



CRUSADERS OF MARY

Newsletter

Volume 6 - Issue 19
May, 2004

St. Nicholas of Myra, Bishop, Confessor

Feast Day — December 6



his popular saint was a native of Lycia, Asia Minor, where St. Paul planted the Faith. It is said that he fasted from early youth and "kept unsullied the innocence of his heart". He was made Archbishop of Myra and proved himself a true shepherd by his zeal and piety. Greek

historians say that he suffered imprisonment and torture for the Faith with many other Christians, but was released when Constantine granted liberty to the Church.

According to St. Methodius, "thanks to the teaching of St. Nicholas, the metropolis of Myra alone was untouched by the filth of Arian heresy". He also fought strenuously against paganism and destroyed the temple of Artemis.

Fabulous miracles are attributed to him, one by which three boys were restored to life after being cut to pieces by a brutal innkeeper who robbed them. The story of his having saved three poor girls from prostitution by throwing purses of gold through the window of their home so that they had a


sufficient dowry to get married is at least a partial basis for his veneration as a patron of children.

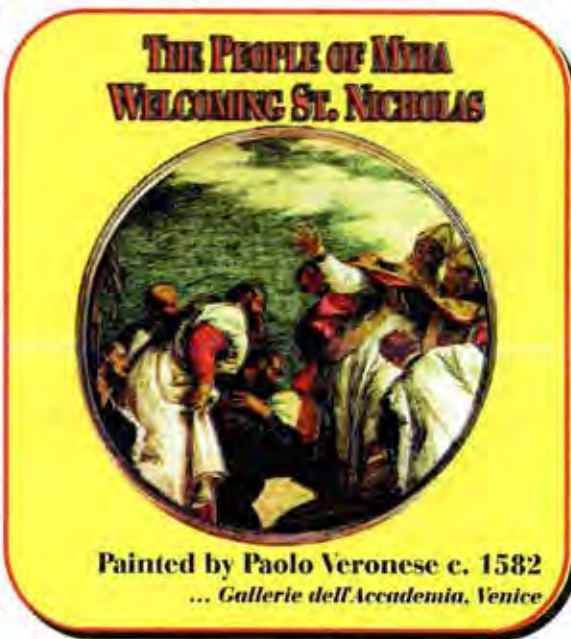
Nicholas died at Myra and was buried there. Later a basilica was built over his tomb and his veneration spread over both the East and West. A later historian wrote that "wherever there are people, in the country and towns, in the villages, in the isles, in the farthest parts of the earth, his name is revered and churches are built in his honor."

At Myra his body was said to exude "a sweet-smelling myrrh" which kept it incorrupt and cured the sick. In 1087, his body was taken to Bari, in Italy, where it continued to work many miracles. The flow of the "myrrh," called "manna of St. Nicholas," is said to continue to this day.

In northern Europe, the custom arose of giving presents to the children on his feast, which was near Christmas. This custom was popularized by the Dutch of New Amsterdam

(New York) who shortened his name to Sant Klaes — our modern Santa Claus — now widely identified with Christmas.

St. Nicholas, together with St. Andrew, is joint patron of Russia. 



Painted by Paolo Veronese c. 1582
... Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice

Mary's Obedience

by Saint Alphonsus di Liguori

Mary loved obedience so much that when the angel made his astonishing announcement, She chose in response to call Herself merely a servant: Behold the handmaid of the Lord (Lk. 1:38). According to St. Thomas of Villanova, "this faithful handmaid never, in either thought or word or deed, contradicted the Most High; but, entirely despoiled of Her own will, She lived always and in all things obedient to the will of God." She Herself made it known that God was pleased with Her obedience, for

She said: He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid (Lk. 1:48). The humility of a servant consists precisely in a willingness to obey promptly. St. Irenaeus says that by Her obedience, Mary repaired the evil done by Eve's disobedience: "As Eve by her disobedience caused her own

Continued on page 2

In This Issue:

St. Nicholas of Myra, Bishop, Confessor	1
Mary's Obedience.....	1
Under Angel Wings	2
Letters to the Editor.....	4
Honesty.....	4

Under Angel Wings

Our Guardian Angels are always with us, acting as protectors and guides, observing our every action. Though we cannot see them or hear them, we should remain confident in their presence. We have as a testament of the existence of Guardian Angels, the accounts of a few privileged souls who were blessed with a more intimate relationship with their Angels, sensing their actual presence and in some miraculous way, seeing and hearing them. One such favored person was a Brazilian girl named Cecy Cony, who later became Sister Maria Antonia. Since her early childhood, this simple and

pious girl saw and heard her Guardian Angel, whom she called her "New Friend". Cecy's Angel kept her from lying, stealing, revenge, immodesty and other sins, and guarded her from many dangers. The constant guidance of her Angel helped Cecy to grow in virtue and holiness. In the following account, taken from her autobiography, Sister Maria Antonia describes an instance in which her beloved Angel protected her innocence:

"In the year 1912 Jaguarao experienced the beginning of the movie rage. On all sides, new movie theaters were being opened. On Sundays there were matinees practically every hour. Intense competition and rivalry sprang up between the various owners. Finally, the firm of


Pinto and Brother opened up the most luxurious theater of all. Mr. Pinto was a very rich man. His theater was completely new, with cushioned seats, electric ventilators, waiting rooms and so forth; and all this was for the same price as the others. The name of the theater was Ponto Chic.

"Naturally crowds began to throng to Ponto Chic. On Sundays the matinees were exclusively for the children, to whom the owner distributed beautiful little bags of bonbons. He also raffled off costly prizes, such as a big doll, a pair of skates, etc. This attracted all the children of Jaguarao. I do not know whether this movie fever began to undermine the morals of the people. I only know that on a certain Sunday the priests of the parish announced the opening of another movie

Continued on page 3

MARY'S OBEDIENCE continued from page 1

death and that of the entire human race, so Mary by Her obedience became the cause of Her own salvation and that of all mankind." Mary's obedience was much more perfect than that of the other saints. All others are prone to evil and find it difficult to do good because of original sin; but not so Mary. St. Bernardine writes that because Mary was free from original sin, She did not find it difficult to obey God. "She was like a wheel," he says, "which was easily turned by every inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Her only object in the world was to keep Her eyes constantly fixed on God, to learn His will, and then to perform it." The Canticles refer to this saying to Her: "My soul melted when [My Beloved] spoke" (Cant. 5:6). As Richard of St. Lawrence explains it: "My soul was a metal liquefied by the fire of love, ready to be molded into any form, according to God's will." Mary proved Her love for obedience first of all when, to please God, She obeyed the Roman emperor and undertook the long journey to Bethlehem. It was winter. The distance was seventy miles. Mary was with child and so poor that She had to give birth to Her Son in a stable. She was equally obedient when She undertook on the very same night that St. Joseph suggested it, the longer and more difficult journey into Egypt. The Carmelite Father Silveira asks why the command to flee to Egypt was given to St. Joseph rather than to the Blessed Virgin since She was to suffer the most from it? And he answers: "So that Mary might not be deprived of the opportunity to perform an

act of obedience, for which She was always most ready." Our Blessed Lady showed Her heroic obedience above all when, in conformity with God's will, She offered Her Son to death. Venerable Bede explains Our Lord's answer to the woman in the Gospel who exclaimed: Blessed is the womb that bore Thee ... Rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it (Lk. 11:27). He says that Mary was very blessed by being the Mother of God, but was even more blessed by always loving and obeying His divine will. For this reason all who love obedience are highly pleasing to Our Blessed Lady. She once appeared to a Franciscan friar named Accorso, who was in his cell. While Mary was still there, obedience required that he go to hear the confession of a sick person. He went, and on his return found that Mary had waited for him. She commended him highly for his obedience. On the other hand, She censured another religious who had remained to finish some private devotions after the refectory bell had rung. Mary once spoke to St. Bridget about the confidence with which one ought to obey one's spiritual director, and said: "It is obedience that brings chosen souls to glory." Mary revealed to St. Bridget that it was through the merit of Her obedience that She obtained such great power that no sinner who appealed to Her with a desire to mend his ways would fail to obtain pardon, however great his crimes. Most sweet Queen and Mother, intercede with Jesus for us. By the merit of Your obedience obtain that we may be faithful in obeying God's will and the injunctions of our spiritual guides. 

Amen.

theater. The price was to be less than half the price of the other theaters; so this began to draw the people. To this day I remember all of the films that I saw at the Padres' Theater during my childhood and girlhood, including the titles of each one. Some of the films I saw there were: 'The Public Life of the Saviour,' 'The Prodigal Son,' 'The Miracle of the Virgin' and 'The Sky for My Roof.'

"I cannot say the same of the films that I saw in the other theaters. With the exception of films of travel or of natural history, I could not understand the majority of them, because the greater part of them was hidden from me by the 'holy wings' of my New Friend. My New Friend exercised this censorship, as we have seen, in Santa Vitoria. The second veiling of my eyes took place in the Ponto Chic Theater. After that it took place all through my girlhood and young womanhood.

"The second occasion came about in this manner: One Sunday the management of the Ponto Chic Theater announced a very special program. A great number of families came to see this extra-special program, and we were among the audience. The title of the film was 'Cell Number 13.' The picture began, but only two or three scenes had flashed on the screen when at a given moment I felt the holy hand of my New Friend upon my shoulder. Then, just as at the waterfall, his 'holy wings' were extended in front of me, hiding completely from my eyes the scenes that were being projected on


the screen. My New Friend remained thus during the rest of the film, so that I saw no other scene of the picture.

"On other occasions when I attended the theater his 'holy wings' were extended in front of me only for a certain period of time. Then, they were folded, as it were, and I could again see the screen. Yet his holy hand remained on my shoulder, so that I thought more about him than of what was going on around me. For it was he who filled me with happiness, since I knew now that Jesus was satisfied with his little friend. Many

times during the showing of a film my New Friend's 'holy wings' were extended in front of me for a short time and then taken away, allowing me once more to see what was on the screen.

"Not only during the showing of movies did my New Friend act thus but also during plays and other stage exhibitions. How often did my mother call me a simpleton because I could not describe the film or the play which I attended! And my father said to me: 'My child, you should be able to describe what you see and to narrate what you hear.' Never did I tell them that it was my New Friend who prevented me from



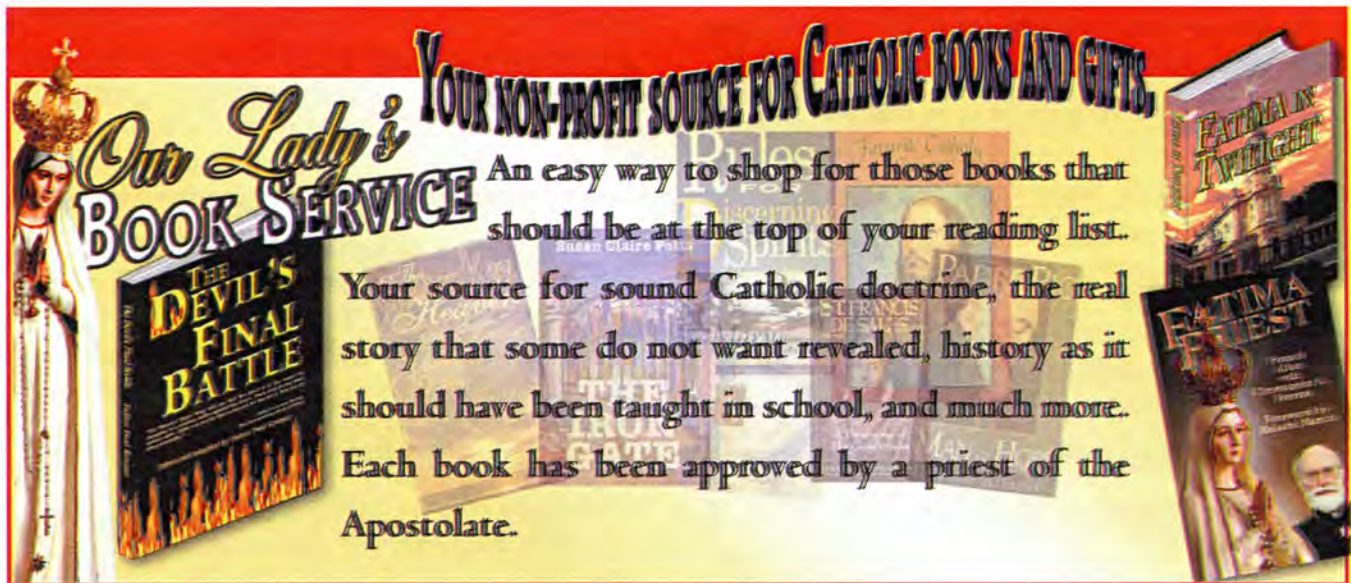
seeing what was on the screen or the stage." 
Editor's Note — *Under Angel Wings, the story of Lúcia and her Guardian Angel, is available from Our Lady's Book Service. If you would like to purchase your own copy, please contact us at the address on page four of this Newsletter.*

Our Lady's BOOK SERVICE **YOUR NON-PROFIT SOURCE FOR CATHOLIC BOOKS AND GIFTS.**

An easy way to shop for those books that should be at the top of your reading list.

Your source for sound Catholic doctrine, the real story that some do not want revealed, history as it should have been taught in school, and much more.

Each book has been approved by a priest of the Apostolate.





Dear Father Gruner,

I would like to greet you in the name of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and all the faithful children of Mary and lovers of Her Immaculate Heart.

I would also like to pass my sincere prayers and greetings to all the children of Mary who unite the nation of God through the Rosary which they pray every day.

Father, I would like to congratulate you on the work that you are doing and letting people know the Message of Fatima. Do not worry about the persecution for you are doing the right thing. Father, this shows that you are a true child of Mary...

One thing I would like to tell you is that once I read these booklets, especially *The Third Secret Revealed*, by Brother Michael, I was deeply moved and felt that my faith was renewed once again. I felt I was very strong, like the apostles during the day of Pentecost.

From that day, I gave many of my friends some copies to read and they were so much interested in reading the books.

Just to inform you, we have a small prayer group and recite the Rosary and have a night vigil every First Friday for the honor of the two Hearts: the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

So Father, I have decided to write to you this small letter to give you a word of encouragement and tell you that I am very ready to support you through prayers and donations.

The only problem with some of us is that our daily income is too little, but still we will see what we can offer for the message to reach the whole world.

The other important thing I will do (or I am doing) is to introduce the Message to even more people.

Thank you, Father. May the Glory of the Lord cover you and your work always. Yours in Jesus and Mary.

John M., Kenya

Dear Father Gruner,

It is with great sadness and sorrow I write this letter to you, Father Gruner.

I could not believe or even imagine that amongst the

Honesty

Honesty is the quality of spiritual beauty in things, actions, or men. Man has a natural tendency to honesty in things. The honest is the good, and man has a natural bent toward what is good. Honesty is opposed to what is disgraceful. Man hates what is disgraceful and loves what is honest or good. Honesty, then, is also a great help in building up the virtue of temperance and preserving it.

Catholics could be such malicious and vicious people to stoop to the lowest of the low.

Bad enough attacking you, but why the Blessed Mother?

I wish I could help you Father. The only weapon I have is the Rosary which I will pray daily that the Blessed Mother will help you. I know She will.

She will bless your good works. I pray daily for the missionaries who are serving in God's missions and all our good pastors.

I am yours in Christ,

Jean Y., SK

P.S. Please write to me again. I know God loves you, He will pull you through as He did me once or more times. Bless you.

We'd Like to Hear From YOU!

Crusaders of Mary Newsletter

In U.S.A. – 17000 State Route 30, Constable, NY 12926

In CANADA – 452 Kraft Road, Fort Erie, ON. L2A 4M7

Call us toll free at: 1-800-263-8160

or fax us at: (905) 871-3646

Visit Our Lady's Web Site at: www.fatima.org

or E-mail us at: info@fatima.org