

DON BOSCO'S MADONNA

MUMBAI

FEBRUARY 2014

VOL.15 NO. 10

CONTENTS

From The Editor's Desk: <i>Praying Awfully.....</i>	3
Are There Real Angels? - <i>Fr. Erasto Fernandez. SSS.....</i>	4
Youth to Youth: Praise him in the Sunshine - <i>Melanie D'Souza.....</i>	8
Walking with the Church: Blasphemy, The Brown Scapular.....	9
Alberto Marvelli (1918-1946).....	10
The Man of the Ordinary Salesian Life - <i>Fr. Thekkadath Joseph,sdb..</i>	11
Witnesses In And For Our Times: <i>St. Miguel Febres Cordero (Feb 9)</i> - <i>Vatican.va.....</i>	12
Lectio Divina: The Dangers of Contagion - <i>Carlo Broccardo.....</i>	17
Quietspaces: Listening to the Wounds of Jesus - <i>Pope Francis.....</i>	18
Death of a Man - <i>Fr. Ian Doulton's Collection....</i>	20
The Educative Method of Don Bosco: A Way to Holiness <i>Fr. Elias Diaz, SDB.....</i>	24
Reflecting on Mary: From "Seeing a Sign" to "being a Sign <i>Maria Ko Ha Fong.....</i>	28
NewsBits.....	30
<i>In a Cheerful Mood.....</i>	15
<i>Loving Children to their Loving Mother.....</i>	32
<i>The Devotion of the Three Hail Marys.....</i>	33
<i>They Are Grateful to Our Lady & Don Bosco.....</i>	34
<i>Thanks to Dear St. Dominic Savio.....</i>	35



*Almighty ever-living God,
we humbly implore
your majesty that,
just as your
Only Begotten Son
was presented on this day
in the Temple
in the substance of our flesh,
so, by your grace,
we may be presented to you
with minds made pure.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ,
your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.*

Cover: **The statue of the
Immaculate Heart of Mary**
(a detail)

From The Editor's Desk

Praying Awfully

I don't know where I read that article, but what impressed me most was the way it began: *'The first thing I have to admit when asked how do I pray, is that I am not good at it.'* Now that was very candid... If someone thought, that beginning an article on prayer meant, giving me, the reader, some suggestions, I was sure to be put off - but when the author very truthfully admitted that he was *'not good at it,'* you certainly want to read on. But then I began to realize that the same could probably be said of anyone who truly attempts to pray. Admit it, much as we say, we pray, we're not good at it.

I began to think back over my years of seminary formation and then later of being a spiritual director and a confessor. I have listened to people, especially youngsters, young seminarians and young adults in particular, speaking about their prayer. Most will say that they *try* to pray, but that they don't manage very well. *'I really feel lost when I go to pray,'* is a common enough complaint. *'And I don't seem to be getting any better, in fact the more I try the worse I feel that I become,'* people frequently add.

And when I look at my own attempts to pray, I am forced to admit that I too am not very adept at it. Occasionally prayer takes off and I feel good, but for the most part it is a struggle. Sometimes it is a struggle just to settle down: to be quiet and focused. Sometimes my mind simply wanders on its merry way, and refuses to come back to where I want it to be. At other times the Scripture I have chosen firmly refuses to yield up the treasure I know it contains. And occasionally drowsiness takes over, and I wake up to find that my time of prayer is over!

At times like that I find St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus is a great help. *'It's a terrible thing to admit,'* she writes in her autobiography, *'but saying the rosary takes it out of me more than any hair-shirt would; I say it so badly! Try as I will to force myself, I can't meditate on the mysteries of the rosary; I just can't fix my mind on them.'* She then goes on to say, *'For a long time I was in despair about it. Now I don't distress myself so much; it seems to me that the Queen of Heaven, being my mother, must be aware of my good intentions, and that's enough for her.'*

In that last sentence, I think St. Thérèse has put her finger on what is really important about prayer. It doesn't matter all that much how well we succeed in having fine thoughts and nice feelings. It's not *what* happens in prayer that is important, but the good intention with which we come to pray. After all, the real work of prayer is much more God's doing than ours.

Fr. Ian Douulton sdb

ARE THERE REAL ANGELS?

Fr. Erasto Fernandez, sss

Since 1993, when Rev. Jayne Howard Feldman founded *Be an Angel Any Day*, people across the globe have taken time to bless a loved one, a friend, or even a stranger with ingenious acts of kindness. As Beliefnet reader 'Angel Love' of Port Orange, FL. says, 'Consider what you would like someone to do for you, and instead, do it for them.' For all these kind-hearted people, being an angel simply means making oneself a source of hope, help, inspiration and so on in another person's hour of need! At the heart of being an angel to someone is the quality of having an abundant reserve of warmth, creative resourcefulness, and a determination to spread some heavenly happiness on earth while one still can. Here are some ways people have used to bless others when they needed it most.

1. Invest in Someone

'Generosity is giving more than you can, and pride is taking less than you need' observes modern day prophet *Khalil Gibran*. *Along this line of thinking, you could donate to a charity or provide financial support (whether temporary or ongoing, anonymous or with a name tag) to someone who needs a money miracle. When your heart gently yet repeatedly nudges you to offer a cheque or cash, listen to it! However, it doesn't help to only give in order to get something (anything, even the usual 'Thank-you') in return. As Jesus himself advised, "But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is*



Rev. Jayne Howard Feldman

doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Mt 6:3-4).

2. Adopt a Soldier or Sailor

"There is more hunger for love and appreciation in this world than for bread" is one of *Mother Teresa's oft quoted sayings. And we all know how she herself went about making people aware of their great inner God-given dignity and worth. She provided a dignified death to thousands of dying destitutes, mostly aged or sick people left on the streets to die unknown and unsung. We might not be able to do heroic acts like these, but we could at least provide a little encouragement and comfort to several whose dedicated services, as a nation, we take for granted. We could remind soldiers and sailors of home by sending letters and care packages filled with fun, practical, and personal items like postcards of*

their hometown, their favourite gum, or recent family photos printed on playing cards. It would give them great pleasure if we could send them what they may not be able to find overseas. Along the same line, we could think of those who work thousands of miles away from their families and homeland, toiling away at construction sites in Singapore, Hong Kong and other foreign cities, of those working as domestics or eke-ing out an existence far away from home!

3. Lend a Loving Ear

Paul Tillich writes, "The first duty of love is to listen." And while most people spend years learning to read and write and express themselves gracefully and accurately, hardly one percent of these spend any real time and effort learning to listen. And yet, listening, true empathetic listening, is perhaps the most difficult of human skills we could ever possess. Especially when dealing with those whose inner hidden needs make them resort to unpleasant ways and tricks to capture the attention of others, we need to remember to be patient and just listen as if it were a friend who needed you. We should be watchful not to be eager to offer advice or be quick to air our learned opinions. Instead, we need to realize that sometimes listening can speak more than talking and that, most often, what people in trouble really look for is merely a loving and listening ear - that seems to solve all their most difficult problems, cheering them up to discover that there is someone who truly cares. One knows that

one's listening has been effective when that sudden brightened look appears on the other's face and from then on s/he tends to be more silent than complaining.



4. Save Our Pets

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated" warns *Mahatma Gandhi*. Especially *Homeless pets* need love and help in finding food and shelter. Get involved with your local SPCA or adopt a pet from an animal shelter or from a friend who can no longer take care of it. *Sandra Williams* further suggests that you could "feed your friends' animals while they are on vacation." Today this simple kind gesture has become a highly valued favour in important crisis situations for several people, for not a few countries do not permit transporting animals, especially by air, or have raised the costs of such transport to prohibitive levels so that most animal lovers cannot afford them. So, they have to either forego their vacation or business trips or find a generous neighbor or friend who will care for the animal in their absence.

5. Lighten Up a Hospital

Leo Tolstoy reminds all of us that

'the sole meaning of life is to serve humanity.' Do you wish to provide for someone ill and in need of more than medical care? You could easily join a group that organizes visits to patients in hospitals, such as St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, or personally visit someone you know who is ill. Instead of flowers and balloons, you could offer prayer sessions, a jigsaw puzzle, or favourite CDs. Besides, one need not visit only known persons since the general feeling that grips anyone who finds him/herself confined to a hospital bed, is that of neglect, loneliness and boredom. So, almost anyone who is in a hospital especially if his/her stay is going to be a prolonged and tedious one, would definitely welcome a visit from a kind hearted person who would brighten up their day at least for a couple of hours. And what is everyone's experience is that a stay for any length of time in a decent hospital today is a mighty expensive affair. Almost every physician worth his name could order a battery of expensive tests that are demanded as a must, even if not really so... and next follows the long list of prescribed medication which is frightfully expensive also!

6. Be a Kindred Spirit

"We are not put on this earth for ourselves alone, but are placed here for one another. If you are always there for others, then in time of your own need, someone will be there for you" suggests *Jeff Warner*. *We could further venture to gradually break out of our comfort zones by offering a delicious cup of coffee*

to a co-worker or by encouraging a neighbour to join our book club. A newly acquired good friend may be waiting in the cubicle next to you or in the next pew at your favourite place of worship in the hope of spending a few light moments in your pleasant company.

7. Sign Up for a Prison Pen Pal

"Communication leads to community, that is, to understanding, intimacy, and mutual valuing," *Rollo May*, a leading psychologist, recommends. Would you want to put your stationery and stamps to good use? Rediscover snail mail by writing to prisons inmates. Proceed with caution and join a safe, established organization such as 'Prison Fellowship' or 'Jewish Prisoner Services International' that provide friendship and help to inmates. Evidently, one would need to exercise caution and prudence in this field, yet, when one puts oneself in the shoes of the detainees, one appreciates the need of communication and fellowship with even this group of our fellow human beings.

8. Tuck Away an 'Anyday' Gift

"Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us daily" This piece of wisdom by *Sally Koch* would readily make sense to most of us. *We all realize that gifts don't necessarily have to be big in order to elicit a brilliant smile from the surprised recipient. Do you happen to spot a bookmark or a box of tea that reminds you of someone? Buy the item and give it to that person - just because you wish to see the person happy and*

cared for! And if you use an attractive wrapper for the gift that would undoubtedly make anyone's day a special one! No matter our age, we all look forward to and welcome a gift, especially if it is a surprise gift, and there is no special occasion to warrant it.



9. Start a Blessing Chain

"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around," writes *Leo Buscaglia* out of the store of his vast experience. 'Pay it forward' by being part of a domino effect of cascading kindnesses in your neighbourhood. As an old adage reminds us, 'a little goes a long way' especially when flooded with genuine love and concern. Offer someone a blessing and request them to pass it on. One never knows how far the ripple effect would take that blessing and how many broken lives it could heal

10. Surround Someone With Wings

"Occasionally in life there are those moments of unutterable fulfillment which cannot be completely explained by those symbols called words. Their meanings

can only be articulated by the inaudible language of the heart." - *Martin Luther King, Jr.* It might be awkward to hug a stranger. Still, any form of gentle touch, especially hugs, has the potential to promote a calmer, less anxious society. Of course, you wouldn't bear-hug the person next to you in a movie theater, but you could try giving him or her a 'mental' hug by radiating positive energy in that direction. Sending vibrations of love and peace to those around us is a helpful way of promoting more cordiality all around.

Eternal Reward

In his Gospel St. Matthew reminds us that when we stand before the Judgment Throne of the Almighty on the Last Day, He will not ask us specifically how many times we visited a Church or were present for the Eucharistic celebration. Rather, His measuring stick will be much more practical and down to earth. "'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?...' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'" (Mt 25:34-40). □

PRAISE HIM IN THE SUNSHINE

by Melanie D'Souza

*"This is the day that the Lord has made, I will rejoice and be glad in Him"
(Psalm 118:24)*

All of us have been rewarded abundantly by the Lord, in these trying years; in one wonderful way or the other. Be it academic success, a fruitful relationship, a blossoming friendship, great family times or even the ownership of a mere gadget we've always desired - it has simply come our way because the Lord has worked in our favour.

I remember as kids, how we'd so joyfully sing praise and worship songs at Mass and during catechism, with all our earnest innocence and childlike fervour. It suffices to say, however, that it isn't the same with us anymore. Sometimes, we even grow a pint selfish; for when good things happen to us we forget to thank the Lord, and often, go as far as to think that it is either our pure luck, or entirely our own doing.

So why praise? Even when things seem to be going okay? Well, primarily because He is the sole reason! He is the lone cause for all the good things; even the bad, let alone our so-called pure 'luck'. Praise goes hand-in-hand with thanks and since we have a lot to thank God for, we might as well praise Him!

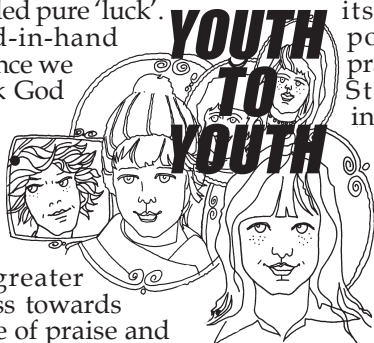
Now we think, what's in it for me? Surely enough, most of us have experienced a greater degree of closeness towards God, during a time of praise and

worship, which makes the former so important! Just as every relationship requires regular cementing; praising Him is the very act that can paint our lackluster spiritual wall. For people of our age and standing, the edgy beats of gospel artists, Paul Baloche or the likes of band NewSong, are sure to mentally uplift us and place us in a more comfortable position with God. Hence, we need not adopt the same method of praise that adults around us do.

Praise to our Yahweh, however, shouldn't be confused with a shower of flattery. I remember the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (**Luke 18:9-14**) who differ in their forms of praise. The former, though more religious, is less humble and praises God for making him better off than the latter- which is what God does not want. He wants us to thank Him for what He has blessed us with, not the despicable circumstances He has saved us from. Our ordinary life

itself, thus, is a powerful tool of praise. Hence, author Stormie Omartian instructs us to **adopt praise as the first response to everything that happens in our lives.**

Praise isn't just a duty-it's more of an obligation!



This fact is reiterated throughout our Scriptures-the psalmist cries out to us-“Praise the Lord my soul and do not forget how kind He is.” In **Ps103:2. 1Chron 16:8-36** also holds a beautiful Song of Praise which underlines to us exactly why our God is so praiseworthy. But the best of all is what Paul writes to the Thessalonians in **1Thess 5:18**- “Rejoice always, be thankful in all circumstances, this is what God wants from you in your life in union with Christ Jesus”. Moreover, Jesus, in his teachings, warns against praising Him ostentatiously in **Matt 6:5**.

But what happens when we fail

to praise Him? We may feel like lesser persons, unworthy of Him, and in need of His Light. Praise helps to dispel exactly this. At this point in our lives, our journey of praise should start with a realization that **His name has always been blessed and worthy of praise**, and then; we should continue to praise Him, with all the sincerity that we’ve ever known.

You can be sure that He’ll always be on the other end of the phone, so you can definitely make your call of praise anytime. And if a new kind of praise has to evolve from you, then so be it! □

walking with the Church

Blasphemy, The Brown Scapular

from St. Martin's Messenger,
Ireland



Q. Recently I read in the papers about a protest against some play put by one of the Television channels. They claimed it was blasphemous. Could you please explain the meaning of blasphemy?

A. The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines blasphemy as ‘the use of the name of God, of Jesus Christ, of the Virgin Mary and of the saints in an offensive way’. Blasphemy is contrary to the respect due to God and his Holy Name.’ It is a sin against religion. St. Thomas terms it a sin against faith. In the Old Testament it was not limited to speech as adultery, murder, stealing and unbelief were also regarded as blasphemous.

Q. I have an old scapular which I have been wearing for years. It is a brown scapular. A family member who has seen it asked me about it but I was

unable to give her any explanation. Could you please tell me something about it?

A. Our Lady is believed to have presented the first scapular to St. Simon Stock, sometimes called St. Simon of England. Simon Stock was prior general of the Carmelite Order. In July 1251 while he was praying to Our Lady, she appeared to him and presented him with the scapular with a very special promise to those who wore the scapular. Pope Pius XI speaking about this promise said, “although it is very true that the Blessed Virgin loves all who love her, nevertheless those who wish to have the Blessed Mother as a helper in the hour of death must in life merit such a signal favour by abstaining from sin and labouring in her honour.” □

ALBERTO MARVELLI 1918 - 1946

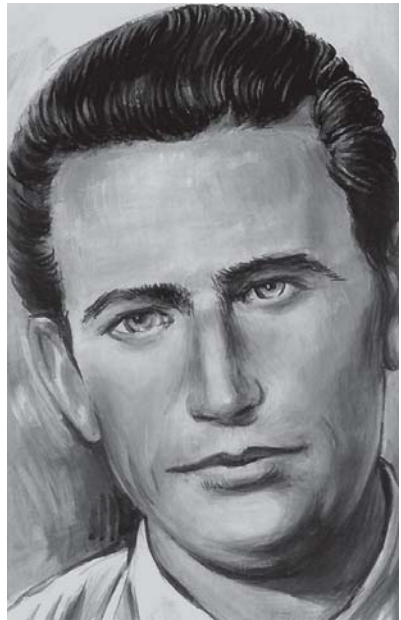
Alberto Marvelli was born at Ferrara on 21st March 1918, the second of seven brothers. When he moved to Rimini with his family he attended the Salesian Oratory there. Ready to help, he became a catechist and a leader at the oratory, a veritable right hand of the Salesians. He loved sports. His models were St Dominic Savio and Pier Giorgio Frassati. When he was 17 years old he wrote down his project of life which would renew his life.

He joined the Oratory group for Catholic Action soon becoming its parish president and later became the vice president of the association in the diocese of Rimini. As an engineering student he was an active member of FUCI while faithfully attending daily Mass.

In June 1942 he graduated and began working with Fiat in Turin. He did his military service in Trieste and succeeded in bringing many of his friends to Mass. During the Second World War he assisted many displaced persons and was a real source of providence for the poor.

After the Allies arrived in Rimini he was appointed as an alderman in the Town Council in the department responsible for rebuilding, and the engineer in charge of civil works: "The poor are on our doorstep" he used to say: "the others can wait".

He agreed to run for elections



as a candidate for the Christian Democrats and was recognised as a committed Christian. One of his communist opponents said: "I don't mind if my Party loses, so long as Marvelli becomes Mayor".

The Bishop appointed him president of Catholic graduates. His Marian and Eucharistic Piety were the pillars of his life: "What a new world opens up to me contemplating Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament", he wrote in his diary.

He died when he was hit by an army truck on 5th October 1946. He was, as Don Bosco wanted, a good Christian and upright citizen, committed to the Church and society with a Salesian heart. As a youngster his motto was: We go forward or we die.

He was beatified on 5th September 2004, at Loreto, Italy, by Pope John Paul II. □



A MAN OF THE ORDINARY SALESIAN LIFE

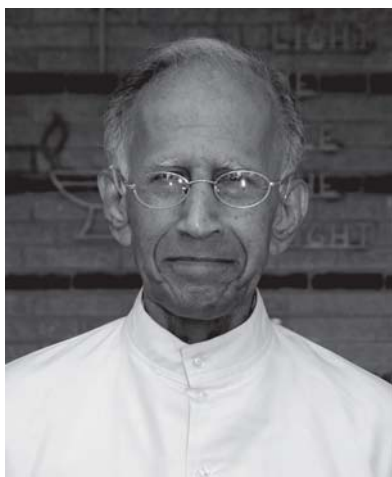
- Rev. Fr. Thekkadath Joseph, sdb (TJ)

I come from a pious Christian family. My grandfather used to make sure that I always went with him to Church and I eventually learned to serve mass and I did so from then on. I was always close to priests.

When I finished SSLC, it was time to make a decision. Though I had a certain desire to go for the priesthood, my parents objected and so I joined college to continue my studies. As Providence would have it, one day my Parish Priest received a letter from Fr. Carreño, the Salesian Provincial- requesting for some priest-candidates from his parish.

My Parish Priest called my father and suggested that I be sent to the Salesians. Being an obedient man, my father came to the college and told me what the Parish Priest had said and he asked me if I would be willing to go to join the Salesians. I said that I was certainly very willing, the only difficulty was the resistance of my parents. This is how I landed in the Salesian aspirantate at Tirupattur in 1943. My aunty was a Religious sister belonging to the Adoration Sisters, and she used to pray for me and I believe this helped me.

There was nothing extraordinary about my journey into Salesian life. After the Novitiate and the other steps towards the Priesthood, I made sure that I put seriously into practice what we were told by the Superiors all through my formative years. It is not that I was in any way extraordinary, but I tried to take as



seriously as possible whatever was suggested to me.

I have tried to study as hard as possible. So when I was ordained a priest I practically spent all my time involved in formation except for a year or two. I have a passion for teaching; I liked history in general and finally got into teaching Church History. As a young Salesian I was terribly scrupulous and it took me years before I got out of it. My joy as a Salesian was always to do the bidding of my superiors.

I have always tried to do what the superiors told me. I would tell young Salesians that they must follow what their superiors tell them and not try and do extraordinary things. This constant listening will give them strength and God's blessings will accompany them. To those in formation; be very open with your superiors especially your Rector and do what he tells you. □

Witnesses in & for Our Times



ST. MIGUEL FEBRES CORDERO 1854-1910 (FEBRUARY 9)

With assistance of www.vatican.va

In 1863 the Christian Brothers opened a school in Cuenca (Ecuador) and among their first students was Francisco Febres Cordero. He was born on November 7, 1854. The Christian education he received in the warmth of his family received a greater impetus in the catechism classes and the example of his teachers in the school. With his open Ecuadorian spirit the youngster did not take long to thrive. The opposition of his parents did not discourage him along his path to the priesthood. From his earliest years young Francis entrusted all his troubles to the Virgin Mary because in her he found strength and a strong determination to go on. Finally, on March 24, 1868 he obtained the permission of his mother to enter the novitiate of the Brothers. On the eve of the feast of the Annunciation, Brother Francis received the habit and took the name Miguel.

His struggles to persevere in his vocation did not cease. Francisco's father, even though he



accepted the decision of his wife never wrote a single line to his son for five years. In the meantime Brother Miguel began his ministry of teaching at a Christian Brothers' school in Quito. At a time when there were no texts or manuals Miguel was an excellent teacher in the Spanish language and literature. He took it on himself to write manuals himself and the

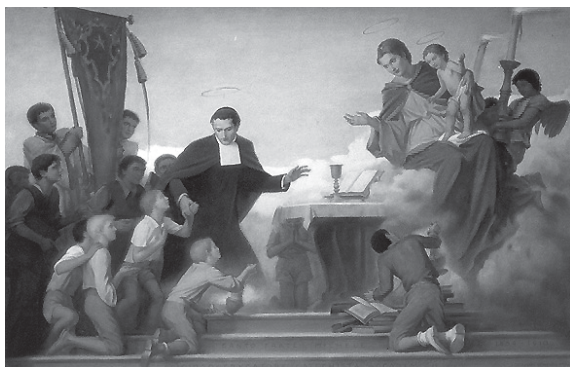
Ecuadorian government adopted those manuals for all their schools. Over the years, Brother Miguel would publish other works especially in the fields of poetry and philology which would inaugurate the National Academy. He even composed Catechisms for children because catechesis was the preferred field of his apostolic activity. He would always especially claim for himself the privilege of preparing children for their First Holy Communion and he dedicated himself to this work until the year 1907 when he left for Europe. His regular contact with children would help him nurture one of the most remarkable characteristics of his spirituality which was the simplicity of the Gospel: "Be harmless as doves." "Unless you become like little children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." That simplicity was expressed in his tender devotion to the Infant Jesus. The practice of the virtues of religious life: poverty, chastity and obedience would shine out with this evangelical simplicity. Evangelical charity would shine out in his Eucharistic piety and his devotion to the Virgin Mary. His contemporaries soon began to call him: "Brother Miguel the saint!"

His holiness radiated beyond the Ecuadorian borders and across the continents as a result, in France, in 1904 where the laws hostile to religious congregations forbade many Christian Brothers from exercising their apostolate in their own country they were compelled to migrate. Many opted for Spain and the countries

of Latin America. In order to ensure that the young Christian Brothers had an essential knowledge of the Spanish language, the superiors transferred young Miguel to Europe so that he could devote himself to composing texts to assist the confreres study the language even more quickly. After a few months in Paris, Brother Miguel moved to the headquarters of the Brothers in Lembecq-lez-Hal (Belgium). He was entirely dedicated to his new job and his virtue continued to radiate in his new surroundings, but the Belgian climate was very different from that of his own country and it did not agree with him. His superiors deemed it fit to transfer him to Spain assigning him to the International Lasallian Centre at Premia de Mar, in the province of Barcelona. The young students there admired the culture and simplicity of Brother Michael as much as his great love of God.

In July 1909 the winds of the revolution reached Premia de Mar and then came the "Tragic Week." Given the frequent incidents of anticlerical violence, the superiors were compelled to move the seminarians to Barcelona and the staff to a shelter at the harbour town of "Bonanova." In those dark days Brother Miguel was given custody of the chapel at Premia. After the storm of the revolution had passed over, the Brothers returned to Premia de Mar but now it was time for the Lord to call home his faithful servant. In late January 1910 Miguel contracted pneumonia and he

was overcome with weakness. After suffering for three days and having been consoled by the Sacraments Brother Miguel gave his soul back to God on February 9, 1910. In Ecuador news of his death was received with much emotion and tears and the state declared a period of national mourning.



St. Miguel, lover of the Eucharist teaches little children Catechism

The Brothers and the students of Brother Miguel vied with admiration and praise of his virtues. Graces attributed to his intercession quickly multiplied. In Quito the process for his beatification began in 1923, in Barcelona it began in 1924. In 1936, during the Spanish revolution his remains were returned to his homeland and received in a triumphal welcome. The tomb of Brother Miguel became a place of continual pilgrimage.

It was the miraculous healing of Sister Clementina Flores Cordero that moved the cause of the holy Brother's beatification.

When all the requirements were reached, Pope Paul VI declared Brother Miguel Blessed on October 30, 1977 together with the Belgian Brother Mutien-Marie. The large attendance of pilgrims from Belgium, from Ecuador and Italy testified to the holiness of these two Brothers.

On the day of the Beatification, precisely during the evocative

ceremony another miracle took place: Ms. Beatriz Gómez Núñez, who suffered with incurable "myasthenia gravis" was completely healed. She, together with her whole family was entrusted to the intercession of the holy Brother and as a culmination of her prayers they had come to Rome for the beatification. This healing, having been recognized as miraculous, was instrumental in reopening the case and in the consistory of June 25, 1984 the Pope John Paul II set October 21 of that same year as the date of the his canonization.

Pope John Paul II proposed this Ecuadorian religious to the whole Church and especially to the people of Ecuador not only as a model of religious life but as a model of a simple and humble catechist totally dedicated to the work of evangelization and an educator who helped many young people and children to find in the life of Jesus the ability to live their faith as a gift and commitment. □

IN A CHEERFUL MOOD

Bear Hunting

Two men went bear hunting. While one stayed in the cabin, the other went out looking for a bear. He soon found a huge bear, shot at it but only wounded it.

When the enraged bear charged toward him, he dropped his rifle and started running for the cabin as fast as he could. He ran pretty fast but the bear was just a little faster and gained on him with every step. Just as he reached the open cabin door, he tripped and fell flat.

Too close behind to stop, the bear tripped over him and went rolling into the cabin.

The man jumped up, closed the cabin door and yelled to his friend inside, "You skin this one while I go and get another!"

More Incorrect

Two young engineers applied for a single position at a computer company. They both had the same qualifications. In order to determine which individual to hire, the applicants were asked to take a test by the department manager.

Upon completion of the test, both men missed only one of the questions. The manager went to the first applicant and said, "Thank you for your interest, but we've decided to give the job to the other applicant."

"And why would you be doing that? We both got 9 questions correct," asked the rejected applicant.

"We have based our decision not on the correct answers, but on the question you missed," said the department manager.

"And just how would one incorrect answer be better than the other?" the rejected applicant inquired.

"Simple," said the department manager.

"Your fellow applicant put down on question #5, 'I don't know.' You put down, 'Neither do I.'"

Hearing Problems

An elderly gentleman had serious hearing problems for a number of years. He went to the doctor and the doctor was able to have him fitted for a set of hearing aids that allowed the gentleman to hear 100%.

The elderly gentleman went back in a month to the doctor and the doctor said, "Your hearing is perfect. Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again."

The gentleman replied, "Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've changed my will three times!"

Ploughing at Night

A husband and wife were driving down a country lane on their way to visit some friends. They came to a muddy patch in the road and the car became bogged. After a few minutes of trying to get the car out by themselves, they saw a young farmer coming down the lane, driving some oxen before him. He stopped when he saw the couple in trouble and offered to pull the car out of the mud for \$50. The husband accepted and minutes later the car was free.

The farmer turned to the husband and said, "You know, you're the tenth car I've helped out of the mud today." The husband looks around at the fields incredulously and asks the farmer, "When do you have time to plough your land? At night?"

"No," the young farmer replied seriously, "Night is when I put the water in the hole." □



THE DANGERS OF CONTAGION

by Carlo Broccardo

The miracles of Jesus are an expression of his concern for humankind, the love he manifests for those who are struck down by sickness, disease and sin. But above all, it is a gesture of his immense love!

In the month of February we continue reading from the Gospel of Mark and we take up the story of the healing. The setting is a bit vague. He does not even specify the time (when?) nor the place (where?). We have to go back to previous episodes to find out and we reach the beginning of the Gospel, when Jesus - returning to Galilee after his baptism and the temptations - goes to Capharnaum and the nearby towns. One day, at an unspecified location he is approached by a leper who asks to be healed.

Two caveats. The first, the sick man asks Jesus for nothing for himself; in the sense he does not ask a question but makes a statement: "If you want to, you can make me clean." This is a strange style, even rude; he

seems to want to impose a miracle on Jesus. But beyond this first impression, the words of the leper are very indicative of his faith; he is very convinced that Jesus can heal him. He takes this for granted; it is as if he says: "If you really want to, I know you can free me from this terrible disease. Behind those (perhaps) rude words there was a strong conviction.

The second point: in the dialogue between Jesus and the leper the verb: "to purify" is used three times. In the Bible, all skin diseases (including leprosy) were referred to by that term; to this were also added some types of mold found on clothes and other objects. Because of this, in the time of Jesus, a leper was not like any other sick person, a paralytic, blind or deaf. He was "only" sick if he had leprosy which made him impure and was contagious.

The book of Leviticus, a long collection of laws devotes two whole chapters to leprosy (cf Lv 13 & 14). We should go back two or three thousand years, to a time when medicine was very limited and any form of contagion could lead to the ruin of an entire country, or an entire city! Because of this, "lepers" till they were certified to be completely healed (which was why Jesus sent the healed leper to the priests), had to live outside the village, without having any contact with anyone!

Strange, then, that Jesus touches the leper! Evidently, he is not afraid of being infected. Further, we may say that Jesus confronts evil as usual, in a straightforward manner. He is not afraid. His authority is indisputable. "He stretched out his hand and

touched him and said: "I want to, be clean!" And immediately the leprosy left him and he was made clean." It was all so simple.

Instead, what followed next was very complicated!

As required by the Law, Jesus sends the cleansed leper to the priests for their certification of his healing so that he could return to his village. But we notice how Mark describes this scene: "He sternly warned him to tell no one what had happened; but go and show yourself to the priest and make the offering that Moses prescribed as a witness to them." Jesus is not concerned about the leprosy and the contagion of the disease but he is worried about the news of the healing, spreading. "Jesus sternly sent him on his way."

Amazing! Two lines earlier Jesus is moved by that sick man, two lines later, Jesus sends him on his way warning him not to open his mouth to anyone except the priests. Why this attitude?

We will attempt this question: there were two dangers of contagion, in this passage. The first is that of the leprosy and Jesus calmly handles that. The second is the fame of the miracle: Jesus did not want his fame to spread considering it a contagious disease. The danger of contagion is so high that the same Jesus, with a hardened look - to which we are not at all accustomed - doesn't want the news to spread.

The miracles of Jesus are beautiful, but we must be careful not to give them too much importance. This is what the

evangelist Mark says. They are an expression of the concern Jesus has for humankind, the love he has for people, men and women who are struck down by disease and sin. That is why he heals, chases demons away, forgives sinners and defends the weak... because he wants to build a better world which is in the plan of God. The miracles are one of the expressions of the love of Jesus for us; they are a reality that quickly draws attention, but we also run the risk of being distracted from what is more important. The greatest act of Jesus' love for us is that he has freed us from evil once and for all. He gave his life and he died on the cross. □



"Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." Jesus and the leper of James Jacques Tissot (1890)

LISTENING TO THE

*On Friday 4th October 2014 Pope Francis
Institute in Assisi. The following is an a*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to begin my visit to Assisi with you, I greet all of you! Today is the Feast of St Francis, and as Bishop of Rome, I chose to bear his name. That is why I am here today: my visit is above all a pilgrimage of love, to pray at the tomb of a man who stripped himself of himself and clothed himself in Christ and, following the example of Christ, loved all people, especially the poorest and the abandoned, he loved God's creation with wonder and simplicity. Arriving here in Assisi, at the gates of the city, one finds this Institute, which calls itself "Seraphic", St Francis' nickname. It was founded by a great Franciscan, Blessed Ludovico da Casoria.

And it is right to begin here. St Francis says in his Testament: "The Lord granted me, Brother Francis, to begin to do penance in this way: While I was in sin, it seemed very bitter to me to see lepers. And the Lord Himself led me among them and I had mercy upon them. And when I left them that which seemed bitter to me was changed into sweetness of soul and body" (FF, 110).

Unfortunately, society has been polluted by the culture of "waste", which is opposed to the culture of acceptance. And the victims of this culture of waste are precisely persons who are the weakest, the most fragile. In this home, however, I see a culture of acceptance in action. Of course, not everything can be perfect here either, but you are working together for a dignified life for those people in grave difficulty. Thank you for this sign of love that you offer us: this is a sign of true citizenship, human and Christian! Put the most disadvantaged people at the centre of social and political attention! At times instead families find themselves alone in taking care of them. What should we do? In this place real love can be seen, I say to everyone: let us multiply our work in the culture of acceptance, works primarily enlivened by a deep Christian love, love for the Crucified Christ, for the flesh of Christ, works which join together professionalism, skilled work properly compensated with volunteer work, a precious treasure.

Serving with love and tenderness those who are in great need helps us to grow in humanity because they are true resources of humanity. St Francis was a rich young man, he had ideals of glory but Jesus, in the person of a leper, spoke to him in silence and he changed him, he made him



WOUNDS OF JESUS

*spent time with the children at the Serafico
bridgement of the talk he gave in Italian.*

understand what truly mattered in life: not wealth, nor power of weapons, nor earthly glory, but humility, mercy and forgiveness.

Here, dear brothers and sisters, I want to read you something personal, one of the most beautiful letters I have received, a gift of love from Jesus. Nicolás, a 16-year-old boy, disabled at birth who lives in Buenos Aires, wrote to me. I will read it to you: "Dear Francis, my name is Nicolás and I am 16-years-old; since I cannot write to you (because I can neither write nor walk), I asked my parents to do it for me, because they are the people who know me best. I want to tell you that when I was 6-years-old in my school named Aedin, Fr Pablo gave me First Communion and this year in November I will receive Confirmation, something that gives me great joy. Every night, since you asked me, I ask my Guardian Angel named Eusebio and who has a lot of patience to guard you and help you. You can be sure that he does it very well because he takes care of me and stays with me every day!! Ah! And when I am not tired... he comes to play with me!! I would very much like to come and see you and to receive your blessing and a kiss: only this!! I send you many greetings and continue to ask Eusebio to take care of you and to give you strength. Kisses. NICO".

In this letter, in the heart of this boy, there is beauty, love and the poetry of God. God who reveals himself to those who have a simple heart, to the

smallest, to the humble and to those who we often consider to be last, even you dear friends. That boy when he cannot fall asleep plays with his Guardian Angel; it is God who comes down to play with him.

The bishop asked that in the chapel of this institute there be permanent Eucharistic Adoration: Jesus himself who we adore in the sacrament and who we meet in the most fragile of brothers, from whom we learn that God loves us with simplicity of heart without barriers or complications.

I thank everyone at this meeting. I carry you affectionately with me and in prayer. Please pray for me too! May the Lord bless you and may Our Lady and St Francis protect you.

After the Holy Father left the chapel, he went to the window and said the following words to the people outside of the building:

Good morning! I greet you all. I thank you very much for all of this. A prayer for all the babies, children and people who are here and for all those who work here! For them! How beautiful it is! May the Lord bless you all! Pray for me too! And always! Pray in favour of something and not against it! May the Lord bless you! ☐



DEATH OF A MAN

From Fr. Ian Douulton's collection of stories

It is Molly Ross who tells us her true story, one I think, you will never forget.

The Interview:

'I want to talk to you, Leah Wertenbaker; it's about your book you call: *Death of a Man*. I read it with more interest than you know. In this book you speak about your married life. It was one of complete love and confidence. You said there were no secrets between you and your husband. So, when he discovered he had cancer and would have to be operated on, he made no effort to hide the tragedy from you. And after the operation you told him just what the doctor had said to you. He had a fair amount of time, but the sentence was death.

'You went on in your book to tell how you and your husband studied the situation. You waited for the time when drugs would lose their power to ease his pain. Together you worked out a plan in advance. The day after Christmas your husband told you that his "time had come." You helped him make up a deadly dose of morphine and then you stood there and watched him pump it into his leg. Somehow it didn't work! He even felt better, but in a few days the pain came back and you had to face it again. You watched over your husband as he tried to kill himself again. Still no results - once more and yet another failure. Now the morphine was almost gone. You and your husband thought of another way, so one night, you brought him his razor, freshly

stopped. He had to put a basin on the bed so that the sheets wouldn't be stained and you held him while he slashed his wrists. You watched the red tide of his life's blood rising in the basin. Then you started pumping morphine into him cutting your fingers on the glass vials you were breaking as fast as you could so that your blood mingled with his. You said that this mingling was a symbol of all your love. You are a *woman* whose fundamental destiny is to bring life into the world. You had done it three times, yet you were helping to put out your own husband's life. Didn't you't find this terrible reversal strange? That was the way death came to your house Leah Wertenbaker. When I had finished your book, I sat still and I remembered the way death came to my house.

'I thought back to the day when the shadow first fell on our house. I saw my husband and myself sitting beside our fireplace. We had been talking as usual about his work at the hospital; he was a surgeon, and the father of our children, two boys at home and our daughter in a convent. After a sudden pause, he broke the silence and said:

"I got the report on our medical check up today."

I was most interested.

He continued: "Molly, I have cancer!"

'My husband was a doctor. He knew only too well what the course of the disease might be. I remembered how calmly he sat

there, talking about what could be done, the treatments, the operation and after the operation. There was that white hospital room and Andrew looking well, saying he felt well but there was something in his eyes that made me hold my breath. He said rather cheerfully: "The good thing is, I'll be able to go on working."

I was happy for him.

As a doctor he went on:

"Yes, they tell me I shouldn't have too much trouble for quite some time."

He then admitted:

"I was never good at trying to hide anything from you, Molly, I can see I'm not doing it now."

He went on with some difficulty:

"It isn't easy to tell you this, but I think it would hurt you more if I didn't. All the abdominal glands are infected. The doctors could be wrong, Molly. Often things change quickly in these cases. But right now, they don't give me much of a chance."

'And yet, even after that, life went on almost normally. Andrew lectured to his students, wrote his medical papers, treated his patients and enjoyed his friends. If anything, he worked harder and took greater joy in being with the children and me. But one thing was different; there was fear in his eyes. It was a controlled disciplined fear, but it was there. It was there also beneath the intonations of his lovely voice, beneath his wit and his humour. For all fit and happy people the fear of death is that terrible step that must be taken alone. Andrew asked for a room

of his own and for a while, even when we slept side by side he often remained motionless and silent as if his sickness had walled him off from the world and when that passed, I came into the living room while he was reading some journal and asked if he shouldn't go to bed and he looked up:

"What was that you said, Molly?"

I repeated: "I said it was getting late, Andrew, don't you think you ought to go to bed?"

He seemed apologetic: "Oh, oh yes, Molly will you forgive me?"

I was surprised: "Forgive you? For what?" Rather shamefacedly he said: "I'm afraid, I've been selfish. Not much company lately."

I pacified him: "You've had things on your mind."

Then putting his arm around my waist he said: "Molly, could we go back to our own room?"

'I told him I never wanted it any other way. Then, with a faraway look on his face he said: "There are some things that a man has to work out alone...At least, that's what I thought. Perhaps I was mistaken. It's all over now."

'Then with a fresh breath he said: "Well, it's going to be a fine day tomorrow, let's take the boys on a picnic, it's been a long time."

'He didn't have to be alone anymore. There was no more fear to fight. He'd accepted his death with all its pains and penalties as coming from the hand of God. Now he was able to say that noblest and least selfish of all prayers: "*Not my will O Lord, but thine be done.*" I said it too and I thought I meant it until we sat that evening by the fire sipping our

glasses of sherry. We'd been talking about all the different things that had been happening during the day.

Then he turned sombre and said: "Molly, I discovered an enlarged lymph gland today."

"I was surprised: "You did? Oh? What does that mean?"

He looked gravely at me and said: "It means I won't be with you, six months from now."

'I had known deep down that it would be like this. But still it was incredible to hear that level easy voice saying this terrible thing. The room went quite cold as though the fire had gone out. And the next day I went into a church and knelt before a great high crucifix. There with only Christ who could see the tears streaming down my face, I asked him for a few extra years for my beloved. But even while I was kneeling I realized that Christ had only thirty-three years and his death was crueler and more anguished than anything we could be asked to endure. I came away feeling strangely comforted, resigned to sorrow and to loss. After that I was able to pray as my husband prayed: "*Not my will O Lord, but thine be done.*" There were still moments of anguish that came and went. One was our last Christmas dinner when my husband toasted me as he had always done. Our eyes met over our glasses but they were too full of love for tears. The moment passed and our sons didn't even notice. Nothing must spoil their festivities. And then, on New Year's Eve the pain came sharper.

'Looking at the clock in our

bedroom Andrew said: "Ten seconds to go Molly. Ready? Ring out the old, ring in the new!"

I was surprised: "Andrew?" Then with a weak smile he said: "Happy New Year, Molly, come on, say it, give me a kiss. Happy New Year, darling." I reluctantly said: "Happy New Year darling."

'Then I remembered the beginning of the end. Andrew was keeping to the house now except for occasional visits to the doctors.

'Then one day he surprised me: "Molly, I want to see Mary, let's go to the convent tomorrow morning."

'I tried to discourage him: "Andrew, that's so far for you, sixty miles!"

He countered: "Well, it's easier than trying to arrange for her to come here."

'I went on: "But tomorrow's a school day and the boys won't be able to come. Wouldn't you rather wait until this weekend?"

He looked away: "Oh, they'll have plenty of time for visits."

'Then I remembered and asked: "Andrew, you saw Dr. Cameron today. He told you something, didn't he?"

He admitted: "Yes, darling, the cancer has invaded the brain."

I was shocked: "Oh no!"

Then he insisted: "I want to see Mary, while I can still talk sense."

'I can remember the details of that meeting as if it were yesterday. This lovely young girl and the dignity of her white novice habit, kissing her dying father good-bye. There were no tears. Only love and faith are stronger than death.

'I relived what came soon after. My husband's days of weakness, so exhausting, it was worse than pain. The loss of speech that left only agonized and frustrated gibberish. The paralyzed arm that meant he had to be bathed and fed and dressed. The dragging leg that made walking impossible. There are times when a man's dignity and strength are sublime. Through all this Andrew's dignity never failed him. He was wasted and worn but he asked for no drugs. He refused to take the easy way.

'So we came to the final day. A doctor who was also a friend told me Andrew could not live through the night. For one last time, I sent for the priest. My husband was unconscious, but suffering had so ennobled his face that it had a beauty all its own. The blessed candles flickered in the warm summer air. His sons and I and his sister-in-law who had nursed him devotedly knelt beside his bed. Kneeling also in the room and down a wide corridor were his friends. Together we prayed for the soul poised in flight between this world and the next.

'Father Michael said solemnly: "Oh God of infinite mercy, forgive him any sins he has committed through human frailty, Holy Strong God, Holy immortal God have mercy on his soul. Go forth! O Christian soul, in the name of God almighty who created you, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God who suffered and died for you, in the name of the Holy Spirit who sanctified you. Let peace

come to you today and your abode be in Holy Sion"

'Most clearly of all I remembered the next morning, for he did live through the night. For three precious moments he regained consciousness and once again I saw his dear eyes alight with love and peace and memory. He spoke to me very clearly: "Goodbye, love!"

'That is what I remembered when I read your book Leah Wertenbaker. I thought again of you standing over your husband who was dying because you both willed it so. You wrote that this was honesty and courage and love, yes, you and your husband were honest, if it's honest to destroy something you did not and could not make. You were brave, if it was brave to refuse the pains of natural death. You loved each other, if it's the function of love to thrust life out of the world with violence.

'I'm glad death came differently to my house I would wish for my husband no other passing than the one he had. There was pain and anguish, yes, but there was also courage and dignity and peace. This was the death of a man! □



DON BOSCO'S EDUCATIVE METHOD: A WAY TO HOLINESS

12

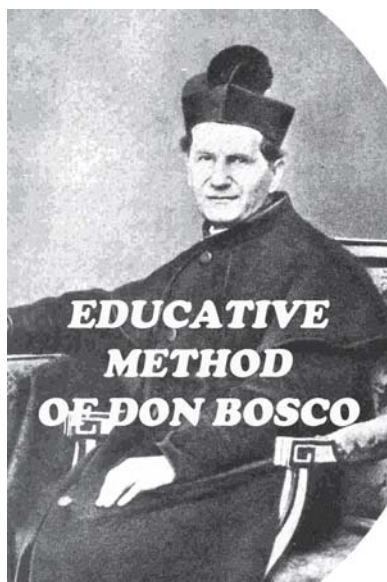
by Fr. Elias Dias sdb

The sum total of all growth is a holistic growth, holiness or happiness. For Don Bosco living the Educative Method was a path to holiness or sanctity. Each person's understanding and interpretation of these core elements are bound to be differences, in the way each one lives and applies the Educative Method of Don Bosco.

This approach considers the Educative Method as the spirituality both for the educator as well as for the educand. One's relationship to God finds expression in the way one deals with his fellowmen. The Educative Method is not only spirituality for the educator it is also spirituality for the educand.

In his dream at the age of nine the great Personage told Don Bosco "not with blows but with kindness and meekness you will gain over these friends of yours."

Love of God, sends His Son into this world to live among men. (*Incarnation*). It is love of communion with men. It is a desire to be with the one whom we love. Don Bosco worked tirelessly for the boys like a father, accepting fatigue, persecution and suffering for the sake of youth unknown to him. He loved them not only in words and deeds but in truth.



Don Bosco worked tirelessly for the boys like a father, accepting fatigue, persecution and suffering for the sake of youth unknown to him. He loved them not only in words and deeds but in truth...

The last element of the pastoral holiness of Don Bosco shows us how he, after the example of God the Father, and Jesus the Good Shepherd has been waiting for and favouring the free answer of the boys.

Don Bosco exercised in a wonderful way the theological virtue of hope in his relationship with the boys, always believing in their possible progress. Love hopes all things. He was convinced that in every young man, even most wayward, there is a spot accessible to the good. Don Bosco's holiness was certainly his patience and humility in knocking at the door of his boys with the strength of persuasion and love,

appealing to reason, affection, freedom and faith. Just like a farmer after so much toil and fatigue waits for a good harvest.

Don Bosco has been defined as a holy priest whose task was to make saints. This was the historical originality of Don Bosco. The proposal of the pedagogy of holiness can be seen in the three biographies of the best educands written by Don Bosco.

We do not have two or three kinds of holiness one for priest and other for religious and one for lay people and youth. Each reaches holiness in a way which is proper to him according to his own personal gifts and duties. We shall consider here two of the basic attitudes which are present in varying degrees in the lives of the three boys obedience and the heart.

1. The complex reality of Obedience: On May 16, 1857, a boy asked Don Bosco what was the secret by which Dominic Savio became so good and holy. Don Bosco answered, "The key and the lock used by Dominic Savio to enter the way to heaven were obedience and great confidence in the spiritual director." Trust in Don Bosco meant that the youngster perceived it as a gift and the need of support in his vocation. It meant doing one's duties well. It meant freedom to grow in sanctity according to one's space and abilities.

2. The heart: the first agent and the final objective: The whole life of Mickey Magone is a classic of education of heart, and because of this it will always be the classic document of Don Bosco's pedagogy.

The Elements of the pedagogy of holiness: The life of a boy, at the time of Don Bosco and also today, was lived in three places: in the playground, in the classroom or workshop and in the Church. These are three material places but they represent three dimensions of the existence of a young man.

a) The playground: For the educator the playground is the field of his educative art in so far as it offers possibility to live together with the boys and possibility of immediate, direct and personal contact. It is an invitation to create deep relationships like in a family. It was an occasion for apostolate of all three boys (Savio, Magone and Besucco) who did this work on the playground.

b) Duty: It was the password in the style and in the spirituality of Don Bosco. He could not think of a saint who did not do his duty. Mickey Magone was punctual in his duties. In the life of Besucco we find besides the use of time and exact fulfilment of his duties he also accompanied his work with prayers.

c) The sacramental structure of holiness: Don Bosco recommended to his boys to approach to the sacrament of confession often, receive Holy Communion frequently and choose a regular confessor to whom they could open their hearts. Confession besides forgiving sins also offers guidance and orientations to the young people who are inconstant and fragile.

The theological objective of youth's holiness: In this part we shall consider the Christian contents of a life of holiness viz.,

apostolate, piety, and penance in the life of the three young men.

a) Apostolate: When Dominic Savio came to the Oratory he was anxious to become a saint. Don Bosco suggested him the first rule to become saint was to work hard to gain souls for God. The source of apostolate is piety; love of God becomes love of neighbour. The boys in the Oratory approached their companion to do good works.

b) Piety: Don Bosco's house was called an Oratory, a house of prayer. Piety means love for prayer. It is rooted conviction of prayers and opposed to sentimentalism and routine. Piety means Catechesis which enlightens and makes one to reflect. Piety means God's presence in life.

c) Penance: Don Bosco did not want his educands to perform extraordinary penances. They practiced mortification and continuous renunciation, precision and small and hidden duties and practiced mortification. Dominic Savio was forbidden to do any penance yet he bore all the sufferings, injuries and setbacks. He practiced perfect control of his senses in the study hall and in the playground.

Spirituality of the Educative Method can be considered under following aspects:

1. Spirituality of Love: "God so loved the world that He gave his own Son." God's love was indiscriminate, like the sun that gives light to all the good, bad and the ugly. Don Bosco offered his love for his boys because of love of God (*Agape*).

2. Spirituality of Presence: Jesus came in this world in order to be

one with men. Last three years of his life he was with his apostles and with the lost sheep of Israel. The purpose of Don Bosco's presence was to prevent the boys from doing any evil and help them to express and bloom themselves and grow in maturity.

3. Spirituality of Daily life: Sanctity is essentially connected with the carrying out of our daily duties according to the state in life with what one's condition, daily life demands and capabilities. According to Don Bosco, to become a saint it is enough to do what we have to do.

4. Spirituality of Joy and Optimism: The first pages of the "*Companion of Youth*" proclaimed the requirement of youth, "I want you to be happy". Don Bosco saw the weaknesses in his boys at the same time believed in their goodness and thus gave everyone a fair chance to grow.

5. Spirituality of Service: Don Bosco took upon himself so many projects in order to serve the young especially the poor and abandoned. He advised his students to get directly involved in the apostolate of doing good in the world and to bring change in the social structure. Therefore there were sodalities, help for the cholera victims and Mutual Aid Society.

6. Spirituality of communion in the Church: The Church is the Sacrament of Christ. As a Sacrament she has communion among the members and offers holiness and means to holiness. Piety expresses the awareness of being immersed in the fatherhood of God, Sacramental life. Devotion to Mary most Holy was always practiced in the life

of Don Bosco. Mary infuses hope and suggests some typical gospel attitudes: listening, fidelity, purity, self donation, service and other values.

7. Spirituality of friendship with Jesus. To live the spirit in the Valdocco style is to form bonds of close friendship between Jesus and the young person. The young person is no longer satisfied with a first encounter and an attraction to the Lord. Don Bosco's constant concern was to educate his boys to the faith, walking side by side with the young so as to lead them to the Risen Lord that they might grow into new men.

8. Spirituality of Mortification: Don Bosco did not want so many exterior mortifications but he insisted on internal mortification. We have to keep an eye on unhealthy appetites that live within us. As members of the Mystical body of Christ, if the head suffered the members too must suffer a little.

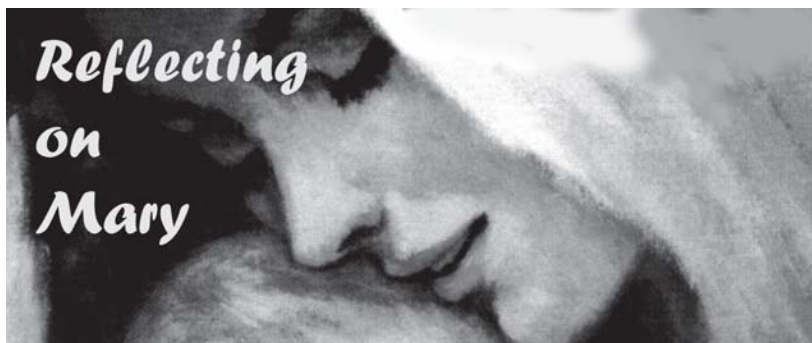
9. Spirituality of Preventive System: God has given a mission to Don Bosco to take care of poor and abandoned boys of Turin. His education embraced all aspects of life of his boys, his education was holistic education.

10. Spirituality of Hope: Just like a farmer who prepares the ground, waters, manures sows the seeds, protects the seeds from animals and waits for the harvest. So man, after hard work waits for good results. Don Bosco proposed his plan of holiness to his boys; he did not force or impose on them. He hoped and waited for their response and gradual maturity. We are called to sow the seeds of spirituality and hope and wait patiently for the good harvest.

Don Bosco left his sons a legacy, the martyrdom of work, the constant presence of the shepherd among the sheep, unbroken smile on their faces in difficulties and in trouble, an implacable war against sin, this will correspond to *purgative way*. Virtue of temperance to check greedy appetites of human nature and turn them into virtue, sobriety, chastity, humility, obedience, voluntary poverty, and meekness *this is illuminative way* because, it adorns the soul with Christ's virtues. Finally for Don Bosco, action is prayer when it is done by frequent contact with God, this will be *the unitive stage* of spirituality.

Conclusion: Don Bosco has given us an "Educative Method of Education" a simple, natural and complete Spirituality which definitely will cost us its price. This spirituality suits for Salesian educators, members of the Salesian family, teachers and collaborators, educands and their parents and all who want to follow Don Bosco and his way of education. Following this Method of Education with his spirituality, he became a saint and led many others to sanctity, "Good Christians and Honest Citizens" or to make the people morally upright and deeply religious persons. He bequeathed this precious heritage to us so that we may read, reflect and live it. □ (The End)

We are grateful to Fr. Diaz for his contribution and we look forward to his next series of articles on the spirituality of Don Bosco from his opus: "The Legacy of Love"



FROM "SEEING A SIGN" TO "BEING A SIGN"

by Maria Ko Ha Fong, FMA

Mary stepping out of her hometown to begin her journey is a metaphor for a "pilgrimage of faith" that she would make through all the stages of her life's journey. She leaves Nazareth behind because of a "sign" given to her by the angel: "Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month" (Lk 1, 36). In the modest house of the priest Zacharias, the elderly Elizabeth waits for the child that is to be given to her as an amazing grace. Mary must make this journey as a proof of the power of God because of which "nothing is impossible" (Lk 1, 37).

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD

When Sarah, Abraham's wife, laughed in disbelief at the thought of still being able to give birth in her old age, the Lord asked her this question: "Is anything too wonderful for Yahweh?" (Gen 18:14). So the son of promise,

Isaac, bears the name which means "God smiles" and that is, a wonderful sign of God's benevolence (cf Gn. 21:7) demonstrated in a person. To the people who were overwhelmed with suffering and discouraged, Isaiah invited them to trust in the one who could do everything: "No, the hand of Yahweh is not too short to save, nor is his ear too dull to hear" (Isaiah 59:1). He is the one who loves to do surprising things: "See, I am doing a new deed, even now it comes to light; can you not see it?" (Is 43:19)

Mary climbs up the mountain of faith urged on by God. As she will exclaim later in an explosion of joy in the *Magnificat*, the Lord her "Saviour," "the Almighty," is a God who does "great things" in her and in all the world. He is a God who "remembers his mercy" which extends "from generation to generation on those who fear him" (Lk. 1, 47.49-50).

MARY THE DAWN

Mary's trust is strengthened by

the “sign” given to her by God, but in reality, Mary herself is a sign that God gives to mankind, “a sign of hope and consolation” (Lumen Gentium no. 68). In fact, Mary marks the dawn which precedes the rising of the sun, she marks the break in the history of salvation according to the prophecy of Isaiah: “The maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son” (Isaiah 7:14). Her existence marks “the fullness of time” (Gal 4: 4). While Isaac, the child of Sarah and John, the child of Elizabeth, bring us the message that God can do anything, the child of Mary is God who can do anything, the Almighty God who became a weak and hidden human being. Along Mary’s journey of faith, there is a process between discovering the signs of God in others and being a sign of God’s love for others. She becomes a sign of a wonderful solidarity among believers. The meeting between Mary and Elizabeth reveals this in all its beauty.

Mary and Elizabeth: two women bearing the future in their wombs, two women who guarded within themselves an ineffable mystery, an amazing miracle. The awareness that they were the object of God’s special favour united

them in the common mission to partner with God in a huge project and that enthusiasm explodes into a blessing and a song of praise: the experience of this prodigious motherhood unites them in solidarity.

VOCATION TO RECEIVE

The marvel of God in Elizabeth was a “sign” for Mary and it helped her to pronounce her *fiat*, and now the marvel of God in Mary becomes a sign for Elizabeth, a sign that stirs in her a confession of faith. So the two women, one for the other, become a place to discover God, an epiphany of his greatness and the reason to praise and thank him. In the reciprocal recognition of a sign of God, their communication, full of insight and deep understanding, is permeated by respect for the mystery that becomes a blessing which bursts forth in a hymn and poem. The mutual encounter in faith overflows with mutual prophecy animated by the power of the Spirit. Together, both of them become signs of God’s solidarity with all humanity.

In addition, Mary’s meeting





The Church, walking in this period of history amidst its difficulties and trials, looks to Mary who shines before her as a sign of "sure hope and consolation" (Lumen Gentium, n. 68). This is why Paul VI, at the end of his Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis cultus*, invites people of today to raise their

eyes to Mary, the prophetic sign of hope: she "offers a calm vision and a reassuring word to modern man, torn as he often is between anguish and hope, defeated by the sense of his own limitations and assailed by limitless aspirations, troubled in his mind and divided in his heart, uncertain before the riddle of death, oppressed by loneliness while yearning for fellowship, a prey to boredom and disgust. She shows forth the victory of hope over anguish, of fellowship over solitude, of peace over anxiety, of joy and beauty over boredom and disgust, of eternal visions over earthly ones, of life over death" (n. 57). □

with Elizabeth in that emblematic situation of pregnancy is a paradigmatic sign of Mary's solidarity with all women. In Mary, woman recognizes her own dignity, which in God's plan turns out to be a novel place of gestation, the womb of the future, the locus of God's coming. In Mary, women become more deeply aware of their own vocation to receive, preserve, give life and nurture it, to generate hope. From her women learn to live with the miracle, to dwell in the mystery, to enjoy the beauty of love. In her women find a "sister."

Mary, recognizing the "great things" done in her by the Almighty, makes her a "great sign" of hope in Almighty God.

DON'T BE AFRAID

Do not be afraid to take steps which are permanent, like getting married: deepen your love by respecting its seasons and expressions, pray, prepare yourselves well; and then trust that the Lord will not leave you alone! Let him come into your home like one of the family, He will always sustain you! Family life is the vocation that God inscribed into the nature of man and woman and there is another vocation which is complementary to marriage: *the call to celibacy and virginity for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven*. It is the vocation that Jesus himself lived.



Pope Francis to youth at Assisi, 4th October 2013

NEWSBITS

USA

In the first week of October 2013, trailing a group of men walking through a prison, **Sister Helen Prejean** overheard bits of what they were discussing. 'I heard one saying, "He is so honest," but I didn't catch who they were talking about at first,' said Sister Prejean, a member of the Congregation of St Joseph, an order of Roman Catholic sisters. Then she figured it out from the fragments of conversation. The subject was Pope Francis, reported *The New York Times*. The people talking about him were 12 bishops who were visiting California's death row in San Quentin prison, home to more than 700 condemned men. 'Francis' whole style is so honest and forthright,' Sister Prejean said. 'He just really says what he thinks. That's what the bishops were commenting on. They're not used to it.'

Who could be used to unvarnished comments like those published that week in the Italian newspaper *La Repubblica*? 'The leprosy of the papacy,' Francis said, was the culture of the Vatican court that was devoted to cossetting popes in flattery.

For many American Catholics, especially for the women in religious orders, the new Pope has been a jolting, rejuvenating presence. Just 18 months ago, a Vatican report on the largest organization of women's religious orders in the United States declared that there were 'serious doctrinal problems which affect many in Consecrated Life.' Among their faults, the report found, was that they had been insufficiently energetic in promoting Catholic teaching on abortion, sexuality and



family life. The organization was put under the supervision of an archbishop selected by Rome.

Now there is a pope who has said that when it comes to abortion and same-sex marriage, 'it is not necessary to talk about these issues all the time.' The church's highest calling is to be with the poor, the oppressed and the marginalized in society, he said.

Which has been ground zero for the work of American Catholic religious women in the United States for decades. Catholic sisters in New York are getting older, but their works meet enduring needs. They run homes for women just released from prison, feed drug addicts and prostitutes who gather under the Major Deegan Expressway, build homes for women who are victims of human trafficking.

USA

An ancient document found in the Vatican archives casts new light on the story of the Nativity and the Three Wise Men who came to offer gifts to the infant Jesus, according to researchers, reports the Times, in an article published in the Australian.

The Revelation of the Magi, reputedly a first-hand account of their journey to pay tribute to the son of God, only now has been translated from ancient Syriac.

Brent Landau, professor of religious studies at the University of Oklahoma, spent two years deciphering the fragile manuscript.

It is an eighth-century copy of a story first written down nearly half a millennium earlier, less than 100 years after the Gospel of Matthew, the original source of the Bible story. - The newly translated tale differs in major respects from Matthew's very brief account.

The Magi of the Bible have long been associated with Persian mystics, but those in The Revelation are from much farther afield - from the semi-mythical land of Shir, now associated with ancient China.

They are said to be the descendants of Seth, the third son of Adam, and to belong to a sect that believed in silent prayer.

Perhaps the biggest divergence from the traditional Nativity story is that according to The Revelation there were "scores" of Magi.

It gives a detailed account of their prayers and rituals.

The story relates that Seth passed down a prophecy that a star would appear that would signal the birth of God in human form. The Magi waited thousands of years until the day the star appeared.

TURIN, ITALY

As Pope Benedict confirmed his intention to visit the Shroud of Turin next year, French scientist Thierry Castex has revealed that he has found traces of Aramaic on the Shroud. Pope Benedict confirmed his intention to visit the Shroud of Turin when it goes on public display in Turin's cathedral April 10-May 23, 2010, Catholic News Service reports.

Cardinal Severino Poletto of Turin, papal custodian of the Shroud of Turin, visited the Pope on July 26 in Les Combes, Italy, where the pope was spending part of his vacation. The Alpine village is about 137 kilometres from Turin. The cardinal gave the pope the latest news concerning preparations for next year's public exposition of the shroud and the pope "confirmed his intention to go to Turin for the occasion," said the Vatican spokesman, Fr Federico Lombardi, in a written statement on July 27. A recent study by French scientist Thierry Castex has revealed that on the shroud are traces of words in Aramaic spelled with Hebrew letters.

A Vatican researcher, Barbara Frale, told Vatican Radio on July 26 that her own studies suggest the letters on the shroud were written more than 1,800 years ago.

She said that in 1978 a Latin professor in Milan noticed Aramaic writing on the shroud and in 1989 scholars discovered Hebrew characters that probably were portions of the phrase "The king of the Jews."

Castex's recent discovery of the word "found" with another word next to it, which still has to be deciphered, "together may mean 'because found' or 'we found',"

THE DEVOTION OF THE THREE HAIL MARYS



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

My heartfelt thanks to the Most Holy Trinity and Our Blessed Mother through whose intercession - by praying the 3 Hail Marys a major financial crisis was averted, my daughter was successful in her university admission and a lost bag containing valuables and important documents was recovered.

Sharon, Mumbai
Sincere thanks to the Most Holy Trinity and Mother Mary for the gift of a healthy grandson. Keep him safe and in good health always.

James and Dorothy, Goa
Thank you dear Mother Mary for all the blessings showered on me and my husband. Also for the safe delivery and the gift of a healthy baby boy.

Cecilia, Goa
My most dear Mother Mary, What can I say? I am dumbfounded at the power of the Three Hail Marys. It is so miraculous! Something which could not happen for long I was able to achieve through the power of the Three Hail Marys. Mother of Mine, I continue to have the strongest faith in YOU. I am propagating this devotion to as many as I can. Please continue to be with me and my family, dearest Mother.

Leticia Pires
My sincere thanks to Mother Mary. My daughter who was to travel abroad for a job had last minute problems with her passport and air ticket. But it was the fervent praying of the Three Hail Marys that helped/ She was able to travel safely and her job was waiting from 1st July. She could only take up the job on 23rd July. Mother Mary protect her and our families.

Mrs. V. Batra, Mumbai
Sincere thanks to Jesus and Mother Mary for all the favours and blessings received through good and bad times. Especially for giving me the grace to bravely fight my illness. Mother Mary, please continue to keep my family under your mantle and intercede for us.

(NEWSBITS Continued from pg. 32)

she said. What is interesting, she said, is that it recalls a passage in the Gospel of St Luke, "We found this man misleading our people," which was what several Jewish leaders told Pontius Pilate when

they asked him to condemn Jesus.

She said it would not be unusual for something to be written on a burial cloth in order to indicate the identity of the deceased. (CNS)

LOVING CHILDREN TO THEIR LOVING MOTHER

I am grateful to Our Lady for providing me with a job and for many other favours. *Selma D'Silva*

Thank you Mamma Mary for curing the irritation in my right eye. Do continue to keep your motherly protection over our family.

Rini Aranha, Mumbai

My sincere thanks to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Holy Spirit and Our Blessed Mother for hearing my prayer.

Theresa, Chennai

I sincerely thank Jesus and Mary Help of Christians for a speedy recovery from surgery.

Francis D'Mello, Vasai

I was on my way to school with my son when a car came rushing behind us and banged into us as we were making a turn. Our Loving Heavenly Mother was surely there with her Son as we escaped with no injury. We are very grateful to Our Lord Jesus and Our Lady for keeping us safe.

S. Antao, Toronto, Canada

I am sincerely grateful to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady for saving my brother's life by putting him into the ICU and for all the graces bestowed on me.

M. W. Dodd, Pune

Belated but heartfelt thanks to Jesus and Mother Mary for helping me in my Inter- exams. Thank you Jesus and Mother Mary for helping me in my studies.

Jane Lucy, Gutteridge, AP

We are immensely grateful to Our Lord Jesus and Our Lady for bringing our son out of a serious attack of typhoid during his crucial Std. X. We received the whole-hearted cooperation from his teachers and the principal as he battled this illness. He was able not just to pass his exams but to pass with 82%. We are eternally grateful to Our Lord and Mother Mary for watching over us.

Z. Pereira, Mumbai

THEY ARE GRATEFUL TO OUR LADY AND DON BOSCO

Thank you dear Mother Mary and Don Bosco for hearing our prayers and for granting my mother clear results.

Riona James, Australia

My sincere and heartfelt thanks to Mary Help of Christians for a negative blood report of my grandson. May Mother Mary, Don Bosco and all the saints help all our children.

B. D'Souza, Mumbai

Our belated thanks to our Loving Jesus and Mother Mary for many favours granted including good health, a job, success in studies. Dear God help us mend all frayed relationships and lead me on the path of righteousness. Help Mira and Maya in their studies.

Pushpalata C. Samagond

I am very grateful to Mary Help of Christians and Don Bosco for saving our children from cancerous sicknesses that my daughter went through, saving my son from an accident. Now he has passed his engineering examinations too. I believe he will get a good job too. My heartfelt thanks!

D'Souza Family, Mumbai

THANKS TO DEAR ST. DOMINIC SAVIO



My most sincere and humble thanks to the Holy Spirit, Jesus, Our Blessed Mother Mary, Saints Don Bosco, Dominic Savio and Jude for my grandson's brain scan being clear and also for all the favours and blessings bestowed on our family.

Mrs A deSouza, Melbourne, Australia
Thank you dear Mother Mary and Dominic Savio for a safe delivery and the gift of a healthy baby boy.

Vanita and Dominic Carvalho, Australia
I want to thank Jesus, Mother Mary, Don Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for my safe delivery and the gift of a healthy baby girl. My mother's friend had given me the miraculous scapular of Saint Dominic

Savio which I wore during my pregnancy and I had a safe delivery.

Ana Sabina Coelho, Goa

Thank you so much, dear Mother Mary and St. Dominic Savio for blessing our daughter with a baby boy.

Vernon & Patricia Gutteridge, AP

My sincere thanks to Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and St. Dominic Savio for the gift of a baby boy and a normal delivery for my daughter-in-law. I am very grateful that my prayers have been heard and will continue to pray for their protection. *Mrs. Maria D'Cunha, Goa*

My sincere thanks to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Dominic Savio for the graces bestowed upon us. Also for the gift of a baby boy, Neron to my daughter.

Natalina Fernandes, Mumbai

My sincere thanks to Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and Dominic Savio for the safe delivery and gift of a baby girl to my daughter Cheryl Carvalho. Keep them in your loving care. *Mrs. Priscilla Faleiro, Goa*

Thank you for the gift of a healthy baby boy to my daughter on 14th September 2013. I prayed to St. Dominic Savio and also placed the miraculous scapular around her neck during the months of her pregnancy.

Maria Vitoria de Araujo, Goa

APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER FEBRUARY 2014

Holy Father's General Intention: *That the Church and society may respect the wisdom and experience of older people.*

Missionary Intention: *That priests, religious and lay people may work together with generosity for evangelization.*

Regd RNI no.9360/57;
Postal Regn. MH/MR/North East/089/2012-2014
posted at Mumbai Patrika Channel Sorting Office
on 1st & 2nd of every month:
Date of Publication: 1st of every month

Subs: (One copy Rs. 20/-); **Inland: Rs. 200 p.a;** **Airmail: Rs.500 p.a**

MARY WAS THERE

I was in Bombay on 30th July 2013 and while attempting to board a suburban train (from Churchgate bound for Andheri) which was just starting to move and picking up speed I managed to catch hold of the door handle and as I was about to place my foot on to the train I slipped. I missed my foothold, fell off the train and went sprawling on the platform. It could have been fatal and that day could have been my last day on earth. My folks back home in Chennai would have been grieving since July. Mary the mother of God was there to save and protect me. Though the fall was almost fatal I escaped with not so much as a scratch and all my personal belongings were safe with me. I always say the 3 Hail Mary's to honour mama Mary. *Rodney B Laporte, Chennai*

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

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

You can help by establishing a Perpetual Burse with:

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

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

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

MO/PO/INTL MO/BPO/Bequests, Wills, Perpetual Burses, all favouring Don Bosco's Madonna or Bombay Salesian Society or Rev. Fr. Edwin D'Souza, (Trustee).

Please address all correspondence to:

Rev. Fr. Edwin D'Souza, sdb.,

SHRINE OF DON BOSCO'S MADONNA,

Matunga - MUMBAI - 400 019 - INDIA

Phone/Fax: 91-22- 2414 6320, email: dbmshrine@gmail.com

<http://www.donboscosmadonna.org/www.dbmshrine.org>