

DON BOSCO'S MADONNA

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*Grant us, we pray,
that, faithful to the
promptings
of the Spirit,
we may magnify
your greatness
with the Virgin Mary
at all times.*

*- From the opening prayer on the
feast of the Visitation of the BVM.*

Cover: **MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS**
A detail of the large picture above the main
altar in the basilica of Mary Help of Christians
in Turin, Italy by Tommaso Lorenzone on the
instructions of Don Bosco



From The Editor's Desk

WHEN YOU'RE SMILING...

Did you know that one of the most important things in this world is a smile? Think of what a gloomy place this old world would be without smiles. We simply could not get along without an occasional smile.

A smile spreads happiness, yet it can spread misery. It all depends upon whether you smile *with* me, or *at* me. When you smile *with* me, we are companions in joy; we go hand in hand to the music of laughter, equals or comrades. When you smile *at* me, you are above me, on some throne of superiority, and I am beneath you, humiliated. When you smile *with* me, our gladness is wholesome, cheering as cool waters, tonic as bright blue sky. When you smile *at* me, you alone have pleasure, a poison-pleasure. You smile *at* me when you know something I don't know and you're cashing in on that knowledge against my ignorance. No game is good where one side always wins.

When you smile *at* me, you only are tickled; I am stung. It is a bad bargain and a poor game. We smile - *at* fools, numbskulls, weaklings, animals, people who fall, stumble, or are awkward, or stupid. Why? Because we think we are superior to them...and they are inferior to us and they must know that from our smile. We smile *with* - clever actors, charming speakers, interesting writers, friends, sweethearts and all those who demand our respect or whose fellowship we want to enter into. We want acceptance and security and that is why we smile at the same things others smile *at* without pausing to reflect whether with that smile-turned-smirk we are condemning someone inadvertently.

The fellows you hang out with, party with, ride the bus or the train with smile *with* you. Also, you cannot fail to smile *with* the girl you're courting, the office colleague your sitting next to and you make sure they are not smiling *at* you. It's the simple, common people, the kind you meet on trains and in the street who are the ones who smile *with* you. The snobs and the snoots and all the little nasty know-it-alls are those who smile *at* you.

When you're out having fun with friends you make sure they are those you smile "with". When we give a beggar some change (at times) you smile "at". The teacher who smiled *at* us when we were kids, we hated; the one who smiled *with* us, we will always adore.

To smile *at* me is ill-bred, to smile *with* me is human. To smile *at* is the most subtle form of insult, to smile *with* means freedom and friendship, love and acceptance. A smile is a very important thing, but a lot depends upon whether it is "with" or "at". You don't need to see a dentist...but when did *you* last examine your smile?

Fr. Ian Doulton sdb

JAMIE'S STORY

Fr. Erasto Fernandez, sss

Having worked for several years as a reporter, with five of those years covering an affluent community," says the author, "I took up something radically different - '*Becoming Jamie*' the story of a seven year old girl, born a boy, but aware of her own transgender status. I veiled the family's identity for their safety. The photographer created an image that illustrated the girl's journey thus far to herself. We featured the story, and it was one that somehow got etched in my memory. Month after month of little girl beauty contests, conservative politics and people calling for the extermination of prairie dogs had bored me with its routine. But after this refreshingly different kind of anecdote, I went back to the lifeless routine of the daily story, the details of government and sustainable business, and the thousand other stories swirling through a community.

A Pleasant Surprise

Not many months later, I got a pleasant surprise: I received an email to say that I had won a prize with the Press Association. I had entered only one story and so I knew it had to be "*Becoming Jamie*" that had hit the jackpot! To be on the safe side, I called the family concerned, to tell them that the story was up for an award, and so it could resurface, and that they should be ready for some pleasant or unpleasant limelight, without allowing themselves to get too

much disturbed by it! 'Jamie's' mother laughed aloud as she countered light-heartedly, "let me tell *you* a story."

The vivacious mother reported how the week after 'Jamie's' article appeared, a woman from the neighbourhood knocked on the front door of her house. She stood there, with tears running down both cheeks, and haltingly confessed she had been part of the group that worked hard to keep 'Jamie' out of public school. "I had no idea what your life was like until I read the featured article. Can you ever forgive me?" she pleaded. As we got talking, she promised to talk to her church group, and her friends about what they had done to the girl and the family, even though well-intentioned!

As can well be imagined, both 'Jamie's' mother and I were crying by the end of her tale. A single news article had been instrumental in changing one woman's outlook on transgendered people. What is more, the offender's direct talk with the girl's mother further transformed "Jamie's mom's" point of view about her conservative neighbours! And above all, I realized that through my routine reporting, I too was blessed to be the channel for "Jamie's" voice and for initiating a chain reaction of better understanding and harmony in the entire community!

Invaluable Lessons for All

It is not too often that a chance

occurrence like this turns out to be a rich blessing to so many, yet there are invaluable lessons that we can learn from it if we care to ponder over it for a while. First of all, we often fail to enter into the feelings of others and tend to judge them off-hand according to our own standards of what is right or wrong! Living in a highly pluralistic society as we do, it would be good to remember that different people have different goals and aspirations for their lives and for those of their children. Besides, modern technology has rendered perfectly feasible several things which seemed impossible only a decade ago! What we may at most say when we see someone adopt something that we find odd or unusual is that *we* would not prefer to do such a thing – but that if it suits the other, they certainly have a right to do it.

Further, we would need to consider what the other person would go through in the face of our opposition or stringent criticism – and that too offered without first investigating the event/deed thoroughly. Besides, it is always better to keep one's opinions to oneself at most sharing it with a trusted few, unless, of course, explicitly asked to share! This holds good particularly when our opinion might tend to be somewhat negative or derogatory and end up hurting the other more than helping.

Eucharistic Culture

Especially if we are in the habit of celebrating the Eucharist daily, that practice should gradually yet definitively shape our daily attitudes, in general making them more positive, appreciative,

encouraging, forgiving and the like. Our life-style and behaviour flowing from the Eucharist should be such that we build community rather than set people up one against another. We recall how Jesus specifically prayed for unity among his followers – a unity that replicates the total oneness that exists in the Trinity: “I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me” (Jn 17:20-23).

Besides, in the world around us we see so much of division and disunity that we would readily agree that we have no need to add to it. As far as possible a genuine follower of Christ seeks always to be more a part of the solution rather than a part of the problem. Racism, casteism, communalism and the like riddle our society all over the world with the result that we find ourselves fairly divided one from another. To add to all this, there is an ingrained individualism that plagues every person which further cuts us off one from another. All these symptoms are the result of sin and if it is true that Jesus has ‘taken away the sin of the world’ the evidence should be seen in the fact that more and more people work together harmoniously – at every

possible level. "How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity! It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes. It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion. For there the Lord ordained his blessing, life forevermore!" (Ps 133:1-3).

Specific Work of the Spirit

Just as the special role of the Spirit within the Blessed Trinity is to seal the love that ceaselessly flows between the Father and the Son (through a genuine Personal bond) so also a major part of the Spirit's work among human beings is to bring them together in unity and love. So, within the Body of Christ which is the Church, too, it is the Holy Spirit who draws people together and keeps them united among themselves. At the very start of the Eucharist, the faithful gather together through the Entrance rite. This is not something they can do by their own power and initiative. It is precisely because the 'sin of the world' has been conquered - its backbone has been broken - at least to a large extent, that they can even come together as one worshipping community in the name of Jesus.

Having brought them together, the Spirit further invites them to allow Jesus to purify them through a fruitful participation in the Penitential rite and then inspires them to be open to the Word of God proclaimed for them. And if it is true that 'no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit' (1 Cor 12:3) then how much more would we need the inspiration and

guidance of the Spirit to understand the message of the Word? Yet, in the Liturgy of the Word, it is not just a question of understanding God's message to us, but also the further question of having the strength to practice it consistently in one's life - and that certainly cannot happen except with the constant guidance and help of the Holy Spirit.

Ultimately, the main project of our lives is not so much our personal sanctification, but rather that we lend ourselves to becoming disciples and apostles of the Lord to work for his kingdom of love, peace, justice and fellowship. The high-point of the Eucharistic celebration is the dismissal rite wherein, energized by our special union with Jesus through Holy Communion, we are sent forth as heralds of the Good News to everyone in the world. The effectiveness of our celebration is gauged precisely by the extent to which we then spread the Good News through our words and actions. This task extends to the end of our lives - and for the success of this we and also our ministerial endeavours need the regular empowerment of the Spirit of God - for only he has the master-plan in view as also the power needed to put it into effect.

Nevertheless, what marvels can the Spirit not work in a person who is a totally selfless instrument in his hands, seeking only the spread of God's reign of love and the good of his/her neighbour. Such a person, like Mary of Nazareth, is a blessing for all mankind. "Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord" (Lk 1:45). □

walking with the Church



The Month Of Mary and "Star of the Sea"

From St. Martin's Messenger, Ireland

Q. *Why is the month of May dedicated to devotion to Mary? When did this start?*

A. Devotions to Our Lady on the first days of May go back to the time of St. Philip Neri. He it was who began the custom of decorating the statue of the Virgin with spring flowers. At a later date devotions to Mary were extended to the entire month of May. There were pre-Christian customs in May honouring Flora the goddess of flowers and as happened with other customs of pre-Christian times these were incorporated by the Church into its own Marian devotions. So floral tributes and processions and the crowning of a statue of Our Lady became popular practices and devotions of the Catholic Church from the late middle ages.

Q. *Why is Mary known as 'Star of the Sea'?*

A. There is a ninth century Latin hymn called Ave Maris Stella. It is a hymn honouring Mary. It presents Mary as the gate of heaven and

also as one who guides travellers safely back into port. Considering the dangers of sea travel in ancient times, it is easy to imagine that sailors and passengers gladly prayed to Mary for safe passage. From the time of the hymn, the image of Mary as Star of the Sea became a popular one in the Western Church. In Pope Benedict's 'Encyclical letter on Christian hope' he writes: *For over a thousand years, the Church greeted Mary the Mother of God, as 'Star of the Sea.'* "Human life is a journey. Towards what destination? How do we find the way? Life is like a voyage on the sea of history, often dark and stormy, a voyage in which we watch for the stars to indicate the route. The true

stars of our life are the people who have lived good lives. They are lights of hope. Certainly, Jesus Christ is the true light, the sun that has risen above all the shadows of history. But to reach him we also need lights close by - people who shine with His light and so guide us along the way. Who more than Mary could be a star for us?" □



I'M NO LONGER A CHRISTIAN, WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

by Diarmuid Clifford OP

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

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

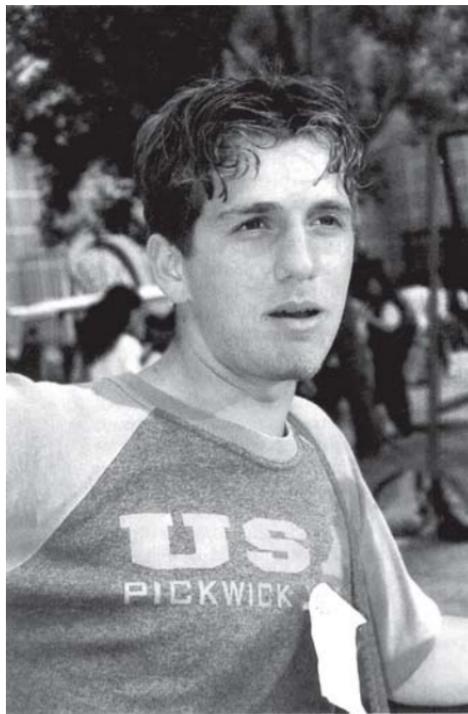
Still many of them retain their belief in God as our creator and

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

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

Effects of growing individualism

It is more likely that the decline is due to the growing individualism which is widespread today and is nourished by a rampant materialism. Experience teaches us that a up and coming



economy leading to a temptingly savvy lifestyle and a religious society do not cuddle up to each other. This individualism affects the political community also; most young people do not vote because they couldn't be bothered. Yet they have to depend on that same community for so



many of their needs, and they are loud in their anger when the state does not respond to their demands. Why should it if they don't care?

People talk about the alienation of the young and lay all the blame on the rest of the community. But the young must take responsibility for their own religious or spiritual lives just as they do for other aspects. Some do but many drift and their hearts grow cold; they lose all taste for spiritual realities; they live their lives at a sensuous material level and devote their energies to' fulfilling their sensuous needs. Most keep a loose contact with the Church e.g. baptisms, first communions, marriages and funerals are still significant times for many people.

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

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

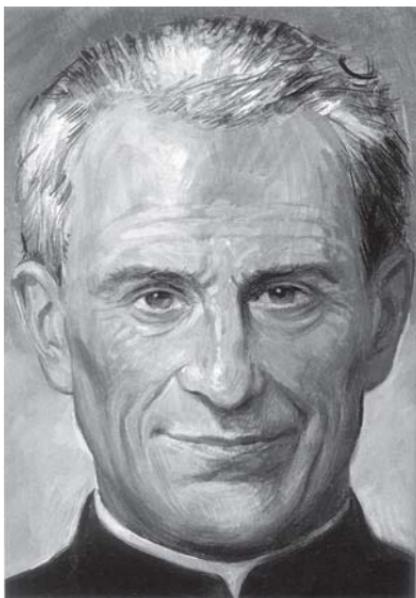
If he continues to search for the truth he will find it and your constant prayers for him may bring him to a deeper appreciation of the divine mysteries of our faith. Remember St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine. She prayed incessantly for his conversion and her wish was granted before she died. For him it was a most profound emotional experience and he uttered these beautiful words to his newly found God and Friend: "Late have I loved thee, O beauty so ancient and so new, late have I loved thee."

Pray constantly that your son will have a similar experience, and he will, if he pursues the truth honestly and constantly. It is never too late to utter those beautiful words. □

LEONARD MURIALDO 1828 - 1900

Leonard Murialdo was born in Turin in 1828, the eighth child of a well-to-do family. He lost his father when he was just four years old, however he received an excellent Catholic education at the Scolopian College in Savona. As a youth he went through a profound spiritual crisis that helped him discover his priestly vocation. In Turin he took up his philosophical and theological studies. In these years he began to work at the Guardian Angels Oratory that was run by his cousin, Fr. Robert Murialdo.

Thanks to this collaboration he came directly in touch with the problems of the youngsters of Turin: street children, prisoners, chimneysweeps and shop hands. In 1851 he was ordained a priest. He began to work in close collaboration with Fr Cafasso and Don Bosco, and took on the administration of the St. Aloysius Oratory at Don Bosco's request. Leonard breathed the preventive system, incarnated it and applied it in all his future educational works. In 1866 he accepted the administration of the Artigianelli College in Turin dedicated to taking in and providing a Catholic and technical education for poor and abandoned boys. He travelled throughout Italy, France and England visiting educational and welfare institutions, to learn and to



address and improve the educational system.

He was amongst those who promoted popular Catholic Libraries and Catholic Workers Unions and he was their chaplain for many years. In 1873, with the support of some helpers, he founded the Congregation of Saint Joseph (*Giuseppini of Murialdo*). Their charism was the education of youth, especially of poor and abandoned youth. He opened oratories, technical schools, family homes for young workers and young farmers especially in the field of technical formation and printing works. His motto was: *Fare e tacere (to work silently)*. He was a spiritual person and a man of prayer, a contemplative in action like Don Bosco.

Towards 1884 he was struck down by multiple attacks of bronchial pneumonia: Don Bosco went to give him his blessing and, despite some relapses, he lived until 1900. □



FR. MONTY RODRIGUES, SDB

by Fr. Corlis Gonsalves, sdb

Monty was born on 6th September 1955, to Joseph and Magdalene Rodrigues. A few days later he was baptized at the Holy Cross Parish Church, in Byndoor. Monty has no doubt that his family played an important role in his 'vocation story' and that it was his good mother who influenced him the most.

He began his schooling at Fatima High School, Ambernath, and studied there till he completed the fifth standard and it was at Dominic Savio High School that his journey towards the priesthood began. The person who set his feet firmly on the road to becoming a Salesian, was Fr. Chrys D'Cunha. In 1975 he joined the minor seminary at Lonavla. After spending a year there, in May 1976, Monty began his novitiate at Yercaud. Then, on 24th May 1977, he made his first religious profession as a Salesian. He was sent for his regency to houses in Bombay and Gujarat where he gave himself enthusiastically to his Salesian mission. After completing an ITI course at St. Joseph's Technical Institute Kurla, he was sent to the Salesian centre at Chhota Udepur (Gujarat) which was in its nascent stage. A boarding and a non-formal technical training centre had just been set up here by the Salesians. He singles out the Oratory at Anthroli village. "This was before we had trouble with that village" he says. "I used to enjoy going to Anthroli and the children too would eagerly wait for us" he recalls with much nostalgia.



Young Fr. Monty with Fr. Maschio

After his ordination in December 1988 Monty began a long innings in Gujarat. Here he gave himself selflessly to whatever mission he was sent. He did not just build structures. Monty was very caring, and paid special attention to the poor and the sick. Monty was so moved by the dilapidated houses in the villages that he obtained funds from Fr. Mondini and began constructing new houses for the people and by the end of that year he had constructed 43 houses. He was also deeply interested in the local tribal culture and so set up the Adivasi Museum. He personally collected a lot of local artifacts and painstakingly set up the museum.

He is presently based at Chinchwad where he is Principal of the Don Bosco Technical Training Institute, and is also in-charge of setting up the new Technical Institute at Chakan. Living and working with Monty is indeed a wonderful experience. Monty's love for the poor is well known and his concern for the marginalized is clearly visible. To put it simply, Monty is an excellent Salesian priest! □

Witnesses in & for Our Times



ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY (died 604) (May 27)

with inputs from <http://www.biography.edigg.com>

A complete biography of St. Augustine of Canterbury is impossible to write: almost all that is known of him is his work as a missionary to the English, and almost the only source of our knowledge of that missionary work is the "Ecclesiastical History" of Baeda.

In the time of Gregory the Great the island called Britain, of course, was the same as that on which Julius Caesar had landed. The English were heathens, and the Celtic Christians seem to have made no effort whatever for their conversion. The English, again, were by no means consolidated into an English nation. It was to one division of these English heathens that Gregory the Great sent Augustine.

The ascertainable biography of St. Augustine begins with his mission, by command of Gregory, to the heathen English; and especially to the subjects of Ethelbert, King of Kent, who had married a Christian lady. There is not the slightest reason for discrediting the story related by Baeda, of the incident which first

excited Gregory's interest in the heathen English. The relations between Britain and Rome having come to an end, it is not in the least surprising that even a person so exceptionally well informed should have known nothing about the Teutonic peoples - Angles, Jutes, Saxons - which had driven out the British.

It is reported that some merchants, having just arrived at Rome on a certain day, exposed many things for sale in the market-place. Gregory himself went there with the rest and, among other things some boys were set to sale, their bodies white, their countenances beautiful, and their hair very fine. Having viewed them, he asked, as is said, from what country or nation they were brought? He was told, from the island of Britain, whose inhabitants were of such personal appearance. He again inquired whether those islanders were Christians, or still involved in the errors of paganism? He was informed that they were pagans. Gregory was eager to go at once on a mission

to the home of these beautiful children but the Roman people could not bear the loss of one already so useful and distinguished, and almost before he had started he was recalled. At length, in the sixth year of his pontificate, he determined to undertake the work himself. From his own monastery of St. Andrew, on the Caelian Hill, in Rome, he sent a company of forty monks, headed by their prior, Augustine.

Their progress at first was rapid. Starting in the summer of A.D. 596, they soon arrived in the neighbourhood of



Augustine converts Ethelbert

Aix, in Provence. But the nearer they came to what should have been their journey's end, the less inclined they were for the work to which they had been appointed. The heathen English were represented as barbarians of unusual ferocity; and the companions of Augustine were as frightened as the companions of Caleb and Joshua. They induced their prior to return to Gregory and seek a release from their perilous task. But Gregory was not a man to be frightened himself, or to have much sympathy with cowards. He wrote, however, with great gentleness: "For as much as it had

been better not to begin a good work than to think of desisting from that which has been begun, it behooves you, my beloved sons, to fulfil the good work which, by the help of the Lord, you have undertaken. Let not, therefore, the toil of the journey, nor the tongues of evil-speaking men deter you: but with all possible earnestness and zeal, perform that which by God's direction you have undertaken." He furnished them with letters to the bishops of Tours, Marseilles, Vienne, and Autun, and also to the metropolitan of Arles. After the lapse of a year they slowly

continued their journey, and landed at last at Ebbe's Fleet, in the Isle of Thanet.

As soon as they had landed Augustine sent the interpreters, whom he had obtained from "the nation of the Franks," to tell Ethelbert of his arrival. Ethelbert seems to have been a really noble-hearted man, and had doubtless been attracted by the piety of his wife Bertha. The missionaries told him that they had come from Rome, the great capital of the West, and "had brought a joyful message which most undoubtedly assured to all that took advantage of it, everlasting joys in heaven, and a kingdom that would never end, with the living and true God." The king ordered them to remain in the island where they had landed, and promised that they should be furnished with all necessaries till he should consider what he would do with them. Soon after he came to the island, and conferred with Augustine and his companions in the open air; fearing the possibility of magic enchantments if he met them under any roof. He was much impressed by their ceremonial, their bearing, and their teaching. "Your words and promises," he said, "are very fair, but as they are new to us, and of uncertain import, I cannot approve of them so far as to forsake that which I have so long followed with the whole English nation ["cum omni Anglorum gente:" this by no means implies, it is scarcely necessary to say, an English nation in the modern sense of those words]. But because you are come from far into my kingdom, and, as I conceive, are desirous to impart to us those things which you believe to be true and most

beneficial, we will not molest you, but give you favorable entertainment, and take care to supply you with your necessary sustenance; nor do we forbid you to preach, and gain as many as you can to your religion."

By the king's invitation they crossed from Thanet and took their abode in the then rude town of Canterbury, and before long were allowed to worship in St. Martin's Church, with the queen. Their influence gradually increased, and a considerable number of the English were converted. At last Ethelbert himself received baptism (Whitsunday, A.D. 597); and following his example, it is said that on December 25th following — mid-winter! — upward of ten thousand were baptized in the waters of the Swale. Of course, it cannot be supposed that in these medieval "conversions" of whole tribes or "nations," there was any rational acceptance of the complete theology of the Church. The conversion was rather the acceptance of a discipline, a mode of life; founded indeed on Christian doctrine and in all kinds of subtle ways symbolizing it; but primarily an imitation of a sweeter and purer life, and a more spiritual and suggestive worship. The words of Baeda (i., 26) are worthy of note as indicating the temper both of Gregory and Augustine: "Their conversion, the king so far encouraged, as that he compelled none to embrace Christianity, but only showed more affection to the believers, as to his fellow-citizens in the heavenly kingdom. For he had learnt from his instructors and leaders to salvation, that the service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not by compulsion." □

IN A CHEERFUL MOOD

Pygmy Hunter

A Hunter walking through the jungle found a huge dead elephant with a pigmy standing beside it.

Amazed, he asked: "Did you kill that?"

The pigmy said, "Yes."

The hunter asked, "How could a little bloke like you kill a huge beast like that?"

"I killed it with my club."

The astonished hunter asked, "How big is your club?"

The pigmy replied, "There's about 60 of us."

Laws of Computing

* When computing, whatever happens, behave as though you meant it to happen.

* When you get to the point where you really understand your computer, it's probably obsolete.

* The first place to look for information is in the section of the manual where you least expect to find it.

* When the going gets tough, upgrade.

* For every action, there is an equal and opposite malfunction.

* To err is human. . . . To blame your computer for your mistakes is even more human, it is downright natural.

* If at first you do not succeed, blame your computer.

* A complex system that does not work is invariably found to have evolved from a simpler system that worked perfectly.

* The number one cause of computer problems? Computer solutions offered by family

members.

And if I may add - The best line I have heard when trying to explain to new computer users why something is happening that you don't understand is:

"I think you have a problem with the interface between the chair and the keyboard."

Workin' on the Railroad

Benny wanted a job as a signalman on the railways.

At his interview, the inspector asked him this question:

"What would you do if you saw 2 trains heading for each other on the SAME track?"

Benny replied, "I would switch the points for one of the trains."

"Good. But what if the lever broke?", asked the inspector.

"Then I'd run down to the signal box", said Benny, "and use the manual lever there."

"What if lightning struck it?" asked the inspector.

"Then..." Benny continued, "I'd run back into signal box & phone the next signal box."

"What if the phone was engaged?"

"Well....in that case," persevered Benny, "I'd rush down out of the box and use the public emergency phone at the level of the crossing up there..."

"What would you do if THAT was vandalized?"

"Oh, well then I'd run into the village & get my Uncle Toby."

This bizarre response puzzled the Inspector, so he asked, "And just why would you do that??"

"Because Uncle Toby... He's never seen a train wreck!!" □



MARY BELIEVES BECAUSE SHE REMEMBERS

(Luke 1, 39- 56)

by Carlo Broccardo

The passage this time is taken from the Gospel reading for May 31st the feast of the Visitation. After the angel came to Mary at her annunciation she made her way to her cousin Elizabeth who was pregnant with John the Baptist.

She hardly arrives when Elizabeth heaps on her a whole string of wonderful compliments. Mary however does not respond to Elizabeth but in turn directs her praises to God! She intones the *Magnificat*, a prayer that is only and exclusively a song of praise to God, listing of all the great things that He has done and for which Mary is extremely grateful.

In the beginning Mary praises God for all that he has done for her, by looking on her, simple, ordinary woman that she was. She then dedicates the rest of her song to proclaiming the marvels that God has worked for her people Israel.

It is a community prayer which encompasses the history of the world. Mary looks at the past and the present and she thanks God because not only had he *done* great things but that he continues to do great things.

Let us remember that Mary is

one of those persons who is able to look around herself and recognize God's work in all that is happening. She is also one of those who is so intelligent that she is able to read the history of her people and recall all the many instances in which God had come to the aid of her people, supporting and guiding them along the way. It is fundamental to remember this aspect, this ability of Mary – glancing at the words of the *Magnificat* we realize that she knows and recalls that God takes care of her and that is what he does for all his children.

Let us now take a step back and reread the words that Elizabeth addressed to her as soon as she entered the house. She said: “Blessed is she who believed that the words spoken to her by the Lord would be fulfilled” (v.45). Elizabeth was right. When, in fact, the Angel Gabriel announced the birth of Jesus, Mary believed him and surrendered herself saying: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord.”

Mary was the one who believed, but where did she find the strength to do so? On what was such great faith based? If we reread the *Magnificat* we will find the answer: Mary knew that God had done great things, she exclaimed that all her power came from the strength that he gave to his children because he supports those who trust in him... Mary's faith is founded upon the fact that she remembers what God had already done! Hers is not a blind faith. She believes because she knows... because she remembers.

Let us take a step back once more, to the first words of Elizabeth: “Why should the



The Visitation is the work of Ghirlandaio (1449-1494), at the Museum of the Louvre in Paris. In the background he alludes to Rome with the Pantheon and the arc of Constantine, He wants to highlight that Rome is the new Jerusalem the heart of Christianity.

But she said 'yes!' Therefore, to be the Mother of God was not, for her, a privilege, rather it was the result of her 'yes' and then the divine life began to be conceived in her.

In a few words, the passage of the Visitation speaks of Mary as the mother of God because she believed and she believed because she recalled what God had done and she could trust Him.

Mary is not that privileged woman to be looked at with admiration and envy. We will never be her because she alone is the mother of

mother of my Lord come to me? (v 43). Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit recognizes that Mary is the Mother of the Lord. That is an awesome title, an enormous compliment, unimaginable: to be the mother of my God! Even here Elizabeth is right: Mary is the mother of the Lord Jesus.

We even know how this has come about, how it was that Mary carried within her the Son of God. When the angel had told her what would take place, she believed and so became pregnant with Jesus (cf Lk 1:26-38, the Annunciation).

Mary was free to say 'yes' or 'no' to the announcement of the angel. If she had said 'no' she would not have been the mother of Jesus...

Jesus and there will never be another like her. She is above all the "image of the Church."

In fact, all of us who believe in God, discover that he has a plan for our lives: be it marriage, the consecrated life, service of the poor, education of the young, devotion to prayer... All we have to do is to choose to say 'yes' or 'no' to his plan for us. To know and remember all that he has done for us can be a very great help to our faith a nudge to trust God.

When we reread the *Magnificat* with fervour, we may even like to add some of the things that God has done for us and for our dear ones and also what he is doing in our world today. □

Quiet S

INDISPENSA

WITH C

by His Holiness P

At noon on Sunday 6 May 2012 the Holy Father introduced the recitation of the Regina Caeli with the faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square. He stressed the importance of remaining firmly united to Jesus. The following is a translation of the Pope's Reflection which was given in Italian.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser" (Jn 15:1). In the Bible Israel is often compared to the fertile vine when it is faithful to God; but if it distances itself from him, it becomes barren, incapable of producing that "wine to gladden the heart of man", as Psalm 104[103] sings (v. 15). The true vine of God, true life, is Jesus who with his sacrifice of love gives us salvation, opens to us the way to be part of this vine. And as Jesus remains in the love of God the Father, the disciples too, wisely pruned by the word of the Master (cf. Jn 15:2-4), if they remain profoundly united in him, they become fruitful branches that bear an abundant harvest.



St Francis de Sales wrote: "The vine-sprig, united and joined to the stock, brings forth fruit not by its own power but in virtue of the stock. Now we are united by charity unto our Redeemer as members to their head, and hence it is that... good works, drawing their worth from him, merit life everlasting" (*Treatise on the love of God*, XI, 6).

On the day of our Baptism the Church grafts us, as branches, on to the Paschal Mystery of Jesus, on to his very Person. From this root we receive the precious sap that enables us to share in the divine life. As disciples, with the help of the Pastors of the Church, we too develop in the Lord's vineyard, bound by his love. "If the fruit we are to bear is love, its prerequisite is

ABLE UNION CHRIST

Pope Benedict XVI

this 'remaining', which is profoundly connected with the kind of faith that holds on to the Lord and does not let go" (*Jesus of Nazareth*, Doubleday, New York 2007, p. 262).

It is indispensable to remain ever united

to Jesus, to depend on him, because apart from him we can do nothing (cf. Jn 15:5). In a letter written to John the Prophet who lived in the desert of Gaza in the fifth century, a faithful asked the following question: how is it possible to combine man's freedom and the inability to do anything without God? And the monk answered: if man inclines his heart towards goodness and asks God for help, he receives the necessary strength to carry out his work. Therefore man's freedom and God's power proceed together. This is possible because goodness comes from the Lord, but it is carried out through his faithful (cf. *Ep. 763, SC, 468, Paris 2002, 206*).

True "abiding" in Christ guarantees the effectiveness of prayer, the Cistercian Bl. Gueric of Igny, said: "O Lord Jesus... without you we can do nothing. Indeed you are the true gardener, creator, cultivator and custodian of your garden, which you plan with your word, irrigate with your spirit and cause to grow with your power" (*Sermo ad excitandam devotionem in psalmodia, SC, 202, 1973, 522*).

Dear friends, each one of us is like a branch that only lives if its union with the Lord grows every day in prayer, in participation in the Sacraments and in charity. And he who loves Jesus, the true vine, produces fruits of faith for an abundant spiritual harvest. Let us pray to the Mother of God that we may remain firmly grafted onto Jesus and that all our actions may have their beginning and end in him. □



A VOICE IN THE NIGHT

From Fr. Ian Douulton's collection of stories

This is a true incident that took place in the Second World War.

Terrence Ross, this is *your* story. You are still living to tell us what happened to you. You will bear the marks of it for the rest of your life. But you still swear it is true...that it came about just this way...

It is night in an army hospital somewhere in England. Propped up in bed you hear the wailing of an air raid siren alert in the distance. You wait for the sound that usually follows. Then you listen to the voices of the other men groaning in their sleep. In the stillness you hear the creak of a bed or the grunt of someone changing his position. Little sounds from the outside filter through the blackout curtains. The shrilling of an insect, the barking of a dog by all these noises and by the silence in the ward you know that it is night. But you cannot sleep because for you it will always be night. Blackness at sunrise and at noon and at sunset for the rest of your life and you are only twenty-two.

Since morning when the doctor told you the truth you have succeeded in crushing down the thought under the sounds and the small business of a hospital day. Now in the silence of the night the fact breaks upon you in wave upon wave of horror. Fear knives into your heart until

you drip with sweat while you shiver and claw the blankets. You were never afraid before not even when you landed on the coast of France to fight an enemy of unknown size. You had often thought of being killed. You had imagined bullets from a machine gun ripping hotly into your body, you saw yourself dramatically heaving a farewell grenade into the flashes. They blazed up and you died in glory

Death, yes, but not this - not everlasting night. Frantically you press your fists against your mouth. You hold it there against the desire to shriek and wake up the other men and bring nurses running to you. Anything to break the black silence; then your commando training flings you rigid against the pillows. You





remember the lesson drilled into you: If you get hurt, you must lie still and suffer in silence. A single cry could cost many lives. You must lie still and suffer in silence.

You remember the rest of the commando training. You re-live those superbly strenuous months that were to have ended in victory or glory. You box, you wrestle, you swim, you rehearse twelve hours a day with rifle, revolver, knife, and machine-gun. You live for days on bread, water and a handful of pills and you march forty miles at a stretch through mud. When the course is finished you rank high among the five percent who have the stamina to earn the title 'commando.'

You exult when you get your first assignment working with the Sea Fourth Highlanders to knock out an enemy radio-locator post when you land up on the coast of France.

You team up with Donald Mackenzie in that first raid "Presieux Friere!" that was the enemy's battle cry. Terrence Ross and Donald Mackenzie heard this through the undergrowth. The rest of their company had already surrounded the hut. The

guards were running helter-skelter. Donald managed to shoot one who was running around the back of the hut. He slumped and fell dead. Then all of a sudden Terrence saw someone coming towards him. Instinctively Terry shot him at point blank range. Donald shouted:

"Terry, he wanted to surrender!" Terry didn't notice. They decided to make a dash for the hut but just as they got into the clearing Terry saw a blinding flash and he collapsed into Donald's arms. All that he kept saying was "my eyes, my eyes" and then he swooned into oblivion.

"That's all I can do for those eyes at this station. We'll send you back to England on the first boat." That was the doctor at the emergency station on the coast. In England, first one and then two more doctors came to give their verdict. Finally there was the best eye doctor in England, he saw Terry's eyes and regretfully said: "It's the optic nerve in your good eye, the one we had hopes in, it has been shattered and there's nothing we can do. Terry looked bravely and blindly into the doctor's face and said: "Thanks for telling me."

That was in the morning. Now it is night. For you it will always be night! You strain against the blackness trying to see something. Then you see the face of the enemy soldier who tried to surrender and the faces of the three others whom you shot and



then this helpless soldier once again. You roll your head from side to side. You hear the rumbling sound of the trucks outside, coming late at night to collect garbage. If you could only sleep... then those faces...again and again. You can't blot them out with anything else because you are blind. You will always be blind!

Terry begins to cry and he stuffs the blanket into his mouth to deaden the sobs. He chokes and his hands go to his neck. His fingers clutch something, a chain and a medal. He tightens his grip on the medal. It carries with it a whole train of memories, it causes the words of an old prayer to well up from Terry's heart: "Holy Mary, Mother of God pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death..." He repeats the words between sobs then he stops. He thinks he is unworthy of being heard since the pathetic face of the unarmed soldier still stares at him. "Holy Mary, Mother of God. Mother! Mother! Nurse! Nurse!" Then he feels a

hand on his forehead and a soft gentle voice: "You were calling?" said the voice. Terry said he was blind and would like someone to come by and stay with him. Then he told her that he saw the face of the soldier he killed... No! He had killed five of them!

"Listen," said the voice, "you did what you thought you had to do. There was no hate in your heart when you took life. Other men have caused this evil. They are to blame not you, not you at all. You thought you were helping to bring peace. So don't trouble yourself anymore. God knows you did what you thought was right. Now go to sleep."

Terry then wafted into sleep almost at once at those consoling words. He was wakened to the sound of shuffling feet and he felt an uncomfortable itch on his face. The bandage over his right eye had become twisted. Then he shouted for John the orderly on duty. As John drew near he identified him with a bucket in one hand and a pail in the other.



John had glasses on too. John was too shocked for words.

He dropped the pail and ran off calling: "Doctor, doctor!" The doctor came and examined the eye, and Terry was laughing through the entire examination. His vision was steadily improving. The doctor said that in three or four hours his vision would be perfectly normal.

"When did you first notice the return of vision?" asked the doctor.

"When I saw old John with the mop and pail." Terry said he really began to feel different when the nurse on duty came to his bed the night before. He asked the doctor who was the nurse on duty during the night.

The doctor said there was no one on duty that particular night. All the nurses were sent to the town, since there were no critical cases in the hospital, but the

town had been badly hit. The doctor insisted that there were no nurses in the entire hospital that night. Terry must have been dreaming. But no, Terry was awake. He even heard the hospital clock chime two when he began to cry and a few moments later the nurse came. That was the way he recalled it to the doctor.

Now you have an idea of what happened, but you do not tell the doctor. You can't imagine him ever believing you. But you think now you were praying just before she came:

"Holy Mary. Mother of God!"

When the doctor leaves, you run your finger on the medal around your neck. You remember, and you lift it up before your eye that sees. Then you close that eye. You look into a soft light where there is only one face now, the smiling face of Mary, your Mother in heaven." □

THE FIRST PILLAR OF DON BOSCO'S EDUCATIVE METHOD: REASON

3

by Fr. Elias Dias

Don Bosco had his own philosophy of Education: Every Educational system has its own philosophy. Don Bosco was no exception. The various educational and psychological theories of his time found their synthesis in his system.

Don Bosco was a priest, and had training in scholastic philosophy which is based on Aristotle. His idea of human nature was a *via media* between these two extremes. He believed in the fundamental goodness of human nature but this human nature is wounded by sin and it has evil tendencies. He believed in the healing and rebuilding power of the Grace of God. He was also influenced by the Roseminian philosophical concepts of Reason, Religion and Loving-kindness.

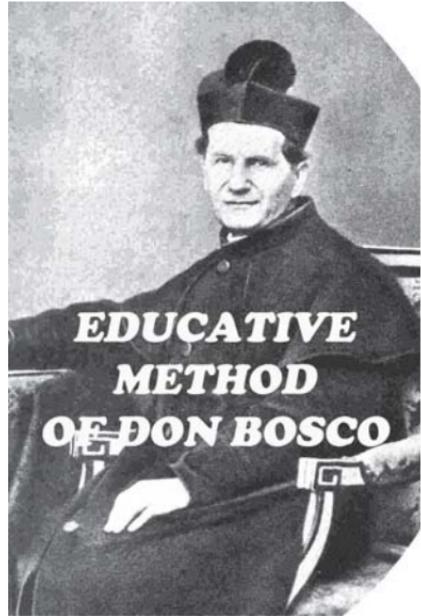
Reason is the first requisite: Don Bosco made reason one of the first requisites of his system.

For Don Bosco, Reason means a number of things:

a) First reason may be defined as Justice, in the sense that the educator, as well as the youngster is subject to the rule.

b) Secondly, reason also means reasonableness. Everything demanded of the youngster must be reasonable in the sense that it must be proportionate and possible.

c) Thirdly, reason may be



understood as rationality. The reason for all educational decisions and demands must be made evident, and the good in them appreciated by the youngster.

d) Fourthly, even more generally, reason may be thought of as motivation. The importance of the educational process must be made evident to the youngster, and his participation called for.

By reasonableness he meant a quality of reasoning which includes, practical judgment, prudence, understanding, naturalness, moderation and all that makes reasoning, human.

The basis of Reason: The basis of reasonableness in education is based on a deep sense of trust. The educator believes in the goodness of the young people and in their openness to truth.

Don Bosco reposed great faith in young people and in their inner resources. He once said

“Even the most callous boys have a soft spot”. An educator must learn to appreciate youngsters, discern their inner resources and stimulate them.

The elements of reasons: Don Bosco manifested the elements of reason in his work of education thus:

1. Clarity of the Objectives: If anything the objectives stood out clearly in Don Bosco’s thinking and practice. This is not only the work of the educator but also the educand who knows the goal and accepts the reasonable demands made on him.

2. Flexibility and easy adjustment to persons: Don Bosco made it a point to update his rules in line with whatever his experiences suggested to him.

3. Formation to act out of conviction: Don Bosco realized that if a word of advice or a rule were to make for the growth of a young person, it had to be reasonable. Therefore, Don Bosco attached so much importance to the motivations and gave reasons to his suggestions.

4. Simplicity, good sense, balance and serenity: There were no exaggerations in the way discipline was obtained at the Oratory. Punishing was never meted out in public.

5. Instruction and cultural and technical formation. At the Oratory, the study and piety formula stood for the integrity of objectives in the work of education. He was made aware of the history of his nation.

6. Don Bosco showed reasonableness in whatever he did in the educational work in the Oratory:

a) Reasonable in Religion: Don Bosco imparted religion to the young in a reasonable and rational way. He prescribed for his children no extra ordinary practices of Piety.

b) Reasonableness in loving-kindness: For Don Bosco, loving-kindness is a mature and balanced affection which enables the young person to grow. It aims at bringing the youngster to do things out of conviction and not because of emotional attachment to a person.

c) Reasonableness in Discipline: Don Bosco’s disciplinary rules were few, and they made known to the students often and their implication explained to them at the beginning of every scholastic term. In order to get discipline one has to make the youngsters his friends and give them motivations.

d) Reasonableness in commanding: He would dialogue with the youngsters.

e) Reasonableness in activities assigned to boys: Though Don Bosco knew the importance of making the individual responsible by cultivating his personal qualities he did not force them. He gave them chances to work in groups thus making them leaders and apostles.

f) Reasonableness in leadership and service: Don Bosco taught his boys to face life with courage, like men and true leaders, to smile in the face of difficulty and start afresh even after failure.

g) Reasonableness in the use of recreation: Everybody needs relaxation. Don Bosco made use of picnics, games, dramas, the band, music etc. to do this.

h) Reasonableness in study and work: Don Bosco insisted on those who could study to produce their

best. Manual work was an integral part of Don Bosco's formation. He knew that it was necessary for the formation of true character. He taught them how to pick up a profession, to work hard and appreciate every kind of work.

The practice of Reason today:

Reason is known by a new name today: **It is called Dialogue.**

In contemporary society, dialogue is viewed under three aspects: as an attitude, as a communication and as collaboration. All these three aspects were practiced by Don Bosco.

Young people today want to be independent, to be themselves. They want to see in adults the ideals they have to strive for. For this reason today dialogue between young and adult has become absolutely indispensable. In order to do this the educator must involve himself physically in the world of the young, he must have a positive attitude of friendliness towards them and get to know their motivations, values and feelings.

Reason means educating in depth:

One of the real dangers facing young people today is superficiality or the tendency to live life on the surface. Another typical problem of the young people is fragmentation which arises out of their being pulled in different directions by all kinds of influences. As an antidote to fragmentation, reason brings young people to compare and contrast the various messages they receive and create synthesis for themselves that will give them a sense of direction.

Reason means educating to be critical:

Young people today live surrounded by an ideological and cultural pluralism. In order to be able to cope with this pluralism, Reason helps them to forge their own scale of values. They are taught the art of critiquing not in abstract but on the basis of their lived experience of daily events.

Reason means knowing and respecting the individual person:

The process of socialization today tends to lump people together as a mass and consider them as numbers or as cogs in a wheel. Education cannot be reasonable if it does not take into account the different ways, values, ideals, work-patterns and aspirations of each person.

Reason means helping each young person to discover and develop the richness within himself:

It is indeed unfortunate that society today tends to goad people including the young into identifying a person with what he has, does and feels. It does not pay attention to his inner richness which lies behind all that he is and does and which constitutes the nucleus of his person i.e., his capacity to love and be loved, to contemplate, interpret and give meaning to reality in a word, to be a person, someone for whom God has a loving design. Young people have to be helped to discover these resources which no one can take from them, and to learn to appreciate and make use of the good things they have in order to cope with the challenges of life.

Reason means releasing the energies of the young by imparting a positive message to them: There are much latent



*the Oratory of Valdocco
where the boys
and the Salesians
still play together*

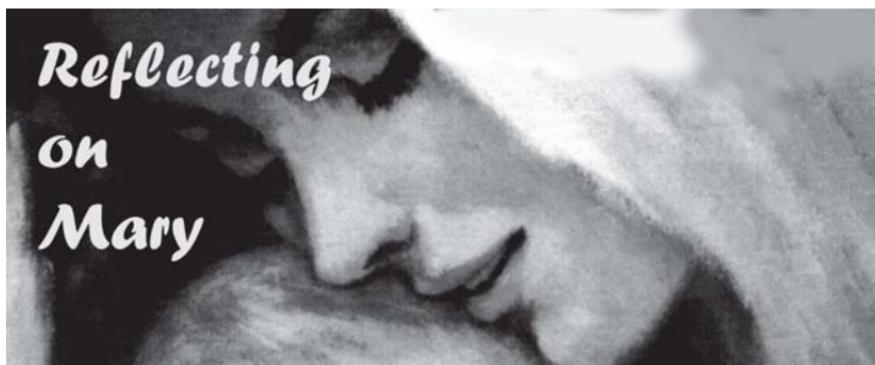
energies in the young people that are looking for an outlet. There is a volcano of idealism, a thirst for happiness and self fulfilment, a craving for beauty, a yearning for goodness. Don Bosco used to say, "Make them see the beauty of religion, make them feel the happiness of virtue." The educator must stress the peace and satisfaction that derive from honesty, the joy that comes from contributing towards a society more worthy of man.

Reason means appreciating and making use of the human sciences: Science which can be described as an ordered and well-founded knowledge of reality imparts to us a considerable body of knowledge and several conclusions. Don Bosco the educator does not despise the contribution of human sciences but welcomes them and he wanted that the educators must be competent, up to date and professional.

Reason also means widening awareness of different factors behind the human maturation:

Reason can also be understood as an ever-widening awareness of the biological, psychological, social economic, political and cultural factors which lie behind the difficult process of human maturation and social evolution such as awareness of the dynamics at work which make for an open personality. Reason is the basic power tool which enables one to remain one's individuality and yet be a member of the social group.

Reason plays a great role in the educative system of Don Bosco. Don Bosco was going round the technical school of St. Michael, Rome when a boy bounced downstairs singing and whistling. The Rector scolded him for his ill-mannered behaviour. "Did the boy do anything wrong?" asked Don Bosco. "Don't you think that such loudish whistling was uncivil?" "But it was not a deliberate infraction" said Don Bosco. "I expect silence at certain hours of the day too, but I ignore minor, thoughtless slips. Besides, I let my boys shout and sing in the playground and on the stairways. Don't you think we ought to go and cheer him up?" The Rector courteously agreed. In the shop, Don Bosco called the boy over to him: bitter and dejected he shuffled over. "Come here, my friend," Don Bosco said to him, "I want to tell you something. Don't be afraid. Your superior has kindly given me permission to talk to you. Cheer up! Everything is all right, provided that you be a good boy from now on and we remain friends. Take this medal and say a Hail Mary for me!" □



MARY IN THE MAGISTERIUM OF THE CHURCH

by Franco Careglio

The First encyclical expressly devoted to Marian devotion was written by Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903). He was a Pope who firmly and with a strong sense of apostolic courage, faced the social reality of his time. One marvels that this is also the Pope of the *Rerum Novarum* (May 15th 1891). Certainly, even though a major part of its content is a papal reflection on the situation of the worker in that century - he had spent several pages on devotion to the Madonna. He was a Pope who intensely perceived and shared the sufferings of the world and offered, from his vast cultural experience, not something simply devotional. Instead, this great Pope taught that the prayer and the affectionate knowledge of the Mother of God should be anything but sentimental. It was the closest approach to the mystery of Christ that was effected through the humanity of a simple woman who did not pretend to understand everything but *'pondered everything in her heart.'*

In the first six years of his pontificate Pope Leo wrote two encyclicals on the Mother of God

which were not only invitations to invoke the help of "the co-redemptrix of the human race" but which were important contributions to Mariological research.

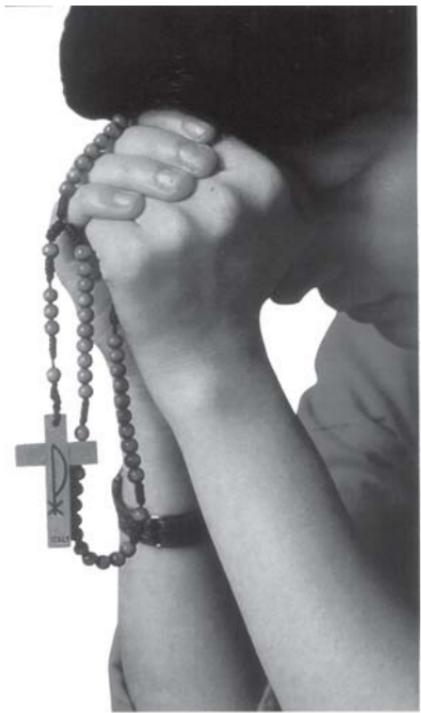
In the years that that followed from 1891 to 1898, he wrote eight other encyclicals, one each year, in which continued to invite Christians to pray to the Mother of God and he offered them effective and precise reflections on her irreplaceable role in the history of Salvation. The main theme however of every written text dwelt on the validity of praying the Rosary. Even if this prayer today, because of the erroneous judgement of a few, seems to appear outdated, it continues to be one of the most popular and most copiously filled with Biblical content. The Rosary is a meditation on the life of Christ through the eyes of Mary whose gaze is a gaze of love and of meditative silence. It was not for nothing that Jesus taught that the "little ones" were blessed because to such as these "are revealed the things that are concealed from the wise and the learned" (Mt 11:25). Those parts of

the Rosary called “mysteries” are accessible to the truly little ones. This does not mean they are illiterate but after much study they have come to realize that the love of God surpasses any human rationalism. From the words of Leo XIII we have this teaching: The Rosary may be prayed by the illiterate or the intelligent as long as both recognize that everything in this world is wonderful even though it is stained and decayed before the love of God in his unique and infinite wisdom.

Supreme among the Apostles

Promulgated on 1st September 1883 this encyclical begins by recognizing that the “supreme ministry exercised by us” (the so-called one “royal plural” alludes to the human and religious authority) recognizes the intercession of the Virgin Mary, who “before God is our mediatrix, our peace and the dispenser of heavenly graces.” From where she is “seated on the highest throne of power and glory (she) grants her graces to humankind as they laboriously make their way to their heavenly homeland.”

The encyclical traces the grand lineage of the history of the Rosary beginning from St. Dominic (1170-1221) who was “the one who first introduced the term the ‘holy’ Rosary and who, through his disciples, propagated this devotion.” It goes on to enumerate the military victories attributed to praying the Rosary and the various others who acknowledged it as the most powerful weapon to overcome every kind of evil. The letter goes on: we are unable to ignore the notable uneasiness of today’s sensibilities. How can we associate the person of Mary, a symbol of peace and tenderness, with a battle



that destroys and annihilates our enemies? Historical honesty can do nothing but recognize the various cultural forms of this age. Without entering such a complex problem, one can say that the Rosary is truly a weapon that can infallibly be used to overpower the “enemies” of the soul. In the century XIII, when St. Dominic prayed the Rosary the enemies and heretics were defeated. Now, for more disconcerting reasons, should we not listen to the voice of Blessed Pope John Paul II when he said: “*There is no peace without justice and is not there justice without forgiveness*”? It is easy to be scandalized by the past but it is less easy to recognize that today, as in any age, violence provokes violence, and aggressions and wars provoke a never ending vortex of pain and suffering along a path of

no return leading to desperation and death. The Pope (Leo XIII), in the manner of the celebrated St. Dominic "warmly exhorts all Christians to tirelessly fulfil the pious exercise of praying the Holy Rosary either privately or publicly, asking that the whole month of October be consecrated and devoted to the heavenly Queen of the Rosary." With intense expressions of Marian piety the document concludes with the certainty that through "the intercession of her in whom God had restored the fullness of every good" will lavish on all the faithful the most abundant heavenly graces. These pages, so simple in their enunciation, most certainly succeed in encouraging greater Marian devotion.

The Great Year

Promulgated on 30th August 1884, this encyclical begins by recalling the previous year. It exhorts Christians to persevere in reciting the Rosary during the month of October to overcome the power of Satan, to secure the freedom of the Church and its Pontiff and to free Italy from the Asian plague that has been spreading. Very briefly he compares the figure of Mary to Judith (the protagonist in the book by the same name in the Old Testament). It begins like all such documents in which the story of Mary is situated in the biblical context.

He makes his invitation to recite the Rosary more urgent so as to receive the indulgences and spiritual benefits that are linked to it. It is curious that he encourages the recitation of the Rosary during Holy Mass (if that happened today!) and invites the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament if the

Rosary is recited in the evening. Even here, he deals with wise cultural forms through wise liturgical and theological research that have been justly revised since.

In their apparent simplicity, these documents reiterate one of the mysteries and, for that reason, one of the greatest paradoxes of Christianity: that Mary is the Mother of God. It is a title that is filled with such wonder both in theology and the liturgy. This ancient reaction to a marvel in the Old Testament in the moment when the Glory of God descends in a cloud over the temple (1 Kings 8:27) the people exclaim: "*He whom the heavens cannot contain...how can this temple be large enough?*"

'Mother of God,' the title that Leo XIII uses more frequently than any other, is the oldest and most important dogmatic title of the Madonna and which was defined by the Church at the Council of Ephesus in 431 to be believed as the truth of our faith is to be believed by all Christians. It is the foundation of all Mary's greatness; and the beginning of Mariology itself. It is the most ecumenical of all titles, not only because it was defined by a Council, but also because it is unique and unanimously accepted, at least in principle by all the Christian confessions. Leo XIII, not very familiar with ecumenism, shows however, that he speaks prophetically even without realising it, in the name of God: the Pope launches out, with the Mother of God, towards that unreachable horizon which is the union of all people of every clime and culture who are universally and immensely loved by God. □

NEWSBITS

TIJUANA

The waves of the Pacific crash against the wall. The poles and the barbed wire fence seem to dip into the blueness of the sea and disappear but in reality they do not budge an inch, they remain firmly anchored to the ocean floor. And this is not where the three-metre high wall ends. This is just where it starts. It stretches right across the Mexico-U.S. border, covering a distance of two thousand kilometres.

The hundreds of crosses along the wall give it a white a tint, almost as if they were meant as decorations to liven up a miserable looking monument dedicated to the thousands of migrants that have lost their lives trying to cross the border. Some die of cold or hunger, other from snake bites or police gunfire. People have tried to climb over it, cross the mountains and make a dream come true: the American dream. Tijuana, Mexico: one of the most heavily trafficked borders in the world. In the U.S., President Barack Obama wants to give legal status to eleven million immigrants, by granting them citizenship. Meanwhile, in Tijuana, approximately ten thousand people are sleeping in the streets or in burrows along the river that marks the border, waiting to get past it either legally or illegally.

"Many of the people living here have been forced to leave



The border wall at Tijuana

the U.S. and will not give up on the idea of returning." Fr. Ernesto Hernandez Ruiz, a Salesian, runs the "Padre Chava" refectory that prepares meals for Tijuana's destitute, most of whom are migrants. He serves a thousand meals six days a week. The Salesians are present in many of the cities located along the border that separates Mexico from the U.S.: Mexicali, Nogales, Ciudad Juarez, Ciudad Acuna, Piedras Negra and Nuevo Laredo, which are mainly used as transit routes for merchandise (and drugs). But for the Salesians Tijuana is more important because this is where most human movement takes place.

Ever since the prohibition era, California's residents see Tijuana as a city that has gone off the rails. Once you've crossed the border, it's all about alcohol and no limits, at low prices. Mexico

on the other hand, sees it as the city of hope, of dreams and of a better future. But for many that dream ends up crashing against the big wall.

"We guarantee the destitute a meal because those who go hungry are capable of anything," Fr. Ernesto said. He is well aware of the fact that human traffickers are very active in Tijuana. Crossing the border costs about a thousand dollars and those who cannot pay it all in one go, incur a debt which then has to be paid back once they reach the U.S. and find a job. If people do not pay up, their families back in Mexico pay the price. "We try to persuade migrants not to stay here - Fr. Ernesto explained - but to go back to their country of origin. We have even signed agreements with transport companies so that they can travel back at discounted prices. But it is not easy because they will not accept defeat after spending their whole lives dreaming of a better life in the United States."

It is eight o'clock in the morning and food is being handed out. Fr. Ernesto has to go. There are hundreds of people waiting in line. The queue which stretches for about one kilometre seems never-ending, as always. It tails off in the centre of Tijuana, between Avenues Melchor Ocampo and Internacional. The wall is just a few metres from there. The elderly, women, children and men (there were mostly men) that turned up today got something eat. Tomorrow who knows?



VATICAN CITY

There are changes ahead for the Vatican's communications offices: this morning the Holy See announced the nomination of the Vatican Television Centre's new director, Edoardo Viganò. Viganò is a priest and lecturer at the Pontifical Lateran University and a cinema expert. He replaces Fr. Federico Lombardi, who continues his role as director of the Vatican Press Office and Vatican Radio.

The second nomination announced today, was that of the vice director of the Vatican Press Office, Angelo Scelzo, who is also Undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications. He will be working alongside the Press Office's other vice director, Ciro Benedettini. Scelzo, a lay journalist, will chiefly be managing the crediting for audiovisual material, a task which had so far been handled by the Pontifical Council. Now everything is being merged into the Vatican Press Office, which seems more logical.

These two nominations are part of a plan to restructure the Vatican's entire media and communications system, which should lead to better coordination. □

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.*

Our sincere and heartfelt thanks to our dear Jesus and Mary for the numerous favours received and blessings bestowed on our family through the praying of the three Hail Marys.

Antonieta Simoes, Macau, S. China

Our sincere thanks to Mother Mary for the many blessings and favours received through praying the three Hail Marys. Mother please continue to intercede for our family and be with us always.

Mr. & Mrs. Rebello, Mumbai

Sincere thanks to the Lord Jesus and Mother Mary for all the favours granted through praying the three Hail Marys. My daughter Jessica had a white mark on her toe which disappeared. Our Lady please continue to bless our family.

Sandra, Goa

My grandson was very critical as soon as he was born and we cried out to the Lord and prayed the three Hail Marys. The next day he was 90% better. The doctors expected it to happen after 72 hours. The doctors called it 'magic' but we said it was a miracle. Also I had a growth in my naval which needed surgery and I prayed the three Hail Marys. As the doctor started clearing the spot it just fell off. Thanks and praise to Jesus and Mamma Mary and all the saints for all the blessings and gifts God has blessed us with.

I. D'Cunha, Mumbai

I am most grateful to Mother Mary for having found the missing gold which I thought was stolen. I recited the 3 Hail Marys for two days. Mother please continue to guide and guard us.

Angela Ferro, Mumbai

I am most grateful to Our Lady and Dominic Savio for the gift of a child to Sonu,

Jeremita Fernandes, Goa

My sincere thanks to Mother Mary for granting all my favours when I prayed the 3 Hail Marys daily.

Mrs. Roma Paris, Dahisar

Our grateful thanks to Mother Mary for all the favours received and for the safe operation when we prayed the three Hail Marys.

Mrs. Seema Noronha, Dahisar

Thank you our dearest Mother Mary, for the many blessings and graces my family and I have received as we faithfully pray the three Hail Marys especially for good health and excellent results of my daughter in her SSC examinations. Protect us always.

S. Monteiro & Family, Goa

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

Thank you dearest Mother and Don Bosco for the many favours and gifts showered on us. Please continue to shower on us your eternal blessings and good health.

Mary Braganza

My belated but sincere thank to Our Lady, Help of Christians, Don Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for a safe delivery of a healthy boy.

Sophia, Mumbai

My sincere and heartfelt thanks to Mother Mary, St. John Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for hearing my prayer and plea for a safe delivery of my daughter and for the divine gift of a baby girl. I also thank my mother for healing this baby Jady from her allergic condition and bronchitis. Thank you St. Dominic Savio for helping us to find a suitable boy from a good Catholic family for my daughter and for blessing us to have a blessed wedding celebration. Do continue to bless my children and their families.

Elizabeth & Sylvester, Bangalore

Thank you Mother Mary, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the gift of a son in June 2011 and for the many favours granted to us.

P. Coutinho, Goa

My sincere thanks to Our Lady, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the safe delivery and the gift of a healthy baby boy. May Mother Mary also continue to bless us all.

D'Souza, Mumbai

**LOVING CHILDREN TO
THEIR LOVING MOTHER**

Thank you, dear Jesus Mother Mary for blessing me and bringing me safely back from the ICU when I was admitted with Malaria and many other complications. I am now in good health. Please keep my husband and my family in your prayers.

Devotee, Mumbai

I am most grateful to you dearest mother for curing me of an illness.

Suja Johnson, Mira Road

Dear Mother Mary, Help of Christians, I thank you for the many favours received through your powerful intercession and most especially for the sale of my property.

N.C. Lobo, Mumbai

My sincere thanks to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and Our Blessed Mother for all that has been given to me and done to me.

M. Dodd, Pune

My belated but sincere thanks to Our Lord and his Blessed Mother for blessing my son with a job of his choice.

Mrs. I. D'Cruz, Pune

On 12 May after having said the Rosary we left the house on our way for a holiday. Hardly a few minutes in the dark, we saw that we had hit a person who was badly wounded. We expected the worst. While my husband jumped out of the vehicle my two daughters and I kept repeating "blood of Jesus save her" and we prayed the Memorare. I am happy to say while the woman had fractured both her legs, she is now on her way to recovery. Our sincere gratitude to the Mercy of Jesus and Mother Mary. Our gratitude for my good report when I was sick.

Sarla & Mario Furtado, Goa

THANKS TO DEAR ST. DOMINIC SAVIO



Thank you dear Mother Mary, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the gift of a baby girl and a baby boy and for taking care of them at birth when they were in the ICU

Simon and Savita Barbosa, Goa

Many thanks to Jesus, Mother Mary, St. Joseph and St. Dominic Savio for saving my life. I had a very major attack on 18th October 2011. I had developed pain in my chest while I was travelling from Goa to Bombay. As soon as I reached home I visited the doctor who normally arrives at the clinic at 11am but when I reached there I found that he arrived at 10am. As soon as I went in I collapsed in the doctor's hands. He took me immediately to the hospital. I was unconscious. I think it was Jesus who saved

my life through the instrumentality of the doctor. I was alone at home. My family was abroad. We thank Jesus and praise Him.

Mr. Anthony R. Carvalho, Mumbai

My sincere thanks to dear Dominic Savio . I've had cataract in both eyes for almost 17 years which was no trouble to me. The fourth eye specialist I visited said that I had an unusually rare cataract which allowed me to see. By God's grace and the intercession of Don Bosco and St. Dominic Savio, I was still see.

Mrs. M. Augustine

My sincere thanks to Almighty God, Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for the safe and normal delivery of my daughter-in-law and the gift of a healthy baby girl despite having problems at the beginning of her pregnancy. Please continue to shower on us your blessings and keep us safe. I pray the three Hail Marys daily.

Mary Nazareth, Goa

Thank you St. Dominic Savio for helping and protecting my child during my pregnancy and delivery. Due to complications during my pregnancy, I was admitted to hospital in my sixth month. From then onwards till the time of my delivery, the scapular of St. Dominic Savio was always around my neck. Because of it, I sailed through my last trimester without any complications. I went through 18 hours of labour and did not have the energy to push at the last stage. It was St. Dominic Savio who guided the doctor to ensure a normal delivery. With the help of vacuum and forceps a healthy baby boy weighing almost 4 kgs was born. *Griselda Lopez, Mumbai*

APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

MAY 2013

The Holy Father's General Intention: *That administrators of justice may act always with integrity and right conscience.*

The Holy Father's Missionary Intention: *That seminaries, especially of mission Churches, may form pastors after the Heart of Christ, fully dedicated to proclaiming the Gospel.*

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MARY WAS THERE

My grateful thanks for a miraculous recovery! My son, Ravi had acute pain in the ear. On examination, our family physician confirmed that there is a tear in the eardrum and had to be operated immediately. With great hope in Jesus and our Mother Mary, I went to the ENT specialist who, after some tests informed that everything was okay and that there was only pus formed inside the ear and with medicine, he would be alright. My nephew John had a gland in his jaw and the doctor advised some tests. Since my nephew is a smoker, we panicked but the reports were negative. Thank you Mother Mary for always protecting me and my family and for the many blessings.

Ramona D'Costa, 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.

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Please address all correspondence to:

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