

# DON BOSCO'S MADONNA

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***O God,  
grant us protection  
in our weakness  
and help us  
through her intercession  
to rise  
above our iniquities.***

*From the Mass  
in honour  
of Our Lady of Lourdes*

**Cover:  
The Apparation at Lourdes  
by Luberoff**



## From The Editor's Desk

### Out of Isolation

From my college years I remember spending time out with some 'friends' who were more than thrice my age. I was barely entering my twenties and they were well into their early seventies or eighties. In those days when we got familiar with these elderly friends we always addressed them as 'uncle' or 'auntie.' Many of these friends lived alone in large bungalows and except for the weekly visits of some middle-aged well meaning guest, they were left to themselves with a host of servants and gardeners to attend to them, but when I went over I was always treated like one of the family. Auntie Jane was one such dear. She was a tiny frail, pale lady with wispy grey hair and wrinkled skin. She always spoke quietly; in fact, I can't recall her ever raising her voice much above a whisper. She had a soft spot for me, and always offered me books from her prolific collection and music that she knew I liked. Sometimes I accompanied her to the market and helped her with her shopping. It was always a delight because she would ask me so many questions along the way. She had had a very difficult life and was frankly very amused at the ease with which I found solutions to her 'problems.' She wouldn't let me leave without offering me something special from her enviable collection and some of these tokens of her affection I still cherish to this day.

As she grew older, Aunt Jane became increasingly deaf. At first she wasn't too bad, and I got used to talking a bit louder and more clearly in her presence, and repeating a sentence occasionally. But as time passed her deafness grew worse, and it became more and more difficult to communicate with her. Over the years, she tried innumerable hearing aids, but none of them proved satisfactory. Eventually, she became almost totally deaf, no longer capable of picking up the thread of a conversation or joining in the chatter.

The cruellest part of Auntie Jane's affliction was the isolation it imposed on her, as she withdrew more and more into a lonely world of silence. I can still see the strained look on her face at as she tried in vain to pick up some hint of what the conversation was about. I can still see her blank smile, as she pretended to laugh at jokes she hadn't really grasped. And I can still see her embarrassment, when meeting a neighbour in the street, at not being able to hold a normal conversation.

In her final years, the only way I could keep in touch with her was by scribbling notes on a pad. It was a clumsy way of communicating, and it didn't always work, but at least it drew her into the conversation and prevented her from drifting away into total isolation.

As I look around at the people who are isolated in our society today - those newcomers to the locality, for example, or the physically challenged senior citizen - I sometimes wonder if we couldn't, with a little imagination, find some similar gesture that would ease their isolation and let them know we cared.

*Fr. Ian Douulton, sdb*

# THE FIVE KEY REGRETS OF THE DYING

*Fr. Erasto Fernandez, sss*

**P**eople grow a lot when they are faced with their own mortality' says Bronnie Ware who works in palliative care.<sup>1</sup> 'I learnt never to underestimate someone's capacity for growth. Some changes were phenomenal. Each experienced a variety of emotions, as expected: denial, fear, anger, remorse, more denial and eventually acceptance. Every single patient found their peace before they departed though, every single one of them. But when questioned about any regrets they had or anything they would do differently, common themes surfaced again and again.' She goes on to list the most common five:

## **1. I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.**

This was by far the most common regret of all. When people realise that their life is almost over and look back clearly on it, it is easy to see how many dreams have gone unfulfilled or only partially realized. Most people had not honoured even a half of their dreams and had to die knowing that it was due to choices they themselves had made, or not made. This taught me that it is of paramount importance to try and honour at least some of our dreams along the way. From the moment that a person loses his/her health, it is too late. Health brings a freedom very few realise, until they no longer have it.

## **2. I wish I didn't work so hard**

Preoccupation with work, primarily an almost desperate

struggle to make both ends meet, invariably results in missing the children's youth and the spouse's companionship. Women also spoke of this regret, even though they are generally more at home. By simplifying one's lifestyle and making conscious choices along the way, it is possible to make do with a lesser income. This extra freedom or space in one's life, makes one happier and more open to new opportunities, especially those more suited to the new lifestyle.

## **3. I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.**

Quite a few people are in the habit of suppressing their feelings almost totally to maintain at least a semblance of peace with others. As a result, they inevitably settle for a mediocre existence and never become who they are truly capable of becoming. Several develop illnesses relating to the bitterness and resentment they nurtured as a result.

No one can control the reactions of others. However, although some may initially react when one changes the way one is by speaking honestly, in the end this inevitably raises the relationship to a whole new and healthier level. Even more it could release and even eliminate altogether the unhealthy relationship from one's life. But either way, one who takes the bold step to share feelings is the undoubted winner over a period of time!

## **4. I wish I had stayed in touch**

**with my friends.**

This regret plagues those who did almost nothing to truly realise the full benefits of old friends until their dying weeks and then it was not always possible to track them down after a long gap. Generally most people become so caught up in their own lives that they foolishly let golden friendships slip by over the years. Almost everyone misses their true friends when they are dying. As death creeps up close, people do want to get their affairs in order as much as possible. But they sadly realize that now it is not money or status that holds the greatest importance for them. When the chips are down, it all boils down to love and relationships in the end. That is all that remains in the final weeks: loving relationships!

### **5. I wish that I had allowed myself to be happier.**

Surprisingly this is a very common near-death regret. Many fail to realise until almost the end that happiness is a choice. They had remained stuck in and grown accustomed to old patterns and habits. The 'comfort-zones' of familiarity built around them initially more for security gradually overflowed into their emotions as well as their physical lives. But deep down, the fear of change had led them to pretend to themselves and to others that they were serenely content with their lot. But when one is on one's deathbed, what others think of anyone is hardly the uppermost thought that plagues one's mind. How wonderful instead if one were able to let go the perceptions of others and smile again, long

before one is already at death's door.

'Life is a choice', concludes Bronnie. 'It is *your* life. Choose consciously, choose wisely, choose honestly. Choose happiness,' she sagaciously advises!

### **Jesus Teaches the Same**

Inviting us to decide on our priorities in life prudently, Jesus told his listeners the parable of the rich fool: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God" (Lk. 12:16-21).

Luke is the one evangelist who stresses the truth that riches are best used as means not so much to obtain personal satisfaction and enjoyment, but rather they serve their purpose when we use them to ensure our eternal destiny. He envisages a great reversal of fortunes when riches are used only for one's personal pleasure and gain. The poignant case of Dives and Lazarus is a story told to bring home precisely this point (Lk. 16:19-31). Luke in this story further emphasizes the fact that once a man grows rich, he seems to lose his balance as regards his priorities; he becomes blind to

even ordinary common sense and will not pay heed even if someone rises from the dead to warn him of the futility of a self-centred ephemeral life.

### **People – our Greatest Treasure**

Both Bronnie and long before her Jesus himself, as well as the great sages of humanity all down the centuries have stressed the fact that if we wish to be happy and successful in life, we need to 'love people and use money' and not the other way round as most seem to choose! Yet, even a cursory glance over the entire world, both of history and of the contemporary age, shows us that most people choose the opposite philosophy of life which is to love and amass wealth even when it implies sacrificing friends and other people, at times even members of one's own family. A little genuine experience, however, suffices to convince us that touching the heart of even one person is far more precious and rewarding than all the transitory corruptible wealth a person can amass.

Some great spiritual teachers tell us that people veer off the path of true happiness because fundamentally their problem is that they confuse real happiness with pleasure. These wise persons point out how pleasure, which can be very intense at certain times and in some circumstances, is nevertheless essentially momentary, lasting for but a few fleeting seconds. It is also largely localized to the physical and material level and satisfies primarily only that one aspect of our lives. Hence the fulfillment it brings is at most partial and never truly capable of fulfilling a person

at the very core of his/her being. Happiness, on the other hand, is often not as intense as pleasure but it does truly fulfill the person from deep within and extends to almost every aspect of his life; it is reflected even on the physical plane. Thus, the happiness that floods our being when we genuinely and selflessly serve another brings us ecstasy and contentment that easily suffuses the giver as much as the receiver. And this can last for a far greater length of time than a flash of intense sensual gratification. Besides, pleasure is basically enjoyable by one person at a time, and that too alone whereas happiness can be and is generally shared by even a large group.

Another significant difference between the two is that pleasure tends to make us concentrate on ourselves and the long-term outcome is that we become thoroughly self-centred, thinking ultimately of no one else but ourselves. Happiness, however, is basically diffusive and tends to automatically include others. Thus, when we are filled with real happiness, we instinctively want to share it with others and in the sharing we ourselves are further blessed. A typical case in view would be the moment when the two disciples of Emmaus discovered that the Crucified Jesus has truly risen! Though exhausted after the long day's journey, they nevertheless ran all the way back to Jerusalem just in order to share their discovery with the rest of the community who also grieved the death of Jesus. And, precisely while they were sharing their experience of meeting with the Risen Lord, they encounter him again, this time at a much deeper

level, and receive their commission to go out and share him in ever wider circles (Lk. 24:36-53).

### **Eucharist: School of Selfless Service**

It is precisely in the context of the Last Supper that Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and then alerted them to the fact that he had set them an example for them to imitate. Jesus went on to say, "By this will everyone know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:35). So, as often as we participate meaningfully and wholeheartedly in the Eucharist we align our priorities more and more to those of Jesus and all this ensures that we would not have the kind of regrets

that several have as they approach their dying moments. Rather, at that crucial 'moment of truth' would be radiant and eager to meet our Lord and Master like St. Paul who wrote, "As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing" (2 Tim 4:6-8). □

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from an article by **Bronnie Ware**, entitled, *Top Five Regrets of the Dying*

## walking with the Church



### ***Who will go to hell?***

*From St. Martin's Messenger, Ireland*

**Q.** *Will those who do not believe in Jesus go to Hell?*

**A.** The Church's teaching on this question is that God is at work among all Christian denominations, across religions and in the hearts of those who profess to have no religion and that anyone of good will may come to the vision of God in heaven - even if they never heard

of Christ. The Catechism of the Catholic Church # 847 reads "Those who through no fault of their own, do not know the gospel of Christ or his church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their own conscience - those too may attain eternal salvation." □



# AT THE SCHOOL OF THE SICK

*from Maria Ausiliatrice - February 2006 (T/A. ID)*

**T**he rapid technological, cultural and social evolution with its undeniable advantages brings in its wake a preoccupation and a fear about our health and the future of our planet.

Such a situation raises questions about life, the meaning of pain and suffering and how we come to terms with this reality. This fundamentally comes down to the human and Christian witness of the sick who can become the living Gospel of Christ among us.

If suffering is life's teacher then a patient becomes a good one.

Accordingly, society and culture are absurdly branded - in some ambivalent way, depending on particular situations - by a passive surrender in the face of human limitations or a refusal to accept one's condition, or an arrogant adherence to the misguided notion of human omnipotence. The crisis of verticality tries to hide God through an individualism which seeks to direct everything to itself while struggling to live in time and to have a right sense of it. These attitudes seem to be the determinants in the process of interpreting suffering and influencing its meaning. There is no shortage of social attitudes and cultures of indifference and passivity towards the sick.

In this context, doesn't coming face to face with sickness and suffering become a path to a more skilful and constructive vision of life and of the care of the sick? In fact, when we place ourselves in

the presence of a patient we find evidence that the patient asks for something and teaches us something too.

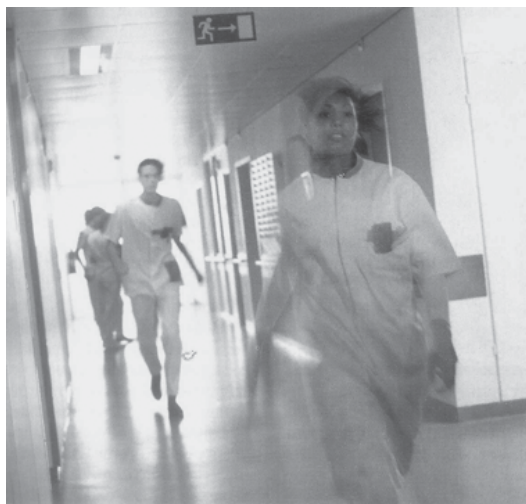
## **The Witness of the Sick**

The patient through his presence alone is capable of witnessing to the value of life in every moment and every situation in a context that is sometimes or often not considered in its entirety or is exploited or even despised. The patient by his very presence witnesses to a community that promotes and values life as it reflects on its own vulnerability and the fact of death as a reality of life. The need of care once again demonstrates the need for personal and collective responsibility in preventing the causes of disease by following healthier lifestyles. We must all work together, at all levels, to find a way to hope, to respect and to human growth.

Finally, the presence of a patient indicates an urgency that s/he be not left alone but be properly taken care of by society in general and the Christian community in particular. The ministry of healing requires "witnesses who are not affected by haste, individualism, the casual approach or easy discouragement, but who are capable of establishing open and reassuring dialogue with those who are sick."

## **What the Sick Teach us**

The educative capacity of the



*Health care professionals not only exercise their competence; they must increasingly exercise their humanity. It is the whole person who is sick, not only the body, so the attention is always given to the whole person.*

sick person is manifested in him/her being able to help us discover the essential realities of life: it is strange, but the sick person happens to recognize, not without surprise, how really important and valuable s/he is in helping people to come together only when there is pain.

In addition, the patient helps us to discover the extent and the provisional nature of human life by expressing the truth of a person in the face of the great mystery of human existence. The experience of suffering, in the great and small events in life, forces us to think more humbly about ourselves.

Finally, it is the suffering patient who, in the light of faith, allows us to fathom suffering, even through its absurd reality, in the painful inner lacerations seen against the background of

the cross of Christ - takes on a meaning beyond any human reckoning.

### **The Patient Pleads**

The existence of human sickness contends that the medical profession has a soul: there is an urgent commitment to a re-personalization of health professionals because of which they promote the establishment of a human element in a professional relationship with a patient.

This means that the economy should not be overbearing: health costs should not have a price. The need to save life is integral to health

in the face of a culture that drives us to consider our whole health-care system. There is an urgent need to reaffirm the centrality of the human person.

Obviously, any discussion about the reorganization of health-care must always have as its purpose the care of each person and science should always be at the service of life.

For this reason, the Christian community must be more attentive to the world of health and disease, to recognize it as fertile ground for spreading the Gospel and as an opportunity to grow as a community that is educated in health care. For this reason we should re-evaluate how we care for the sick and suffering which vitally means bringing the sick out of their sickness of isolation and/or their condition of uselessness. □



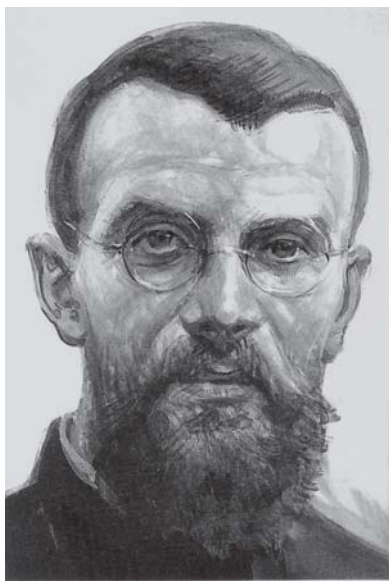
## CALLISTUS CARAVARIO 1903 - 1930

**C**allistus Caravario was born at Cuorgné, in the province of Turin, on 18 June 1903. He seemed naturally inclined to prayer and loved his mother very much, as the many letters he wrote to her testify. At five years of age his family moved to Turin close to the Porta Nuova Oratory. Hewas first in his class at school, and served Mass each morning Mass. On the advice of Fr Garelli the Rector of the Oratory, he entered the Novitiate and became a Salesian. In 1922 Bishop Versiglia was in Turin who spoke of the missions to the Brothers. Callistus told him: *"Bishop, you will see me in China"*.

Fr Garelli left for China and in a short time Callistus followed him there. His mother told Fr Garelli: *"I am willing to leave my son in Don Bosco's hands."* *"With all the affection I am capable of,"* Callistus would write, *"thank you Lord, for having given me such a good mother."* *"Mother, here is news that will make you happy: This morning I gave my first catechism lesson in Chinese"*.

Callistus was sent to Macao, and then to Timor where he edified everyone because of his goodness and apostolic zeal. *"My good mother",* he wrote, *"pray that your Callistus may not be just half a priest but a complete priest"*.

On 18 May 1929, he returned to Shiuchow, where bishop Versiglia ordained him a priest and



entrusted him with the mission at Linchow. In a short time he had visited all the families and earned the affection of the children. The political situation in China grew tense and the persecution of Christians and foreign missionaries began.

On 13 February 1930 Fr. Caravario was in Shiuchow to accompany the bishop on his pastoral visit to Linchow. Some young boys and girls went with them. On 25 February a group of Bolshevik pirates stopped the bishop's boat, wanting to take the girls. While trying to stop them Bishop Versiglia and Fr Callistus were taken by force and ultimately shot, but before they were killed they heard one another's confessions. They breathed their last in their beloved China.

Paul VI declared them martyrs in 1976, John Paul II declared them Blessed in 1983 and canonised them on 1st October 2000. □

**GUJARAT'S FIRST SALESIAN PRIEST  
FR. IGNAS MACWAN SDB**

*He is presently the principal of Don Bosco, Dakor, Gujarat*

**I**gnas Macwan was born on 21<sup>st</sup> May, 1957 at Mariampura, Petlad, Gujarat. His father, Clemence Dhulabhai and his mother Mariam Clemence were a pious couple who had eight children, Ignas was the seventh among his siblings.

After completing his Matriculation (old SSC) Ignas did a three year technical course at Xavier Technical Institute, Sevasi, in the Fitters and Turners trade and was gainfully employed but from his childhood he nurtured a great desire to become a priest. He decided to leave the job in order to fulfil his dream. Although some tried to dissuade him, Ignas was convinced that he wanted to answer God's call.

Ignas was keen on becoming a missionary and working outside Gujarat. He eventually joined the Salesians after he consulted Fr. Thomas Braganza, the principal of Don Bosco High School, Baroda and the Rector, Fr. P.I. Jacob. Ignas was directed to join the aspirantate at Lonavla in June 1982. He made his first profession on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 1986 and was ordained on 28<sup>th</sup> December, 1995 at Mariampura, Petlad.

After his ordination, Ignas was assigned to the community of Dakor as an Administrator and later to Narukot for two years. In 1999 he was appointed Principal at Don Bosco, Chhota Udepur. A year later, he was transferred to Betul in Madhya Pradesh as the Principal of the Technical



Institute. In 2001 he returned to Dakor to complete his B.Ed. studies, and the following year he was appointed as the Principal of the school there. In 2003 he was back in Chhota Udepur as Principal, a responsibility that he carried out for the next five years. In 2009 once again he returned to Dakor as Principal, and continues to serve there presently.

Ignas has a great sense of dedication and is very approachable. These traits have won him the affection and admiration of all.

Two other well known qualities of Ignas are his cooking and gardening abilities.

But probably the most unique distinction that Ignas can be proud of is the fact that he is the first Gujarati Salesian. With a contended smile on his face, he says he is happy that he has been able to spread the Salesian charism and Don Bosco's mission in Gujarat. □

# Witnesses in & for Our Times



## HE STROVE TO LIVE LIKE CHRIST ST. JEROME EMILIANI (8 FEB)

**J**erome Miani (*as he was called*) was a native of the city of Venice, situated in the lagoons of the Adriatic Sea. Because of the beauty of its palaces, its antiquity and liberal government, people from all over the world come to live there. Like many families of that city, because of wars with the Goths and other barbarians, the Mianis left for Rome with their belongings and came to live in Venice. Many prelates and saintly senators came from that family and witnessed to its noble ancestry. They reached high government posts and brought illustrious fame because of their intelligence and wise counsel.

Jerome was nurtured and brought up by his parents in the bosom of the Republic. His father was Angelo and his mother was Leonora Morosini. It was said that an angel told them that a saint with a sacred name would be born to that family.

He never lacked friends either because he was gracious or because by nature he was affectionate and benevolent. He was naturally joyful, kind, and strong-minded and as far as being talented, he could hold

conversations with his equals, but his love was superior to his intelligence. He was short of stature, of rather dark complexion, robust and vigorous. Sometimes, he was quick-tempered too.

During his youth he always adapted himself to the changing times. During the war against the League of Cambrai, he was a member of the cavalry and he did not know how to guard himself from the errors into which most army men fall into. This was not because they were in the army but because it was those with ruined souls who joined the army and they were corrupted by the bad example of their vicious leaders, who with their iniquitous and corrupt habits spoiled the soldiers. Instead of being custodians of Christian customs and defenders of honesty, the men grew impure and gave in to wicked thievery or still worse, they formed a cesspool of every wickedness, which meant that to be a soldier meant being lustful, insolent, cruel, and greedy, instead of being chaste, modest, strong and liberal.

### His Conversion

In God's good time Jerome

realized that he had lived a life of ingratitude and profligacy. When he began to become aware of his waywardness and his ingratitude at the many graces God had bestowed on him, he wept often and at the feet of the Crucified. He prayed that he would hate himself and his past life. He attended church and heard sermons. He sought the company of those who could help him with their counsel, example, and prayer. Among the many the Lord sent to him for his salvation, was an illustrious priest, a Venetian Canon Regular, a man of outstanding doctrine and kindness who for many years took care of his soul and directed him to lead an upright life.

He began to help the poor with whatever alms he received, with counsel, by visiting them and by defending them. What was most delightful to know was that he was always joyful except when he called to mind his sins. In order to uproot a sin from his soul he would practice the opposite virtue in order to overcome the fault. After he had conquered one fault, he would go to the next one. In this way, with the help of God, who granted him everyday greater fervour, he soon uprooted every vice from his soul and was ready to plant in its place the seed of divine grace. He would often remind his friends: *"Brother, if you want to cleanse your soul from sin in order to make it the dwelling place for the Lord, start by pulling out one hair at a time so that you may punish it in your own way, then go to the others and soon you will be sound."*

He set his heart on suffering every misfortune for the love of



his Lord. One day, as the nobleman Paul Giustiniani narrated: a scoundrel viciously insulted him for no reason at all and threatened to pull out his beard (that was very long) one hair at a time, he said nothing else but these words: *'If God wills it so, here I am. Do it!'* Those who heard Jerome say that remembered that if he had heard those threats in former times he would have torn the offender to pieces with his teeth.

### **Famine of 1528, Works of Mercy**

Europe and Italy in particular experienced a severe famine in 1528 and several people in the towns and villages of Italy died of starvation.

Hearing that Venice was better off people from all over Italy banded together and began to invade the city. You could see the poor in the squares and the streets unable even to cry, but weeping silently at their approaching death. Seeing such a spectacle and moved by ardent charity, Jerome decided to help them with whatever he could.

In these activities he would spend the entire day and, many times, the day was not enough. The dead, whom he found at times in the streets, unseen and

unknown, he would put on his shoulders as if they were balsam and gold, and would carry them to the cemeteries.

The horrible famine was suddenly followed by a fatal epidemic which caused purple and red spots to cover human bodies. Avoiding neither the sick nor the dead the valiant soldier of Christ contracted the same disease. Once he realized that, he made his confession, received Holy Communion and committed himself to the Lord and patiently he awaited God's will.

In a few days he recovered unexpectedly, and immediately resumed his previous work, though not yet entirely healed. He worked with greater fervour, as he was surer, after this personal experience, that the Lord does not abandon those who work in his service, rather, he accomplishes through them new and wonderful things.

Having gathered some children who would beg in the street he opened a school and taught his students how to live a holy life.

Jerome taught these children to fear God, to consider nothing their own, to live in common, to live not from begging but from their own labour. Begging, he used to say, was less than a Christian practice. He said everyone should support himself by the sweat of his own brow, according to the saying: *"He who does not work, should not eat."*

He left Venice and people accused him of inconstancy but he was following the promptings he heard from the Lord through the scriptures: *"I must evangelize also the other towns?"* Aware that the Christian people were like a

flock without a shepherd, he left Venice and went to Bergamo.

He crossed the river Adda and entered Milan where an outstanding act of his cannot be overlooked. After having arrived at Milan territory with many of his poor, he and several of the children with him fell sick. Having found an abandoned and unroofed hospital where there was but straw, he laid down on that. He had neither bread nor wine, nor money. A certain Duke Francesco Sforza sent him the necessary means and had him taken to Milan's hospital where he could stay with his companions.

### **Back to Venice, Death of Jerome**

He returned to Venice for some pious work and stayed there a little less than a year. He would visit friends with whom he conversed with such fervour that they were all filled with Christian hope.

He was fifty six years old and had spent the last twelve in Christian austerity when God was pleased to call him to his celestial fatherland.

It was God's divine will that a contagious disease should break out in the Bergamo territory, a disease not understood by the doctors, which in fourteen days or so would kill the sick. At that time Jerome was in St. Martin's Valley with many of his own. From them, occasionally, he would withdraw alone to a grotto for contemplation. It happened at that time that one of his own was taken ill and, in a few days, was at death's door. Since he himself was already at his end, he was surrounded by many of his

*Continued on pg. 23*



# IN A CHEERFUL MOOD

## Dead Donkey

A city boy, Kenny, moved to the country and bought a donkey from an old farmer for \$100. The farmer agreed to deliver the donkey the next day.

The next day the farmer drove up and said, "Sorry son, but I have some bad news, the donkey died."

Kenny replied, "Well then, just give me my money back."

The farmer said, "Can't do that. I went and spent it already."

Kenny said, "OK then, at least give me the donkey."

The farmer asked, "What ya gonna do with him?"

Kenny, "I'm going to raffle him off."

Farmer, "You can't raffle off a dead donkey!"

Kenny, "Sure I can. Watch me. I just won't tell anybody he is dead."

A month later the farmer met up with Kenny and asked, "What happened with that dead donkey?" Kenny: "I raffled him off. I sold 500 tickets at two dollars a piece and made a profit of 898 dollars."

Farmer: "Didn't anyone complain?"

Kenny: "Just the guy who won. So I gave him his two dollars back."

## Mind Reading

One day a young man was visiting the fair, over to one side was a small tent, with a sign that said "For 50 dollars I'll teach you to be a mind reader! Apply within."

So the young man thought that he'd give it a go, and went inside. Behind a small table inside was an old man, who looked up when the young man entered and says,

"Ah, you must be here for the mind reading lessons."

"Well, yes" the young man said.

"Well, follow me, and I'll give you your first lesson." Then the old man goes out the back of the tent and walks over to a hose, which he picks up one end of. "Here, hold this hose."

"Why?" said the young man.

"It's part of the lesson," replies the old man, "Now, look in the end and tell me what you see."

So the young man looks into the end of the hose, and only sees darkness. "I don't see anything," he tells the old man. Just then the old man turns on a tap, and the hose shoots water into the young man's face, "I had a feeling you'd do something like that!" the young man shouts at the old man.

"You are now a mind reader!" the old man replies. "That'll be 50 dollars."

## Nina's Mouth

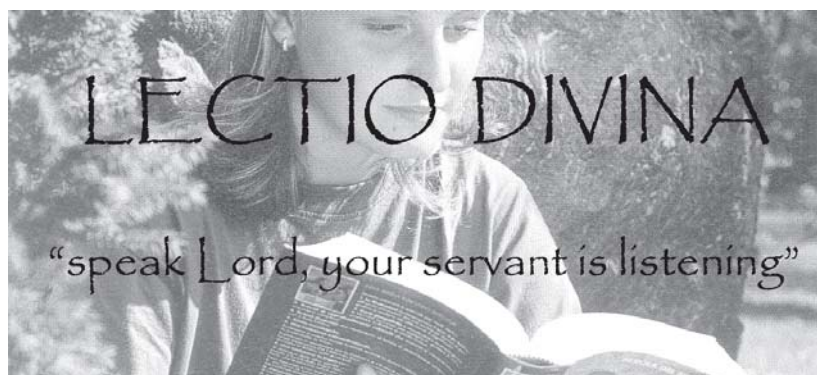
Eight-year-old Nina brought her report card home from school. Her marks were good...mostly A's and a couple of B's.

However, her teacher had written across the bottom: "Nina is a smart little girl, but she has one fault. She talks too much in school. I have an idea I am going to try, which I think may break her of the habit."

Nina's dad signed her report card, putting a note on the back:

"Please let me know if your idea works on Nina because I would like to try it out on her mother." □





## A FULLER SENSE OF SCRIPTURE

by Neil Dias

**S**cripture has always been at the centre of the Christian faith as inspired Word of God. Although our faith is based on the “graces we received through Jesus” (see John 1), it is Scripture that introduces and explains the person of Christ. What makes Scripture unique is that it is authored by God, not as in a word for word dictation from him, but by inspiring the human writers in capturing moral and spiritual truths within their respective historical settings.

### Human Language in Scripture

Human words and actions are limited by our finiteness, which is why human works, in literature for example, do not have absolute universal applicability even in the domain they aim to function. Scripture, however, does not suffer from this limitation (with respect to faith and morals), and that is because it is inspired and guided by a being who is infinite in every aspect. It is because of this fact that the words in the Bible have many facets, several messages, and numerous exegetical

interpretations beyond the obvious.

The New Testament authors understood this uniqueness of Scripture (OT) and interpreted its passages accordingly. Thus you have, say, Matthew using Isaiah 7:14 in reference to the prophecy of the Messiah. Some modern Biblical scholars have said that Isaiah 7:14 was not really a prophecy concerning Jesus, and that Matthew’s use of this is questionable. But is it? No, is the answer. What modern analysis fails to account is that the Bible not only spoke to the immediate generations to whom they were delivered, but to generations after generations yet to come. Thus, although the immediate context of Isaiah might have not alluded to Christ, the passage “in its fuller sense” did allude to the Savior. That is the *sensus plenior* meaning of the passage.

### The Fuller Sense

Fr. Raymond Brown, an excellent Catholic scholar wrote: “The *sensus plenior* is that



*The reading of a passage of Sacred Scripture is an essential part of the administration of all the Sacraments.*

who is in heaven meets his children with great love and speaks with them..." One might suppose that the Father allegorically or metaphorically talks to his people, but on many occasions He literally speaks to you and me as well. For instance, the Lord's call to Samuel (see 1 Sam 3) is a personal call

additional, deeper meaning, intended by God but not clearly intended by the human author, which is seen to exist in the words of a biblical text when they are studied in the light of further revelation or development in the understanding of revelation."

### **The Bible in our daily lives**

Bible is unique not only because its message transcends through time, but in fact its texts have more salvific or comforting truth than what might be naturally understood. It is important to understand this for it is not just some of the modern scholars who fail to grasp the rich treasures of Scripture. We ourselves many times don't understand that the Bible in our homes has practical life applications in our generations – that its meaning in the "fuller sense" directly concerns us, not just as historical or moral/spiritual truths that it preserves, but as God's one-on-one dialogue with us.

The Church in her document *Dei Verbum* (Word of God) says: "In the sacred books the Father

to us too, and Mary's response to the angel (see Luke 1) should be our response also. Jesus is speaking to you and me when we read the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, and rebukes us in the present when we deviate from his precepts.

The Bible is a Living Word, as living as our Lord Jesus himself. When we read the Bible we must be conscious of this fuller sense of the Scripture, this living reality of Scripture, which has a spiritual **dialogue** with us as individuals. When we don't read the Bible we must realise that we are missing out on a great conversation with God. This is what makes the Bible an indispensable part of the Christian faith.

Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ, ignorance of Christ is ignorance of Truth, ignorance of Truth leads to meaningless existence. The fuller meaning of the Biblical text, where Jesus is not just revealed but where he communicates with us, plays a crucial part in giving meaning to our lives. □

## THE SACRAMEN

*The Pope's message on the occasion  
by His Holiness P*

***"Stand up and go; your faith has saved you" (Lk 17:19)***

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

On the occasion of the World Day of the Sick, I wish to renew my spiritual closeness to all sick people who are in places of care or are looked after in their families, expressing to each one of them the solicitude and the affection of the whole Church.

I would like to place emphasis upon the "sacraments of healing", that is to say upon the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation and that of the Anointing of the Sick, which have their natural completion in Eucharistic Communion.

The encounter of Jesus with the ten lepers, narrated by the Gospel of Saint Luke (cf. Lk 17:11-19), and in particular the words that the Lord addresses to one of them, *"Stand up and go; your faith has saved you"* (v. 19), help us to become aware of the importance of faith for those who, burdened by suffering and illness, draw near to the Lord. In their encounter with him they can truly experience that *he who believes is never alone!* God, indeed, in his Son, does not abandon us to our anguish and sufferings (cf. Mk 2:1-12).

The faith of the lone leper who, on seeing that he was healed, full of amazement and joy, and unlike the others, immediately went back to Jesus to express his gratitude, enables us to perceive that reacquired health is a sign of something more precious than mere physical healing - it is a sign of the salvation that God gives us through Christ; it finds expression in the words of Jesus: *your faith has saved you*. He who in suffering and illness prays to the Lord is certain that God's love will never abandon him, and also that the love of the Church, the extension in time of the Lord's saving work, will never fail. Physical healing, an outward expression of the deepest salvation, thus reveals the importance that man - in his entirety of soul and body - has for the Lord.

2. The sacrament of Penance has often been at the centre of the reflection of the Church's Pastors, specifically because of its great importance in the journey of Christian life, given that "The whole power of the sacrament of Penance consists in restoring us to God's grace, and joining with him in an intimate friendship" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1468). The Church, in continuing to proclaim Jesus' message of forgiveness and reconciliation, never ceases to invite the whole of humanity to convert and to believe in the Gospel. She makes



## TS OF HEALING

a of the World Day of the Sick 2012  
 Pope Benedict XVI

her own the call of the Apostle Paul: "So we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor 5:20).

God, "rich in mercy" (Eph 2:4), like the father in the Gospel parable (cf. Lk 15:11-32), does not close his heart to any of his children, but waits for them, looks for them, reaches them where their rejection of communion imprisons them in isolation and division, and calls them to gather around his table, in the joy of the feast of forgiveness and reconciliation. A time of suffering, in which one could be tempted to abandon oneself to discouragement and hopelessness, can thus be transformed into a time of grace so as to return to oneself, and like the prodigal son of the parable, to think anew about one's life, recognizing its errors and failures, longing for the embrace of the Father, and following the pathway to his home.

3. From a reading of the Gospels it emerges clearly that Jesus always showed special concern for sick people. He not only sent out his disciples to tend their wounds (cf. Mt 10:8; Lk 9:2; 10:9) but also instituted for them a specific sacrament: the Anointing of the Sick.

This sacrament leads us to contemplate the double mystery of the Mount of Olives, where Jesus found himself dramatically confronted by the path indicated to him by the Father, that of his Passion, the supreme act of love; and he accepted it. In that hour of tribulation, he is the mediator, "bearing in himself, taking upon himself the sufferings and passion of the world, transforming it into a cry to God, to the moment of redemption".

Becoming conformed to the Paschal Mystery of Christ, which can also be achieved through the practice of spiritual Communion, takes on a very particular meaning when the Eucharist is administered and received as Viaticum. I wish to encourage sick people and the suffering always to find a safe anchor in faith, nourished by listening to the Word of God, by personal prayer and by the sacraments, while I invite pastors to be increasingly ready to celebrate them for the sick.

To Mary, Mother of Mercy and Health of the Sick, we raise our trusting gaze and our prayer; may her maternal compassion, manifested as she stood beside her dying Son on the Cross, accompany and sustain the faith and the hope of every sick and suffering person on the journey of healing for the wounds of body and spirit!

I assure you all of a remembrance in my prayers, and I bestow upon each one of you a special Apostolic Blessing. □



# CITY OF PAIN

*From Fr Ian Doulton's collection of stories*

**I**n hospitals, in those cities of pain, there is a street lined with little houses, where pain is always at home. People need you desperately, but, you don't like hospitals. You can't stand the sight of pain and disease. Face it for the love of God! Face it with the help of God as the saints did. St. Francis of Assisi, for instance, hated sickness and disease, his flesh crawled at the very sight of a leper. Yet for the love of God he embraced those bodies full of sores. He washed them and then (and these are his own words), *"all that was bitter to me, was turned into sweetness of soul and body."*

Do you call yourself Christian, a follower of Christ? Do you believe that God is the Father of us all? Then you can't refuse to help your own brothers and sisters who are waiting for you in pain.

Let's go to a hospital. We'll visit a ward on the men's floor. We stop at the first bed and talk to a thin old man. His name is Albert Simmons and he has been there for a year and three months. "What seems to be the trouble?" I ask. "Car hit me, broke my leg. It won't set right," he says feebly. "How are you feeling?" I ask. "Not so good," he says despondently. "The leg pains you much?" I dare to ask. "Not much," comes the reply. "What seems to be the trouble then?" I insist. "I've been here a year and three months and nobody's come to see me!" I am surprised. "You haven't had any visitors in a year

and three months?" I am upset and go on: "Haven't you any relatives or friends?" Sadly, he says: "Everybody's gone; dead or moved away and forgotten me." I look around the ward. "You should have a lot of company here with twenty men." He is becoming irritable with my questions: "It isn't real company. Everybody else has people coming to see them. The man across the aisle had ten people come to see him on Sunday. The man over there in the corner doesn't say two words, he's so sick, but his wife comes every day. She just sits and holds his hand." He now becomes emotional. I can hardly stand visiting hours. All the people coming in and passing on right by, I just lie here. Nobody cares."

He's lonesome. There are hundreds of lonesome people in this hospital. Hundreds in just this one hospital.

Now this is a private room; the name on the chart says William Brooks. The young man in the bed turns his head slowly, clenching his jaw. "What do I need? Just one thing. Somebody to tell me why I have to suffer like this." I make the mistake of asking: "You're in pain?" He raises his voice with irritation mixed with anger: "That's what they always ask. As if it were something I could get out of. The pain is in me. It's buried in my body like a white hot knife. It stabs and stabs." I go on: "Can't they give you anything for it? Can't they give you anything



strong enough to deaden this pain?" He answers, trying to keep his temper down. "They are afraid they'll kill me. So they let me lie here till the pain drives me crazy." "Why?" "That's what I want to know. If I could get a hold of a couple more of those pills ...Oh, the nurses are clever. They know what I'm thinking of. They won't even let me have a belt on my bath robe." Now I try some spiritual talk: "Perhaps if you prayed?" "Pray? What should I say? Thank you God, for torturing me like this?"



what would he say? Twenty years is too long and I said I'd never regretted it. How can God forgive that? I'm afraid." There are tears in her eyes.

"Why must I suffer?" The anguished enquiry rings from every room. And the answer? Here in this room at the end of the hall there are three beds. We stop at the first one to see what Mrs. Anna Nelson needs. We lower our heads in homage to the shadow that lies grey across this woman's face. I ask her if she needs anything. "What do I need?" Something no one will give me. Because I won't ask for it." She closes her lips, but her need is there. Looking out from her frightened eyes her soul is speaking through them. Now she goes on again: "I'm going to die without a priest. Fallen away, that's what they call people like me. Away from Mass, away from Confession, married without the sacraments. 'Sin!' - that's what the priest called it. 'You'll be living in sin' he said. "It's love," I said, "you can't help love." But, yes, it was sin. Nobody else knew... a respectable, married woman, that's what they thought. Twenty years of sin and nobody to forgive me. I could ask for the priest but

*Here are three people who need you. What are you going to do about it? What **can** you do? Let's say that a month has gone by and that we're back in the same hospital.*

We look in first at that lonesome old man Albert Simmons. He excitedly shouts: Somebody came to see me! Yes, sir, the nicest young fellow walked in the day before yesterday and he sat down beside my bed where nobody but the doctors ever sat and talked to me. Guess what? He listened to me talk. I was so wound up, I got started and couldn't stop. But he's coming back. He's coming to see me next week again. God bless him! The doctor was saying that the new medicine he gave me sure picked me up in a hurry. I don't know what it was, but I'm feeling better ever since he came. Yes, sir, God bless that boy!"

Now for the young man, the desperate young man: William Brooks, "William Brooks," I call. Brooks looks up and apologizes,



"Sorry, I didn't hear you. I was stuck, on the last paragraph of this story I was writing. Joe Young got me started. He came in one day and I had never seen him before and he started to talk. Seems he has a habit of visiting people in hospitals whether he knows them or not. He's crippled, braces on both legs, goes about on crutches. He came on one of my rotten days. All I wanted him to do was shut up and go away."

Brooks continues: "You know, one good thing about being in a hospital? It gives you plenty of time to think." "About what?" "Life and stuff... But what's the use of thinking when you can't find any answers?"

I try to act encouraging. "Did you ever hear this by John Bannister Taft?" I ask, and I then recite the lines:

*My life is but a weaving between my God and me.*

*I may not choose the colours but he worketh steadily.*

*Full oft he weaveth sorrow, and I in foolish pride*

*Forget he sees the upper, and I the lower side.*

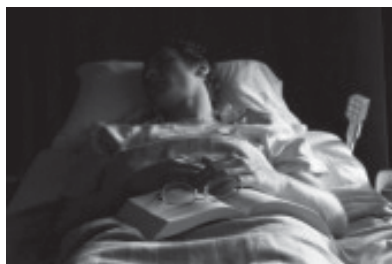
"Read a lot?" I enquire. "Used to," he replies, "in between selling hardware. I've even tried to write, mostly short stories." Then I ask: "You've done any writing since you've been here?" And Brooks replies: "What would I write about? Sleeping pills and syringes?"

I try to suggest: "Sure, you could write all about them and the rest of this hospital routine. You know you'd be surprised to know what a kick you'd get out of putting down on paper all the stuff that's been boiling inside of

you. But, don't try to be logical, when it comes to suffering. It won't work. Quit thinking about and trying to figure it out. Just hang on to one thing: faith in the mercy of God."

Brooks was confused by those last words: "Mercy? I don't understand," he becomes pensive. I continue: "Yea, God's mercy, not our own idea of what it should be. The mercy of God is a mystery that will always have us stumped. Why couldn't Christ have saved us just by living or by teaching? He could have done it just by lifting his little finger. But he didn't. He earned God's mercy for us by dying on a cross. But he knows people. He knows that they don't put much stock on what they get for nothing. So he lets them get that mercy for themselves by suffering in faith, without knowing why." I leave Brooks thinking...and very quiet.

Now for the woman in the shadow, Mrs. Nelson...Mrs. Anna Nelson. No! She's not asleep, she's left this city of pain forever. She went in silence because three days of paralysis had left her movement only in the eyes; one hour ago those eyes stared in dumb anguish at the woman who came to visit the patient in the next bed. Around her neck the visitor wore a little wooden cross. It was on a long chain. It hung down when the woman leaned over Anna's bed. It was like the cross at the end of the rosary that Anna's mother had given her for her First Holy Communion so many years ago. Communion, Confession, aching memories now for the homesick soul. The frightened soul, fallen away,



dying without a priest or the sacraments or God, like a runaway child come home in the night, looking in at the windows, seeing the family within, the light and warmth and the food but afraid to knock, afraid of punishment. Too stubborn to call out, huddling in the darkness hoping that someone would only open the door!

The visitor turned and came over to Mrs. Nelson's bed. She looked deep into those staring eyes. She softly asked: "Is there something I can do for you?" There was only a weak grunt. "Is there something you want? A glass of water? No?"

*(Continued from pg. 14)*

followers and asleep for a long time, then suddenly, as if rousing from a deep sleep he got up and as best he could, said: "Oh, what a thing I have seen!" When he was asked what he had seen, he answered: "I have seen a most beautiful throne surrounded by a great light, on which sat a child holding in his hands a banner that read: "This is Jerome Miani's throne." Everyone was amazed to hear this, most of all, Jerome.

Jerome was in St. Martin's Valley with many of his own. From them, occasionally, he would withdraw alone to a grotto for contemplation.

After having been sick for just

She carried on: "You want to see the cross? Have you seen a priest since you've been here? Would you like to? Suppose I went and asked him to come right now, would you like that?" Only eager grunts followed. The kindly visitor kept her promise. That is why you now see on Mrs. Nelson's face a smile of peace which no pain or sorrow will ever erase.

Did this really happen? Did somebody come and visit these people and bring them courage, hope and faith? Or did it never happen? Did the loneliness, the despair and the agony go on? Because you didn't come? This is your magnificent opportunity, your obligation as a Christian. You, men and women who have your health, your own two good legs to carry you on mercy's errands. You could be the ones to whom Christ would one day say: *"Come you blessed of my Father, possess your kingdom, for I was sick and you visited me."* □

four days with the plague he returned his soul back to its Maker with such faith that he showed no signs of fear on the contrary, he said that he had made his covenant with Christ. He would exhort everyone to follow the way of the Crucified, to hold the world in contempt, to love each other, to take care of the poor, saying that whosoever did those deeds would never be forsaken by God. □

*The above biography is a summary of what was written by an ardent follower and affectionate friend of Jerome Emiliani Andrea Gritti of Venice.*

# THE BEATIFICATION AND CANONISATION OF DON BOSCO

## 13

*by Fr. Elias Dias*

**I**n April-May 1883 Don Bosco visited Paris and other cities in France. People openly spoke about his holiness. They rushed to see him, listen to him and to touch him. They even brought their sick to him. They felt as if a saint was walking through the streets of Paris and France. At his death on 31 January, 1888 everyone unanimously agreed that Don Bosco was a Saint.

Barely 24 hours after the funeral of Don Bosco, the Superior Council of the Salesian Congregation under the leadership of Don Rua discussed the possibility of initiating the cause of the beatification and canonization of Don Bosco. This ordinary informative process began on June 4, 1890 and after 44 years of laborious work on Easter Sunday April 1, 1934, Pope Pius XI declared Don Bosco a saint of the Roman Catholic Church.

The course for the beatification and canonization of Don Bosco followed the traditional process. This consisted of two parts. The Ordinary Process or Diocesan or Informative Process and the Apostolic Process held in Rome.

The ordinary process began with the meeting of Superior Council who desired to initiate the process for Don Bosco's beatification. The fame of his sanctity made many



prelates and even Cardinal Parocchi, the Vicar of the Pope and Cardinal Protector of the Salesians ask the superior Council to make an official petition to the Cardinal Archbishop of Turin to introduce the ordinary process. The petition was signed by Don Rua and the members of fifth General Chapter of the Society on 31 January 1890. It was corroborated by several archbishops and bishops. The ordinary process had its first session on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1890 and came to an end on April 1, 1897. It had 562 sessions with the sworn evidence of various witnesses which filled up 22 volumes consisting of a total of 5,178 pages.

This process was followed by the Apostolic Process which consisted of several phases. The first phase ended with the publication of a decree by the Sacred Congregation of Rites which officially introduced the Cause in Rome. The publication

of this decree was preceded by various important and essential preliminaries: the careful examination of the Acts of the diocesan process by a special commission of the Sacred Congregation of Rites and the careful study and examination of all the writings attributed to the Servant of God. Don Rua, following the request of the Archbishop gathered the writings of Don Bosco and categorized them into nine large sections and sent to Rome. In 1906 Pope Pius X asked that a special study be made on the controversy between Don Bosco and Archbishop Gastaldi. This was followed by an examination of the popularity of the Servant of God and the desire of the people to see him glorified. Finally a small investigation was conducted to find out if a public cult of veneration was given to the servant of God. To ascertain this, the members of the Turin Tribunal visited the tomb, the room and other places where Don Bosco lived.

With these preparatory acts completed, the way was now open to initiate the great step of the decree for the introduction of the Cause. To reach this it was necessary to prepare the so-called *Positio* consisting of two volumes since there was a great amount of material which was gathered for this purpose. This was done by the lawyer Ferdinand Morani. He also prepared a general introductory sketch of the life, virtues, fame of the sanctity of Don Bosco. The *Summarium* consisted a reproduction of the sworn



*On June 3rd, 1929 Pope Pius XI proclaimed Don Bosco blessed and here he is kneeling in prayer before an image of the new Blessed.*

evidences, some postulatory letters of cardinals, bishops, superiors General of Religious Institutes, votes of theologians on his writing and finally the objections of the promoter General of the Faith, Alexander Verde and responses to them. The decree was discussed on July 23 and signed by Pope Pius X on July 24 1907. At that point Don Bosco was given the title of VENERABLE.

The Apostolic Process would now lead to the Decree of the Heroicity of Virtue of the Venerable. The diocesan authority conducted two processes one is called inchoative process and the second was called the continuative

process. Before the Acts of these processes were officially sent to Rome there was the canonical recognition of the body which took place between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> October, 1917 at which Dr. Peynetti, a medical expert was present. They were ratified by the Holy Father on June 9, 1920. Things should have moved faster but Canon Colobiatti asked for a fresh inquiry into the Venerable's relationship with Archbishop Gastaldi. Finally Pope Pius XI ordered the decree of the heroicity of the virtue of Don Bosco be declared on February 20, 1927.

With the publication of the decree on the heroicity of virtue the work of man came to an end and the work of God began: the miracles for Don Bosco's Beatification. The miracles are worked by God through the intercession of the Servant of God. Each proposed miracle went through a very long and serious process first at the diocesan level and then at Rome.

The first miracle was the cure of Sr. Provina Negro 30 years old FMA nun. In 1905 she was sick with an ulcer in her stomach. After a prayer she made to Don Bosco she took a picture of the saint and rolled it into a little ball and, contrary to the doctor's advice, she swallowed it. It was 7.30 pm. At that very instant her pain ceased and she felt perfectly well.

The second miracle took place in Castel S. Giovanni in the district of Piacenza. Teresa Callegari, 23 years old, who had been sick with pneumonia and during her convalescence she complained of severe pain, swelling and loss of fluid in her left knee. On the eighth day of a novena to Don Bosco

Teresa had gone very bad, her sisters thought the end was near. On July 17 1921 at 4 a.m. after sleepless night she saw a priest coming towards her and placing his hand on her forehead. He said "Get up, move your legs." She called her sisters. They thought she was going insane. She had never seen Don Bosco but she knew that he was Don Bosco. He then disappeared. Teresa was not dreaming she was awake. She was cured! After examining and approving these miracles Pope Pius XI promulgated the decree on March 19, 1929.

In May 1929 they opened the grave of Don Bosco to recognize his mortal remains. This was in Valsalice in May 1929. Mgr. Salotti the Promoter General of the Faith was there to see that everything was done according to sacred Canon Law.

The date of the Beatification had been fixed for June 2, 1929. There were great preparations underway in Turin and in Rome. On that day Basilica of St Peter was filled to capacity. There was a large number of Archbishops and Bishops among whom were 12 Salesian prelates too. At the appointed time a Vatican Prelate read out the degree of beatification in which the Holy Father briefly recalled the life, works, his heroic virtues and the miracles worked through his intercession. At the end of the reading of the degree the picture of Don Bosco appeared in the glory of Bernini. This was greeted by thunderous applause from the crowd. First time "*Ora pro nobis Beate Joannes*" was heard. The crowning of the Rome celebration was the audience accorded by Pius XI in the courtyard of St. Damasus



to the members of the Salesian Family. The festivities in Rome were followed immediately by very solemn festivities in Turin. On June 9, 1929 Don Bosco's mortal remains were solemnly brought to the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians from Valsalice.

The triumph of the Beatification, the solemn festivities all over the world, the increase of devotion of the new *Beatus* and number of miracles worked through his intercession greatly encouraged the Postulator to ask for the resumption of the Cause for Canonization. The Holy Father approved it on June 17, 1930. The resumption of the cause implied a further two miracles.

Heinrich Hirsch, a graduate in medicine devoted his life to the care of Tuberculosis patients and in turn contracted the malady. In the year 1929 his condition was serious. X-rays indicated wide lesions on his lungs. Encouraged by some Salesians and some of his relatives he began a novena to Don Bosco in the month of May. On 24<sup>th</sup> May he felt cured. The X-rays indicated that the tuberculosis had vanished.

Anna Maccolini who was 74 years of age had been hospitalized at the Home for the Aged in Rimini. From autumn to December 1930 she was confined to her bed by severe phlebitis (an inflammation of a vein) in her left thigh. One morning the relic of Don Bosco was brought and touched to her infected leg. She suddenly felt better and after some months she was completely cured. The Holy Father approved the miracles on November 19 1933 after the approval of the miracles the Cardinals and the

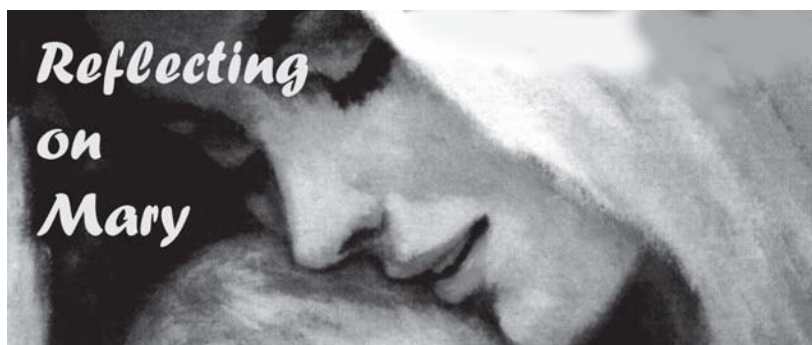
Consultors gave a vote to proceed to Canonization.

The Congregation of the TUTTO was held on November 28, 1933 and this was followed by three Consistories. The first was a secret consistory, only four the Cardinals were present, the second one was and held on December 21, 1933. The third was semi-public and was scheduled for January 15, 1934. At the end of these consistories the Holy Father was pleased and proceeded with the process of the Canonization of Don Bosco. The Canonization of Don Bosco was fixed on April 1, 1934. It was Easter Sunday and the closing of the extraordinary Jubilee Year of Redemption.

On that memorable day Pope Pius XI declared Don Bosco a Saint and inserted him in the calendar of the saints and the Church celebrated his feast on January 31. On the same day Fr. Peter Ricaldone, Rector Major sent a message to all the Salesians expressing his feelings of joy and gratitude to God. He said the secret of Don Bosco's holiness was "his constant correspondence to God's grace." On April 2, a solemn tribute was paid in Rome headed by Mussolini and other dignitaries at the Capitol.

In Turin where the saint lived and died there were many festivities. April 8, 1934 was a rainy day. The organizers wanted to cancel the procession. About 300,000 people took part in the procession with their umbrellas. At that time a little boy asked his dad "Why are so many people waiting for Don Bosco?" His father replied "Everyone loves Don Bosco very much." MB XIX, 334) And Don Bosco loves everybody. □





*The Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes (11 February)*

## THE CHURCH LIKE MARY

*by Mattia Principe*

*The Church, like Mary, holds within herself and close to her heart the tragedies of man, demonstrating God's love for humankind.*

**T**he Gospels affirm that Jesus proclaimed the Word and healed the sick which are signs, par excellence of the proximity of God's Kingdom. Matthew, for example writes: "Jesus went around all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom, healing all kinds of sicknesses and infirmities among the people" (Mt 4:23; cf 9:35).

The Church which has been entrusted with the task of extending in space and time the mission of Christ cannot neglect these two essential works: evangelization and the care of those sick in body and in spirit. In fact, God yearns to heal the entire person and in the Gospel the healing of the body is a sign more profoundly of a remission of sin (cf Mk 2:1-12).

No wonder, then, that Mary, Mother and model of the Church is invoked and venerated as *Salus infirmorum*, Health of the Sick. As

the first and most perfect disciple of her Son, she is always seen accompanying the Church on its journey with a special solicitude for those who suffer. We have the testimony of thousands of the faithful who make their way to her shrines to invoke the Mother of Christ seeking strength and relief.

The Gospel account of the Visitation (cf Lk 1:39-56) shows us how the Virgin Mary, after the annunciation of the Angel, did not pause to ponder on the gift she had received but set out immediately to help her aged cousin Elizabeth who for already six months was carrying John in her womb. In the assistance that Mary offered her aged relative in such a delicate situation as her pregnancy, we see prefigured the entire activity of the Church which supports life and cares for those in need.

In celebrating the memorial of the Apparitions at Lourdes (11



Madonna of Mercy by Girolamo di Giovanni at Macerata (1463)

voices of so many saints noted for their charity. We may consider in particular, those who worked and spent their lives among the sick and the suffering like Camillus de Lellis and John of God, Damien de Veuster and Benedict Menni. They were close to the suffering and were aware of their anguish and tears but

February), the place chosen by the Blessed Virgin Mary to manifest her maternal solicitude for the sick, the liturgy appropriately reechoes her *Magnificat*, the canticle of the Virgin who exalts the wonders of God in salvation history: the humble and the poor, as are all those who fear God, experience his mercy which turns the tide of fortune demonstrates how holy our Creator and Redeemer is. The *Magnificat* is not a canticle of those on who lady luck smiles but rather it is an expression of the gratitude of those who, through the tragedies of life can still trust in the redeeming work of God. It is a song that expresses the tested faith of generations of women and men who put their trust in God and who have committed themselves, in the first person, like Mary, to assist those in need.

In the *Magnificat* we hear the

they also experienced the miracle of joy which was the fruit of their love.

The Church, like Mary, holds within her the tragedies of man and the consolation of God, embracing us all as we journey through history. Throughout the centuries the Church demonstrates the signs of God's love as she continues to do great things in the humble and the simple. Sufferings accepted and offered up, love and service sincerely and gratuitously shared, are they not miracles of love? The courage to face sickness serenely, with only the power of faith and trust in the Lord, is that not a miracle that the grace of God arouses continually in so many people who spend time and energy assisting those who suffer?

Through all this we live joyfully but that does not mean we forget



suffering, indeed we begin to understand it. In this way, the sick and all the suffering in the Church are not only recipients of the attention and care but they are, first and foremost, protagonists on the journey of faith and hope, witnessing to the miracles of love and paschal joy that blossom forth from the cross and the resurrection of Christ.

"Is any among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise," wrote the apostle James (5:13). He goes on: "Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the Lord will raise him up" (5:14-15). Here is an obvious extension of Christ in his Church, who still acts, through his priests and whose own Spirit is working through the sacramental sign of oil. It is to him that the Church turns in faith expressed in prayer, and, as happened to those who were healed by Jesus, so also may we say of every patient: it is your faith and sustained by the faith of your sisters and brothers that you are saved.

From this text, which contains the basis and praxis of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the sick we can also envision the role

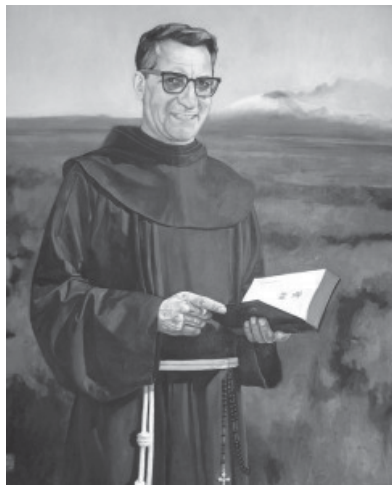
of the sick in the Church. Theirs is an active and "provocative" role which is why we say this prayer with faith. The patient must "call" the priests, and they must respond helping them to experience their illness in the context and through the action of the Risen Lord and his Spirit.

***Mary, Mother  
and model  
of the Church  
is invoked  
and venerated  
as  
Salus infirmorum,  
Health of the Sick.***

And here we can see the importance of the pastoral care of the sick, the value of which is truly incalculable, for the immense good it does in ways unknown and mysterious, in the first place to the sick person and then not only to the priest himself but also to the family, the acquaintances, to the community, the whole Church and even to the world at large.

In fact, when the Word of God speaks of healing, salvation and the health of the sick, it considers these concepts in an integral sense, never separating soul from the body. A sick person who is healed by the prayer of Christ, through the Church, is a joy on earth and in heaven and is a foretaste of eternal life. □

### VATICAN



The Italian Franciscan priest, Father Gabriele Maria Allegra, who translated the entire Bible into Chinese for the first time, was beatified in the Cathedral in Acireale, Sicily, on September 29, 2012.

The beatification of the man known as “the Saint Jerome of China” took place ten years after Pope John Paul II first recognized a miracle through his intercession in 2002.

The ceremony should have taken place on October 2002, but the Holy See decided to postpone it because at that time relations were particularly tense with China following the canonization of the Chinese martyrs in the year 2000.

Born “Giovanni Stefano Allegra” in San Giovanni la Punta, in the province of Catania, Sicily, in 1907, the future blessed friar entered the Franciscan

minor seminary in Acireale in 1918, and the order’s novitiate in Bronte in 1923. Three years later he was sent to Rome to study at the Franciscan’s International College.

In 1928, Allegra felt inspired to devote his entire life to the translation of the Bible into Chinese. Allegra spent most of the next 40 years of his life on that arduous task.

On Christmas Day 1968, Father Allegra achieved his life’s ambition when the first one-volume Bible was published in Chinese. Known as the “Studium Biblicum” version, that is still the main Chinese text today and is considered to be the most faithful to the original manuscript.

This great Franciscan died in Hong Kong in 1976. It came as no surprise, however, when eight years later, in 1984, the local bishop (later cardinal), John Baptist Wu, opened the cause for his beatification. John Paul II declared Father Allegra “Venerable” in 1994, and in September 2012 he was declared “Blessed”.

### VATICAN CITY

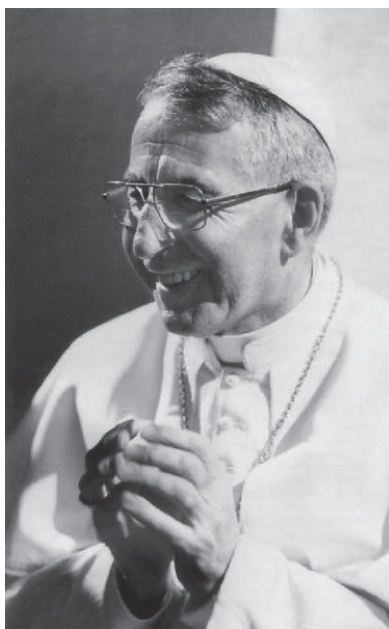
Data published at the beginning of October by the Prefecture of the Papal Household showed an increase over 2010, when about 2.3 million people attend celebrations with the pontiff. More than 2.5 million (2,553,800) faithful participated in various meetings with Pope Benedict XVI: general audiences (400,000), special audiences (101,800), liturgical celebrations (846,000), and Angelus and Regina Coeli (1,206,000).

In 2009, the total was 2.243 million participants. The Prefecture's announcement stated that the data is approximate, calculated on the basis of requests received and tickets issued by the Prefecture for event participation, as well as a rough estimate of attendance at events such as the Angelus or the Regina Coeli and the great celebrations in St. Peter's Square - and above the celebration last year, John Paul II's beatification ceremony. The data show a growth in participation over the last three years. The picture presented, the statement explains, refers only to meetings at the Vatican and Castel Gandolfo and does not include other events involving the Pontiff with large participation of the faithful, such as apostolic journeys in Italy and abroad.

## ROME

"Some interesting new facts have come to light regarding Pope Luciani's state of health, thanks to the testimonies (167 people have been heard) and medical documents collected. These sources definitively confirm that he was not killed." This is according to Mgr. Enrico Dal Covolo, Rector of the Pontifical Lateran University and Postulator of John Paul I's sainthood cause, who spoke to Italian news channel Tgcom24 in an interview on Pope Luciani who passed away after just 33 dayson the papal throne. On the 17<sup>th</sup> October was his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Mgr. Dal Covolo delivered the first part of the Positio - the documentation on John Paul I's heroic virtues, on his life and on



the miracle he is believed to have performed - to the Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, Cardinal Angelo Amato.

"We delivered the Positio on 17 October - the postulator said - and the process for determining the Pope's miracle will continue. I am certain that the Pope will soon be proclaimed a saint, though we still do not know exactly when. The cause is hanging by a very thin thread and we need to be careful!"

"I met with Pope Benedict XVI about a week ago - Mgr. Dal Covolo added - and he confirmed he was very glad about this step forward in the late Pope's beatification process, advising me to be cautious. He strongly supports this cause, with great affection and interest. He gave a special blessing." □



## THE DEVOTION OF THE THREE HAIL MARYS



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

Thank you Mamma Mary for curing the irritation in my eye and all the graces received. Please continue to keep your mantle over my family.  
*Rini Aranha, Mumbai*

My heartfelt thanks to Our lady for the completion of 25 years of the *Effie Lady Salon* in Abu Dhabi. Our Lady has granted us all the graces we needed.

*Ms. Lira D'Monte, Abu Dhabi, UAE*

My heartfelt thanks to Mother Mary for helping my sister who is troubled with a broken family to go back and join her old job. I prayed the 3 Hail Marys and Mother helped us.  
*Mary Zachariah, Mumbai*

I had forgotten to remove the key from the lock of my bike which I keep at the bus stop and I remembered only after I had gone much ahead. With Mother Mary's blessings my bike (which could easily have been stolen) remained in tact and safe. Heartfelt thanks to Our Lady to whom I prayed through the devotion of the Three Hail Marys.  
*Mrs Sujata Glen Lemos, Vasai*

Thanks to the Holy Blood of Jesus prayer and Mary help of Christians prayer which I always recite daily. I was saved from a major accident while returning from a short vacation in Goa. Also for saving us from an accident while on our way to church on Sunday. My sincere thanks to Mary Help of Christians for the many favours received by my family and me.  
*Merlyn Fernandes, Mumbai*

Thank you Mother Mary for all the graces and favours received and do continue to bless our family.  
*Joana Gracias, Goa*

Grateful thanks to our Mother Mary for having bestowed blessings on our family. Thank you Mother for the gift of a job to our child after a patient wait.  
*Mr. & Mrs. Desa, Mumbai*

Belated thanks to Mother Mary for granting my son a good job and for other favours received.  
*Edward Coutinho, Mumbai*

Sincere thanks to Jesus and Mother Mary for all the favours and blessings received especially for the safe delivery of my daughter and for the gift of a baby girl through praying faithfully the three Hail Marys.  
*Mrs. Sarah A. V.*

My heartfelt thanks to the Lord Jesus Christ, Mother Mary and all the saints for answering my prayers. Do continue to bless my family and me.

*Emily D'Gama, Mumbai*

My sincere thanks to Our Lady, Mary Help of Christians for hearing my prayers and for granting all my petitions.  
*Wilma Martins, Goa*

Mother Mary, thank you so much for protecting my grand child who was admitted for high malarial fever, but is well now.  
*S. Gomes*



## LOVING CHILDREN TO THEIR LOVING MOTHER

I had lost my bunch of keys which included the key to the lock of the main door. I searched all over but could not find them. Then I prayed to Mother Mary and a couple of days later I found them. I'm so grateful for this favour. I never thought I would find the bunch. Thank you Mother Mary.

*Ivor Govias, Mumbai*

On 27th September 2012, my sister, a colleague and I had gone on a holiday abroad. On our way to collect our bags I slipped on the last step and fell backwards on the moving escalator. My head hit the moving steps which resulted in three cuts and a lot of bleeding on the head. While waiting for the airport doctor, I was sitting on the floor near the wall since there were no seats. And my eyes were focussed on the opposite wall with a frame with these words "Praise the Lord and have faith". Thought I was hallucinating and so did my sister and colleague. But on our return, we all three saw the frame with the words. I was rushed to the hospital emergency. My wounds were cleaned, was given a tetanus shot and then they joined the cuts on my scalp. The doctor confirmed that "I was one lucky lady". Of course I told him it was not luck but that I was blessed and God is great! My shoulder length hair straight hair miraculously did not get caught in the moving steps. Naturally, I was in shock but we continued on our holidays to Brussels with just a slight headache. Am back home, still very happily surprised to be alive for my very near-death experience. God is Great! Thank you Jesus and Mother Mary.

*Ursula Cardozo, Mumbai*

## THEY ARE GRATEFUL TO OUR LADY AND DON BOSCO

I fractured my ankle and feared the worst. Thank you, merciful Jesus, Our Blessed Mother, Don Bosco and St. Anthony. I am on the way to recovery. Thank you also for all the other favours received.

*Mrs. Brass Australia*

My sincere thanks and heartfelt gratitude to dearest Jesus, Mary Help of Christians and all the saints for helping me to find my husband's old identity card which was lost on the road. *Mrs. Hollarere Parrie, Udaipur, Rajasthan* We are very grateful to our dearest Mother Mary and St. Dominic Savio and Don Bosco for saving me and my family from what could have been a serious accident, when we were travelling by car. Mother Mary was watching over us and we came out safe and unhurt.

*S. Antao, Canada*

Our sincere thanks to Our Lady and Saint John Bosco for a good medical report of my granddaughter.

*M. Torcato, Canada*

My heartfelt thanks to dear Mother Mary and Don Bosco for the many favours received.

*P.P., Goa*

Belated thanks to Our Lady, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for all the blessings and favours received and also helping my son secure his admission in a foreign university and for solving my financial problems. Dearest Mother please continue to help, guide and protect us.

*Barbara, Mumbai*

My belated but sincere thanks to Our Lady, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for helping my son in his ICSE exams and helping him to secure a good percentage. Please continue to bless him in his further studies.

*Mrs. Reena Philip, Mumbai*

Thank you Mother Mary and Don Bosco for always blessing our family.

*Sherry D'Souza, Mumbai*

## THANKS TO DEAR ST. DOMINIC SAVIO



My grand daughter Sofia Solaya born 18 May 2012 to my teenager daughter. Thanks to St Dominic Savio. She wore the scapular all through the time she was in the labour room. Thanks to the Virgin Mother Mary, Sofia is a lovely girl, already 18 old and so full of life. I recommend my daughter to her care.

*Odile Lablache*

My sincere thanks to St. Dominic Savio for the safe delivery and gift of a healthy baby boy. May Mother Mary continue to bless us all.

*D'Souza, Mumbai*

My sincere thanks to Mary Help of Christians Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for a safe and normal delivery. *Rosa Filipa Rodrigues, Elena and Eliza, Rodrigues e Pereira, Goa*

Our belated but sincere thanks to Our Blessed Mother Mary and St. Dominic Savio for helping our son secure a job in the company he had been yearning for. We thank our dear blessed Mother for the countless favours received and blessings bestowed.

*J. A. D'Cruz, Mangalore*

Our sincere thanks to our Blessed Mother Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the many blessings bestowed on us. We have been blessed with good health, peace and the gift of the births of our two grand children.

*Patrick and Jean Sequeira, Melbourne, Australia*

My sincere thanks to Our Lady, Don Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for granting my son a job abroad.

*M. Fernandes, Goa*

Our sincere and heartfelt thanks to Jesus, Mother Mary and Dominic Savio for the safe delivery of our daughter Dominica Maria and the gift of a bonny baby boy.

*Mr. & Mrs. C.J. Dalby, Vizag, AP*

Sincere thanks to Our Lady, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for all the favours and graces received.

*B. Coutinho, Thane*

Thank you Lord Jesus, Mother Mary, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the gift of a baby girl to my second daughter after 18 years of marriage.

*Mrs. Fanny Shetty, New York*

Heartfelt and sincere thanks to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mother Mary and Dominic Savio for a safe pregnancy and delivery of a bonny baby boy.

*Dominica and Greg Roberts, Vizag, A.P.*

### APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

FEBRUARY 2013

**Holy Father's General Intention:** *That migrant families, especially the mothers, may be supported and accompanied in their difficulties.*

**Missionary Intention:** *That the peoples at war and in conflict may lead the way in building a peaceful future.*

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## MARY WAS THERE

Every month I read *The Devotion of the Three Hail Marys* but never recited them as a part of night prayers. My husband was transferred to a place where Sunday was a working day so he couldn't attend the Sunday Mass regularly. We started reciting the three Hail Marys as a part of our night prayers on a trial basis with not much faith. To my surprise, within a span of 8 months, he was promoted and transferred to another state which was far off and also a difficult work wise. But this time round, we started praying with full faith and he could attend the 3 novenas of our church feast of Mother Mary. Within a span of 3 weeks, he was transferred to a closer place, from where he could come home on the weekend. Currently, he's posted back to Goa. My belated but heartiest thanks to Mother Mary for granting all the favours. Mother Mary, continue to intercede for my family and protect us always. *Sabina Braganza, Goa*

Don Bosco's Madonna, has developed to its present form from a folder published in 1937, by late Fr Aurelius Maschio, on behalf of the Salesians of Don Bosco, Bombay. The magazine is sent to all who ask for it, even though there is a fixed subscription (Rs 200/- India & Rs 400/- Airmail)). We trust in the generosity of our readers/benefactors. Whatever you send us will help cover the expenses of printing and mailing; the surplus if any, is devoted to the support of orphans and poor boys in our schools and apostolic centres.

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

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