



APOSTLES' OF THE ROSARY Newsletter

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God knows: 'I did it when I could'

"The things that thou hast not gathered in thy youth, how shalt thou find them in thy old age?" Eccl. 25:5



There was an old Religious, a lay Brother, who had been known throughout his community for his untiring and generous work. He had seemed to have an instinct to be where he was needed most and if he had not himself first discovered a job that had to be done, no one ever had to ask him twice to do it. But now he was old and his strength was ebbing fast. The same old readiness was there, but tired arms and faltering feet would not respond to his will as before. Often as younger men worked, he would look on almost wistfully, and then say: "God knows I did it when I could."

What a splendid conviction to have as we go down the hill of life or in days when sickness lays us low! We cannot then do much for God or for others. The days of our activity are over for a time or for ever. There is much to be done, but not by us any more. We can pray, yes, and we can be patient and resigned; but beyond that we cannot go. But will it not be consoling when we look back over the past, when youth and health and strength were ours, to be able to say, as the old Brother did: "God knows I did it when I could"?

Well, there is no use in waiting for the days of inactivity to come. We cannot help ourselves then. *Now* we can act, *now* we can work, *now* we can be up and doing. No matter where we are - in the world or in the cloister, married or single, rich or poor, one of a family or leading a lonely life - there is much to be done here and now, and I do not have to look far to find it.

In the home there is the care of the children, and the daily chores that can become so irritating. There are father and mother to be helped and their many wishes to be carried out. There are brothers and sisters who we can assist or to whom we can be quite troublesome.

In the give-and-take of daily life there are those who



As Jesus looked down and knew,
'YOU DID IT WHEN YOU COULD'

come to us for help, for guidance, for solace. There are those whose work we could make lighter and others whose road we could make easier. There are burdens that we might help others to lift, and other burdens that we might help some to carry. There are crises in life where we might steady a slipping soul, and there are depths of despondency down into which we could reach a withdrawing hand.

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Mary: Mother of Our Creator



The first pages of Holy Scripture pulsate with the creative words of God. If only it were possible for us to visualize the nothingness suddenly vibrating with the wonders of creation, the perfections of the mighty works of God – light, life, sound and color filling with beauty the vast stillness. The Psalmist tells us “The Lord shall rejoice in His work”, and His creatures, delighting in them, rejoice in the knowledge of God which His creative works reveal.

“He stretched out the north over the empty spaces and hangeth the earth upon nothing.” These words from the book of Job convey a deep realization of creation's dependence on God. That dependence continues to exist no matter how man may try to blind himself to it. Because of this blindness, his very dependence on God is increased.

In writing of the Word, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, Saint John tells us: “all things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made.” And Mary is the *Mother* of the Word made Flesh! In Her Son is all power, all creative power ... and He came on earth and dwelt among us, His creatures, like unto us in all things except sin. It was through Mary, the most beautiful, the most exalted of all God's works, that earth received the privilege of harboring the Creator. It is through Her that each Catholic receiving Holy Communion in the state of grace exults in the same privilege.

In thanking God for all His creative works, what a joy it is to thank Him above all for creating Mary Immaculate and making Her the Mother of the Incarnate Word – the Word by Whom all things were made! †

To the Infant Jesus

There in the narrow manger, cold and bleak,
My Lord! Thou art.
And there within Thy Hands so soft and weak,
I lay my heart.
Beneath Thy tiny Feet I bow my head,
O Blessed Child!
And kiss the straw that forms Thy chilly bed
In winter wild.
Show me Thy wondrous Babe, O Mother Maid,
Foretold of yore;
The Treasure on Thy virgin bosom laid
Let me adore.
His small Hand place upon my prostrate brow,
O Mother blest!
For, kneeling in His infant Presence, now,
My soul finds rest.

Upon Thy fair and youthful face I read
A look of love–
A look which bids me trust Thee in my need,
Spouse of the Dove!
Mother of God, commend me to Thy Son
As here I bend;
And oh! Commend me when my task is done
And life shall end.
A sinner kneeling at Thy Infant's cot,
I call on Thee;
A sinner, at His Cross forget me not,
But plead for me.
And thus in faith assured I leave my heart,
Blest Child! With Thee;
A worthless gift with which Thou wilt not part
Eternally!

O tiny Sacred Heart, pressed close to Your dear Mother's pure breast, hear the humble prayer that I pour forth to You. Let it ascend beyond the vast stars and planets, and fall as fair, fragrant flowers before the throne of Your Father.

The world is too much with me. And, dear Jesus, I fear that I love it far more than I should. Its gold and passing glory snare my heart and soul, and frequently lead me away from Your dear love and Commandments. The voice of the city calls me away from the paths of prayer and duty, and I forget the golden heights of Your City of love and rest. The spirit is willing, O Lord, but the flesh is very weak. I want to do the things that You want me to do, but I do the things of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

At such times, when Heaven seems far away, and earth very near and real, let me think of You, here, throned upon the stainless altar of Your Mother's breast. Let me get a deep and lasting understanding what Bethlehem means; and to make it a part and parcel of my everyday life. Let me realize that the glory of this world passes quickly and is naught, and that Eternity and God await me. Let me look beyond the things of Time to those of Eternity. And let me remember that I was born not for earth but for Heaven; and that all true peace and beauty and all that is worth striving for, lie beyond the confines of life, in the home of Your Father and mine.

It was because of this You came on earth; it was for this You were born poor and obscure; and because of this You will die upon Calvary. You came to redeem me, to call my soul and the souls of all mankind back to the Kingdom of Your Father.

And as I kneel here before You, I begin to see and to know the meaning of the secret of life.

You do not speak, dear Jesus, but Your silence is more precious than words. And as I gaze upon You now, I see Your little arms flung wide, cross-wise, and Your eyes filled with longing and love. And my poor faltering lips whisper promises of loyalty for the future. Oh, I shall try



to do my level best to keep Bethlehem before me, day in and day out; to make it rule and guide me throughout my whole life.

Mary, Mother of the Infant Jesus, my Mother too, whisper to Jesus, Your own dear Son, to aid and succor me in my endeavors to lead a pure and stainless life. He will harken to Your plea quicker than to mine. For He cannot refuse His Mother anything. And He loves You above all creatures. Mary, my Mother, pray for me. Jesus, my God and my Savior, hear Her prayer and mine, and grant my petition. Amen. †

An Ancient Hymn

When I used to sing in choir some years ago, I loved to sing a Latin hymn to the Blessed Virgin, composed by Charles Gounod. The words to "Inviolata" are much more ancient than that musical setting, and recently I found the English words, which are beautiful. If you have the St. Gregory's Hymnal, look at hymn number 208; if you have the Traditional Latin hymnal, the chant setting is number 151. Here are the English words in honor of Our Lady:

Inviolata, immaculate, and chaste art Thou, O Mary, Who hast become the glowing gate of Heaven. O Mother of Christ, so kind and most dear, receive our devoted hymns of praise: that our minds and bodies may be always chaste, with fervent heart and tongue we now implore Thee. Obtain for us, through Thy sweetly sounding prayer, pardon for ever. O Mary, O Thou tender Queen, Who alone inviolate didst stay. † – S. V.



Fatima Center staff had the privilege of talking to many priests and bishops during the eight days (Oct. 6-13) of the Conference, "Last Chance for World Peace." One could not help but observe the diversity of the priests' backgrounds. Some had never heard of the Fatima Center before we wrote to them earlier this year. But common to all was an earnest

desire to serve Our Lady.

Conference priests and bishops were astonished that the Fatima Center did not ask them for any money! Mrs. Coralie Graham explained that readers of *The Fatima Crusader* desire urgently that the requests of Our Lady be fulfilled, and that the Fatima Message be spread around the world. She told them of the tremendous sacrifices and generosity that you and other readers have shown to the Center, to organize the Conference. They were amazed and perhaps a little inspired that so many people had committed great sacrifices to teach the



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And the question I should ask myself just now is: Am I doing all I can, while I can? Tomorrow may find me stricken on a bed of pain; next month may find me an invalid; a few years hence will find me too bent with years to be of service to others. But today I can; today I am strong enough to work for God and for others. And again the question: Am I doing all I can *today* for my own soul and the souls of others? If not, then when the crippled days come, I shall have no chance to say in truth: "God knows I did it when I could."

Dear Jesus, it must be a wonderful thing in days of sickness and in times of weakness to be able to look back on the past and realize that work was done generously and unstintingly. The dear, old Brother certainly was not proud as he looked back over the years that were gone. I hope I can say in my old age what he said. But I shall never say it with truth unless I do all I can now. So give me much grace, dear Lord, to do all I can for You and for others now — and always. †



Father Gruner, bottom right, explains the surroundings to an interested group during the recent pilgrimage. Conference attendees, photo below left, listen intently, as several high-profile speakers took to the podium.

Fatima Message. They will pray for you with gratitude.

The audience was attentive to Father Gruner's proposal of a "Fatima Movement of Priests." One priest has already written to Father Gruner to describe how he is going to advance the "Fatima Movement" in his country, Sri Lanka. He is enthusiastic and ambitious! Please pray for his success on behalf of Our Lady.

Lay people also attended the conference. A family from the United States thought they had signed up for the pilgrimage which followed immediately after the Conference. They were looking forward to visiting Fatima, Lourdes and other pilgrimage sites. Only when they had received their final package of Conference information, perhaps two weeks before they were leaving, did they realize that they had signed up for the Conference instead! But they came eagerly, attended all the talks, and enjoyed every moment.

We cannot thank you enough for your prayers and support. During the Lent season, please help us thank the Blessed Mother for Her assistance to the Conference. She cut through many knots we encountered along the way. Our newest Issue of *The Fatima Crusader* features stories and pictures from the Conference, and news on what will be the next steps. †

We'd like to hear from YOU! Write or call:

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