



CRUSADERS OF MARY

Newsletter

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MARY'S OBEDIENCE

by Saint Alphonsus de 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 servant never displayed any will of Her own, 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 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 of us 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 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 pregnant 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 it as 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. And this with such perfect abandonment, as St. Anselm and St. Antonius remark, that had there been no executioners waiting for Him on Calvary, She herself would have been ready to crucify Him. 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

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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." As St. Philip Neri used to say:

Blanche of Castille-Alphonsus VIII

by Saint Louis de Montfort

Blanche of Castille, Queen of France, was deeply grieved because twelve years after her marriage she was still childless. When Saint Dominic went to see her he advised her to say her Rosary every day to ask God for the grace of motherhood, and she faithfully carried out his advice. In 1213 she gave birth to her eldest child, Philip, but the child died in infancy.

The Queen's fervor was nowise dulled by this disappointment; on the contrary, she sought Our Lady's help more than ever before. She had a large number of Rosaries given out to all members of the court and also to people in several cities of the Kingdom, asking them to join her in entreating God for a blessing that this time would be complete. Thus, in 1215, Saint Louis was born — the prince who was to become the glory of France and the model of all Christian kings.

Alphonsus VIII, King of Aragon and Castille, had been leading a disorderly life and therefore had been punished by God in several ways, one of these being that he was defeated in battle and had to take refuge in a city belonging to one of his allies.

Saint Dominic happened to be in this city on Christmas Day and preached on the Holy Rosary as he always did, pointing out how great are the graces that we can obtain through it. He mentioned, among other things, that those who said the Rosary devoutly would overcome their enemies and would regain all that they had lost in warfare.

The King listened attentively and sent for Saint Dominic to ask if what he had said about the Rosary was

"God demands no accounting of things done by obedience, since He Himself said: *He who hears you hears Me, and he who rejects you rejects Me.* (Lk. 10:16). 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. ♦

really true. Saint Dominic assured him that nothing was more true, and that if only he would practice this devotion and join the Confraternity, he would see for himself. The King firmly resolved to say his Rosary every day and persevered for a year in doing so. The very next Christmas Our Lady appeared to him at the end of his Rosary and said:

"Alphonsus, you have served Me for a year by saying My Rosary devoutly every day, so I have come to reward you: I have obtained the forgiveness of your sins from my Son. And I am going to give you this rosary; wear it, and I promise you that none of your enemies will ever be able to harm you again."

Our Lady vanished leaving the King overjoyed and greatly encouraged; he immediately went in search of the Queen to tell her all about Our Lady's gift and the promise that went with it. He held the rosary to her eyes (she had been blind for some time) and her sight was instantly restored.

Shortly afterwards the King rallied some troops with the help of his allies and boldly attacked his enemies. He forced them to give back the territory that they had taken from him and to make amends for their other offenses against him, and put them completely to rout. In fact, he became so lucky in war that soldiers rushed from all sides to fight under his standard because it seemed that whenever he went to battle the victory was sure to be his.

This is not surprising because he never went to battle without first saying his Rosary devoutly on his knees. He made certain that all the members of his court joined the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary and he also saw that his officers and servants were devoted to it.

The Queen joined the Confraternity and started saying the Rosary too, and she and her husband persevered in Our Lady's service and lived really holy lives. ♦



SPOTLIGHT ON THE SAINTS

St. Philomena, Virgin, Martyr

Feast Day — August 11

While searching for the graves of martyrs in the catacomb of St. Priscilla, workers discovered, on May 24, 1802, the tomb or loculus of a girl martyr. It was closed by three earthenware slabs or tiles on which a legend was written in red paint, which when rearranged became *Pax tecum Filumena* — “Peace be with thee, Filumena.” The name Filumena or Philomena (“Beloved,” in Greek) was taken to be the name of the martyr whose skeleton was found inside the tomb. It was that of a girl about fourteen years old and was entire except for the skull which was broken. The cement held a small vial with traces of what seemed to be blood and on the tomb were various symbols: two anchors, two arrows, a javelin, a flower or torch, and a palm. The tomb dated from the latter half of the 2nd Century.

For three years her sacred remains were preserved with other relics in Rome, and then in 1805 the pastor of Mugnano, near Naples, asked for the relics of the saint, hoping that through her intercession and by her



presence in his church his parishioners would be restored to religious fervor. The relics were solemnly transferred to Mugnano and enshrined under an altar of the church. Soon numerous miracles occurred, and her fame spread through Italy, then to France and the rest of the world, bringing thousands to her shrine. Among these was Venerable Pauline Marie Jaricot, foundress of the Propagation of the Faith, who was miraculously cured of a hopeless illness and who brought St. Philomena to the notice of St. John Baptiste Vianney, the Curé of Ars. He in turn erected a shrine of the saint in his church and recommended her warmly to his clients. He called her his “dear little saint,” his “agent in Heaven,” and ascribed to her the miracles which others attributed to him.

In 1837, Pope Gregory XVI authorized the veneration of the saint and permitted the clergy of the Nola diocese to celebrate Mass in her honor, a privilege soon extended to other dioceses. In 1855, Pius IX approved a proper Mass and Office for her feast. This Office states that though “her life, her acts, and the kind of martyrdom she suffered have remained hidden,” St. Philomena was “a virgin and martyr,” who came forth from the darkness of the catacombs and the obscurity of the past to adorn the altars of the Church. ♦

News from the Apostolate

Our Lady’s website has been busy, especially with foreign languages. Fr. Paul Kramer’s four article series on the Great Chastisement has been translated into Portuguese and Italian, and can now be found on the web. Also translated for the web recently was the book *The Devil’s Final Battle* in both French and Italian. The Apostolate is also busy updating the foreign language websites.

Much has also been done on the Third Secret. Frère Michel’s summary on the Third Secret has been put up in various languages, and a new article has been put on the web, in English, on the Apparition of the Blessed Virgin

Mary at La Salette. Here is the URL for the new article: www.fatima.org/thirdsecret/lasalette01.asp We are currently improving the presentation of earlier issues of Our Lady of Fatima’s quarterly magazine, *The Fatima Crusader*. The website is adding formerly missing photos, articles and news items. When it is finished, every issue of *The Fatima Crusader* will look online close to what it did when you first read it in your hands.

The Fatima Crusader, Issue #79 has been added to the website. It deals primarily with the death of Sister Lucy, but also has articles on the tsunami from the end of last year, and articles on St. Alphonsus de Liguori, featuring the first part of a series on his life, taking us all the way up to his early priesthood. ♦

Miracles of the Green Scapular

Following are a few stories of the Green Scapular that our supporters have written in to us with. If you have a Green Scapular story you would like to share with our readers, please send it to the Editor of the Crusaders of Mary Newsletter.

If you would like Green Scapulars to distribute, please contact Joanne in our Volunteer Department at 1-800-845-3047.

Dear Father Gruner:

Last fall, probably sometime in November or early December I received in the mail a Green Scapular and pamphlet explaining about it. At the time I laid it aside but after a few days I realized I should use it and say the prayer. You see I had a wart-like growth on my left cheek which had been there for many months and which seemed to be getting bigger. As a result it was necessary to be very careful when washing my face or removing clothing over my head as it would catch and become irritated. I began to hold the Green Scapular on it and say the prayer. I asked Our Lady to give me the gift of removal of this growth and I would spread word of the devotion if it happened. This was repeated a few times each day. On the morning of the day before New Year's Eve as I was washing the growth came off as it had become hard and dry. What a New Year's Gift from Our Lady! Please send me some Green Scapulars and pamphlets so I can distribute them to friends and people in my area.

I am very thankful that I had received this scapular and was inspired to call on Our Lady's help. It means that removal by a dermatologist as was suggested to me in August by a doctor is no longer necessary and my faith in the Mother of God is much stronger.

Sincerely,
Teresa P., Killaloe, ON

Dear Father Gruner,

You sent me a Green Scapular, and I gave it to my sister-in-law whom doctors said her cancer had spread to her bones. After giving her the scapular, she went back to



doctors, they said it was not cancer, but arthritis-AMEN!

Please send me 2 Scapulars for my sick granddaughter who is 4 years old and has heart problems, and my 7 year old grand niece with juvenile diabetes. I myself am 70, with Hep. C, 2 open-heart surgeries, bum kidney, spleen, deaf both ears, bum liver-prostate, but I think daily prayers help greatly. I was to Fatima in 1955 — Beautiful! I brought back water from the fountain which I still have. Wish I could afford another trip some day.

Mike F., New Berlin, NY

Dear Father Gruner:

On page 31 of the *Crusader* you have an attractive display of the Green Scapular which prompted me to write you.

A good friend of mine had an elderly friend in the hospital, every day coming closer to death. I gave him a blessed scapular to give to him on his next visit which he did.

A few days later, he told me the man did die holding the Green Scapular which glowed a bright green. His son watched his father next to the bed and reported this. Also, the attending doctor and nurse witnessed the same thing. No explanation. Of course it was told them that one of the specific benefits of the Green Scapular is to help die a holy death. And so easy and simple to expedite. Give out the blessed Green Scapular and pray the prayer frequently for effects.

In Jesus, Mary, & Joseph

We'd Like to Hear From YOU!

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