through praying the three Hail Marys.

Max Fernandes, Mumbai

I went through a very complicated pregnancy during which I was hospitalised several times. I had two episodes of bleeding and an ultrasound showed the presence of multiple fibroids. I was prescribed complete bed rest as the largest fibroid was located right above the uterus and was growing along with the baby. We put our complete trust in God and prayed the *Three Hail Marys* and the Memorare daily. At 32 weeks I had to undergo a C-section and even though the baby was premature she was otherwise healthy. Subsequently I underwent another 3 hour surgery for the removal of the fibroids, the largest of which was 1.2 kg. Today my baby is a healthy, happy child and I am fit as well. We continue to pray to our Blessed Mother to keep us under her protection.

Hazel Dias Rodrigues, Goa

On 6th July 2012 my son and I were returning from Santa Cruz Post Office both of us were reluctant to cross at a signal but we took the risk and crossed and missed by a whisker a speeding bus. The same took place in November 2012. I am sure that it was because we pray the three Hail Marys whenever we leave the house. These incidents could have had disastrous ends. We are grateful for Our Lady's protection.

Rosy Lobo, Mumbai

Our special thanks to the efficacious devotion to the three Hail Marys which keeps my dad safe.

A Devotee

My husband Blaise prayed the three Hail Marys before going for his heart bypass surgery. His operation was successful and also for helping my son succeed in getting a good job and for helping my daughter get settled in life. My sincere thanks to Our Lady for these and the several other favours received. *Mr. Blaise, Doris, Nicky and Natasha Gomes*
Our sincere thanks to Our Lady for all the favours received, especially for giving my son a job in Australia, my cure of cancer too.

Pulcheria Pereira

LOVING CHILDREN TO THEIR LOVING MOTHER

Thank you dear Mother Mary for helping me clear my first semester engineering exams. Do continue to bless my family.

Rini Aranha, Mumbai

Dear Heavenly Father, through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, our dear Mother, I want to thank you for all that is happening in our daughter's life. At times we want to question things, but we place her life in the hands of Mary and ask you to continue to bless her and protect her and keep her free from sin, harm, danger and evil. Help her not to stray from our Catholic Faith.

Your grateful child, Australia

My sincere thanks to Our Blessed Mother for snatching my husband from the jaws of death through the special prayers and novenas that we prayed for his recovery. The doctors and nurses were surprised as well.

Mrs. C.E. Wesdell, Bangalore

Both my children were admitted for dengue fever and by the grace of God and the intercession of Our Lady they recovered fully and were discharged after a week. My belated thanks for another precious favour received, the recovery from a pain in my arm.

Mrs. Johnson, Mumbai

Our belated thanks to Our Lady for blessing me with a healthy baby girl.

Teena Torres, Goa

THEY ARE GRATEFUL TO OUR LADY AND DON BOSCO

Our very heartfelt gratitude to Our Blessed Mother Mary and Don Bosco for a safe and normal delivery of a baby boy to our daughter and son-in-law.

Parvati & John Thoman, Sydney, Australia

For granting me an assistantship at the college where I work and for saving me when my float began to unexpectedly deflate while I was on a tagging behind a speed boat. I'm grateful to Our Lady and my patron saint Don Bosco.

Shawn Bosco Dias, USA

Thank you dear Mother Mary and Don Bosco for helping me win a court case and for helping me find a lost certificate.

Doren James D'Souza

Sincere thanks to our Blessed Mother and Don Bosco for my husband's good report. Please continue to protect our family always.

Mrs. Carmine Cardozo

Thank you dearest Mother for helping my son get his lost suitcase back. It contained valuable documents and other things. It was lost at the airport. After imploring the intercession of Our Lady it was restored three days after his return.

Mrs. Annie D'Silva, Mumbai

My sincere and heartfelt gratitude to Our Mother Mary for getting my son's admission to a good B-School.

A. Noronha, Pune

My sincere thanks to Our dear Lord, and Mother Mary that my MRI report was negative. Thanks for all the other favours and graces we have received.

D. Dias, Mumbai

THANKS TO DEAR ST. DOMINIC SAVIO



This testimony and thanksgiving is long overdue but here it is nevertheless. A non-Catholic friend had several complications all through her pregnancy and was in bed for all the 9 months. When she did deliver a little baby girl through Cesarean section, the baby's eyes and ears had defects and had to undergo several corrective operations. The child is now almost 6 and is schooling and is an above average child. We thank our Blessed Mother and St. Dominic Savio whose Miraculous Scapulars were kept in faith under her pillow all through the entire pregnancy term. Thank you all.

Maria Fernandes - Goa

Our sincere thanks to Our Lady and Dominic Savio for my daughter's successful wedding and I also thank you for all the favours bestowed on my family.

Molly Joseph

Many thanks and immense gratitude to the Lord Jesus Christ, Mother Mary, St. Joseph, St. John Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for the countless favours received by me and my family.

Mrs. Philomena D'Souza, Goa

Dear Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, Our dearest Mother Mary and St. Dominic Savio, our sincerest thanks for blessing both my daughters with safe deliveries of a boy and a girl.

Mrs. Maria Pontis, Mumbai

Our sincere thanks to Our Lady and St. Dominic Savio for giving us the gift of a baby boy, Abram Josvan Monteiro.

Anthony and Viona Monteiro

My sincere thanks to the Holy Spirit, Our Lady and all the Saints for answering my prayers. Mother Mary do protect us always.

R. D'Souza, Goa

Thank you dear Jesus, Mother Mary and Dominic Savio for the gift of a healthy baby girl after three years of marriage.

Mr. & Mrs. D. Cardoz, Mumbai

APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

JULY 2013

The Holy Father's General Intention: *That World Youth Day in Brazil may encourage all young Christians to become disciples and missionaries of the Gospel.*

The Holy Father's Missionary Intention: *That throughout Asia doors may open to messengers of the Gospel.*

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MARY WAS THERE

While returning by road on 28th December 2012 from Ratnagiri my daughter, who sat behind us with my wife felt inspired to ask us to put on our seat belts. 30 minutes later, our vehicle met with an accident. Our driver lost control and the vehicle toppled on its side and rolled down a small hill about 15 feet. My daughter and wife were constantly shouting "Jesus help us," and indeed they did save us. We were all saved and the seat belts securely held the four of us safe. My daughter and wife were totally unscathed - with not even a bruise or cut. Many onlookers retrieved us from the vehicle and after some first aid. Arrangements were made to ferry us home to Vasai. We are most grateful to Jesus and Mother Mary.

John, Joan & Caroline Pereira, Vasai

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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