

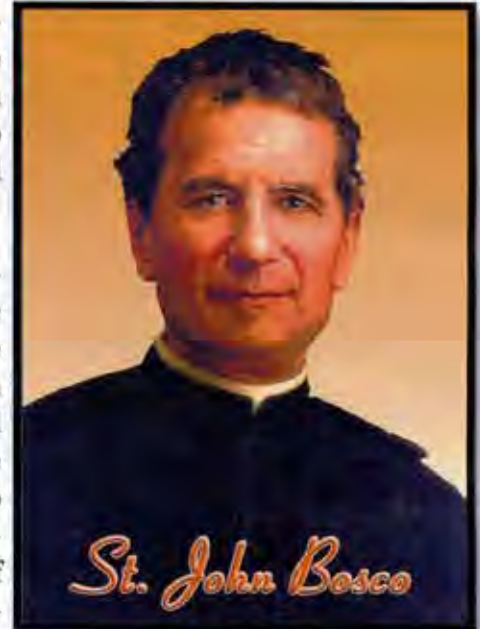
The Thaumaturgus of Turin

by A. Auffray, S.D.B.

A few years before he died, they asked St. Vincent Ferrer how many miracles he had worked. "About three thousand," he replied. The inquiry for his canonization made a careful examination of them, and they were so tired out that they came to a stop at the eight hundred and seventy-third.

If the same question had been put to Saint John Bosco, he would have surely replied, with the same simplicity as the famous Dominican, with an amazing figure. The miracles wrought in answer to his prayers were indeed innumerable. After going through the testimony borne by his sons, his pupils and by contemporary witnesses, one must agree that death, life, the devil, disease and nature proved docile to his commands. There was no greater *thaumaturgus* [miracle worker] in the Nineteenth Century, if he were not the greatest. ... [Here are some] selected out of multitudes, and wrought on behalf of all classes and conditions, and under more than one sky. They prove that Don Bosco was a man sent by God on a providential mission; these miracles both accredited and facilitated his work. Could this humble priest have accomplished his tremendous undertakings within half a century had he not been able to win over to his plans, besides the wondering crowds, the hearts of those whom he restored to health and happiness and life? It is not only the Basilica of Our Lady, Help of Christians, that was built with the help of miracles, but the whole of the great educator and apostle's enterprise.

Nevertheless, he would have been much astonished had anyone attributed to him the marvelous gift of having authority to



command the forces of nature. It was not he who acted, he thought quite sincerely, but Our Blessed Lady. He invited people to pray to Her, gave them Her blessing, distributed Her medal among them, it was She who wrought the wonders. He said this plainly at a meeting of the Old Boys, held at Valsalice on July 19, 1883, towards the close of his life: "For the last ten years a report has been spreading, and the newspapers publish it, that Don Bosco works miracles. What a mistake! Don Bosco does not work miracles. He prays himself and gets others to pray for those who recommend themselves to him; and that is all. As for miracles, it is the Blessed Virgin who works them. She sees Don Bosco needs money to feed and bring up his thousands of children as Christians; then She brings him benefactors by the favors She showers upon them." At most, when pressed with urgent

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Marvels of the Rosary

by Saint Alphonsus de Liguori



If you would like a free copy of our *Pray the Rosary* booklet, see page 4 for address and phone number.

It would hardly be possible for me to put into words how much Our Lady thinks of the Holy Rosary and of how She vastly prefers it to all other devotions. Neither can I sufficiently express how highly She rewards those who work to preach the devotion, to establish it and spread it, nor on the other hand how firmly does She punish those who work against it.

All during life, Saint Dominic had nothing more at heart than to praise Our Lady, to preach Her greatness and to inspire everybody to honor Her by saying Her Rosary. As a reward he received countless graces from Her; exercising Her great power as Queen of Heaven She crowned his labors with many miracles and prodigies. Almighty God always granted him what he asked through Our Lady. The greatest honor of all was that She helped him crush the Albigensian heresy and made him the founder and patriarch of a great religious order.

As for Blessed Alan de la Roche who restored the devotion to the Rosary, he received many privileges from Our Lady; She gracious-

ly appeared to him several times to teach him how to work out his salvation, to become a good priest and perfect religious, and how to pattern himself on Our Lord.

He used to be horribly tempted and persecuted by devils, and then deep sadness would fall upon him and sometimes he used to be near to despair; but Our Lady always comforted him by Her sweet presence which banished the clouds of darkness from his soul.

She taught him how to say the Rosary, explaining its value and the fruits to be gained by it and gave him a great and glorious privilege: the honor of being called Her new spouse. As a token of Her chaste love for him She placed a ring upon his finger and a necklace made of Her own hair about his neck and gave him a Rosary.

Father Triteme Carthagena and Martin of Navarre (both very learned men) and others as well have spoken of him in terms of the highest praise. Blessed Alan died at Zunolle in Flanders September 8th, 1475, after having brought over one hundred thousand people into the Confraternity.

Blessed Thomas of Saint John was well known for his sermons on the Most Holy Rosary, and the devil, jealous of the success he had with souls, tortured him so much that he fell ill and was sick so long that the doctors gave him up. One night when he really thought that he was dying, the devil appeared to him in the most horrible form imaginable. There was a picture of Our Lady near his bed; Blessed Thomas looked at it and cried with all his heart and soul and strength: "Help me, save me, my sweet, sweet Mother!" No sooner had he said this than the picture seemed to come alive and Our Lady put out Her hand, took him by the arm and said:

"Do not be afraid, Thomas My son, here I am and I am going to save you: get up now and go on preaching My Rosary as you used to do. I promise to shield you from your enemies."

When Our Lady said this the devil fled and Blessed Thomas got up, finding that he was in perfect health. He then thanked the Blessed Mother with tears of joy. He resumed his Rosary apostolate and his sermons were marvelously successful. †



We often marvel at the sacrifices Our Lady's friends make in order to support the apostolic work of the Fatima Center.

We received a phone call from Marianne, who had traveled with us on one of our Fatima pilgrimages.

It had been her dream to visit Fatima since she was six years old. But as an adult — a single mother of four, such a trip was out of the question, both financially and because of her family duties.

At last she was able to make the pilgrimage. Shortly af-

ter returning from her trip, she challenged herself to raise a thousand dollars to donate towards the Fatima Center's new building.

This was to be in honor of the ninetieth anniversary of the Miracle of the Sun at Fatima. She did what she could to raise the money, even to sell some of her old tutoring text books.

What an extraordinary thing to do. It is a challenge to the rest of us to try things for Our Lady that we might be afraid to try for ourselves.

Thank you for this contribution, and for this example of heroic service to Our Lady.

May She obtain every grace for you and your family. †



Thousands of Pilgrims take part in special, inspirational ceremonies at the Fatima Shrine.

questions, he would admit now and then that they worked together, the Virgin and he. But the crowd made no mistake. They knew that, if the mediatorial omnipotence of Mary could obtain innumerable favors from the love of God, Don Bosco's credit with his Mother was very great, and they largely drew upon it.

A touching and singular episode was the instantaneous cure wrought the day after the consecration of the church of Our Lady, Help of Christians, on June 10, 1868. A poor paralytic woman had herself borne to the church in a wretched conveyance drawn by a donkey. On coming close to it, the ambulance had to pull up; the crowd was too thick. The driver tried hard to break through, but in vain. Then the invalid saw Don Bosco surrounded with the faithful begging his blessing, and could not be held back; so she stood up and got out of the cart and drew near the Saint, and only then discovered she was cured. A wild cry of joy broke from her lips. Her parents who were there were struck dumb with fear at the sight, and wept with emotion and tried to lead her away. But she went on shouting: "I am cured, I am cured." "Well, we can see that clearly," they answered, "come along." "No," replied the woman who was cured, "I want to go and thank the Virgin for Her favor."

And, pushed on by the crowd, she went into the church.

On Sunday evening in May, 1869, a young girl, with her eyes bound up under a thick black bandage, and led by two other women, entered the church of Our Lady, Help of Christians, at Turin. Her name was Maria Stardero, from the village of Vinovo, and for two years she had been so violently affected in her eyes that she had lost her sight. She could not find her way alone; her aunt and a neighbor accompanied her on the pilgrimage she had undertaken.

After saying a prayer at the altar of the Blessed Virgin, they asked to speak to Don Bosco, and the following conversation took place in the sacristy.

"How long have your eyes been affected?"

"A long time; it is a year since I was able to see." And "We have tried all sorts of remedies," put in her aunt, "but none of them has been of the least use. The doctors say that her eyes are ruined. They give us no hope."

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She began to cry.

"Can you distinguish big things from small?"

"I cannot make out anything at all," said Maria.

"Take off your bandage," said Don Bosco, setting the young girl opposite a well lighted window: "Do you see the light from this window?"

"I see nothing at all."

"Do you wish to see?"

"Why do you ask? I desire it more than anything else in the world."

"Will you use your eyes for the good of your soul, and never to offend God?"

"I promise that with all my heart."

"Have confidence in the Blessed Virgin, and She will help you. Now, tell me what I have in my hand."

The girl made a great effort with her eyes, and fastening them on what was before her, cried out: "I see."

"What?"

"A medal of the Blessed Virgin."

"And on the other side of the medal?"

"On that side is an old man with a flowering rod in his hand; it is St. Joseph."

At that moment she stretched out her hand to take the medal, but it fell into a dark corner. Her aunt stooped to pick it up, but Don Bosco stopped her. "Let her alone; we shall then see whether the Blessed Virgin has really restored her sight."

The young girl found the medal at once, and that without difficulty. Then she broke forth into delirious cries of joy, and, without speaking to anyone or even thinking of thanking God, she hastily set off to Vinovo, followed by her aunt and the friend who was with her. But she soon returned to give thanks to the Blessed Virgin, and did not forget to make an offering to Her church. Her gratitude went even further than that, for in a few years' time she became a Sister of Mary Help of Christians. †

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

The Editor,
Apostles of the Rosary

IN U.S.A. – 17000 State Route 30, Constable, NY 12926
IN CANADA – 452 Kraft Rd., Fort Erie, ON L2A 4M7

Call us toll-free at: 1-800-263-8160
or fax us at: (905) 871-8680

Visit Our Lady's Web Site at: www.fatima.org
or e-mail us at: info@fatima.org

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