



CRUSADERS OF MARY

Newsletter

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The Clothing Mary Offers

Fulton J. Sheen



We are strengthened in our love of the Blessed Mother by being shown the foundation stones upon which it reposes. More than that, one sees in the scapular, which is a miniature clothing, a reversal of the penalties and effects of original sin. Before Adam sinned, he was naked but not ashamed. That was because of the integrity of his human nature by which senses were subject to reason and reason to God. His union with God was, as it were, the clothing of his whole being. But once that union was disrupted, he was naked and ashamed. He now had need of clothing. From that day to this, human nature has used either one of two kinds of clothing, depending upon whether they emphasized the nakedness of souls or the nakedness of the body. Those who are totally disinterested in God clothe themselves with jewels and finery to compensate, whether they know it or not, for their inner spiritual poverty. Those who love God, and therefore have souls clothed with the raiments of His

grace, need never care about the richness of the external. We see something of the symbolism of this in the clothing of a nun. When the ceremony begins she is dressed in surpassing beauty and bedecked with jewels. But once she consecrates herself to God she clothes herself in the poverty-stricken garments of her community. Being clothed with the richness of Divinity, why should she concern herself with the superficial beauty of the world?

There must be something of this symbolism in Mary's gift of the scapular which was originally a habit. "The beauty of the King's daughter is from within." Mary's gift of clothing is just a simple garment, sufficient to

cover the traces of original sin in us, but its very simplicity is also a witness to the fact that Her own beautiful mantle covers our souls. The scapular bears therefore a

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Elias on Mount Carmel

Susan Vennari

It is 860 years before Christ. A striking scene is being enacted in Palestine. The entire Jewish nation is assembled there on the summit of the Scripturally famous Mount Carmel. Dinning within a circle formed by the thousands of Israelites, 850 pagan priests are screaming fiendishly about a stone altar upon which they have laid a dressed bullock. Early this memorable morning they began dancing about according to their rite and slashing themselves with their lancets. Their shouts have been ringing shrilly, their lancets waving more and more wildly until now, at noon, they mill about in an exhausted frenzy, covered from head to feet in their own blood.

Deafened by the shrieks of the many hysterical, blood-covered priests, the Jewish King, Achab, presses foremost in the tremendous crowd of on-lookers. His face is contracted with worry and pain; the faces of his entourage are crestfallen. But to the side, alone, a white-bearded old man stands wreathed in smiles! His eyes glint like fire and quick gestures betray a great nervous strength in his thin and poorly clad body. He is jesting with the priests and taunting them!

Behind this mysterious and horrible scene lies a tense drama.

The Jewish nation has fallen into idolatry and three years and six months before this day, that old man—who was dwelling on this same mountain—walked down the streets of the royal city and up to the palace. He then proclaimed before the king that if the nation did not return to its God it would be divinely punished. Since that very day, when he was sent away from the royal palace unheeded, it has not rained in all Palestine. But now, at the summons of the king, the whole nation is gathered on Mount Carmel. The venerable old man—who is the fiery prophet, Elias—having once more presented himself, commanded the capitulating monarch to “gather unto me all Israel, on Mount Carmel, and with them the pagan prophets who eat at the queen’s table: four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and four hundred prophets of the groves”.

Early this unforgettable morning, Elias stood before the vast, wondering throng and cried: “How

long do you halt between two sides? If the Lord be God, follow Him! But if Baal, follow him!” No one spoke a word. Not a move was made. So the prophet fairly proposed a contest. The pagan prophets would build an altar and he would build one. Then they would both offer holocausts and pray for miraculous fires to consume their offerings: the God Who sent down the consuming fire would be acknowledged by the nation as the true God. The pagans have been storming their idols for hours while their holocaust only dries in that relentless sun from a sky that has been cloudless interminably long.

However, it is not so much for the fire-contest between the prophets that we interest ourselves in this strange sight but for the after-event. After he has brought down a miraculous fire and thus proved that “God is God” and after he has seen the whole nation fall to its knees with the cry “The Lord is God! The Lord is God!”, the mysterious prophet turns to the king and says that *now it will rain*. And while the king goes to take dinner at the prophet’s bidding, we follow Elias as he proceeds to a place near the side of Carmel. The murmur of the Mediterranean, which laves Carmel’s foot in a perpetual homage to Her mysteries, seems to rise like the overture of some great event. Preoccupied, the old man sits on the ground and crouches there, his head between his knees, and tells his young servant to go and look out over the sea; six times we see him return only to report to his venerable master: “There is nothing.”

What an unusual scene! What if the Israelites, feasting nearby, were to know that this venerable old man is destined to live until the end of the world... What if they knew that in a future century he is to appear with the greatest of their prophets in that one moment of the earthly life of the Incarnate God when He will let fall the veil from His divine splendor! Yes, right over there on that peak facing them—of Mount Tabor—this old man will appear at a moment that will astound the world down through the ages to a stream-lined century of which they do not even dream. What if they knew that *at this very moment* that awesome figure is not only about to present a material salvation to them but is also about to behold a *prophetic vision of the spiritual Salvation of all mankind through an Immaculate*

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Thank you!

Our Lady's Volunteers work constantly to spread the Fatima Message and to distribute Our Lady's sacramentals. 'Many hands make light work' might be said of the work. It is a blessing for the Apostolate to have devoted workers in India who work hard to try to meet the ever-growing need for scapulars. Their lives are also better as they are able to provide food and clothing for their families with the wage they are given for their good works, a wage which is provided through your generous support.

The India office scapular workshop recently shipped 60,000 Brown Scapulars and 20,000 Green Scapulars to our head office! But even these amounts do not last long, for we receive requests for sacramentals constantly. For example, in answer to requests from priests last year, this office provided over 236,000 scapulars and pieces of literature. The Philippines and India offices also distributed hun-

dreeds of thousands of sacramentals. Volunteers also help make Green Scapulars, which bring many conversions.

More News about the "Three Hail Marys"

The 'Three Hail Marys' campaign has been very successful. In 2005, we sent out tens of thousands of this pamphlet worldwide. After our introductory mailing, over 60,000 were sent to priests who requested additional copies for distribution. Please pray for these priests and their efforts on behalf of Our Lady.

But our goal is to put this little prayer folder into the hands of a million souls! The need is great, for we live in a period of such confusion that many, indeed, most Catholics cannot answer even basic questions about their Faith. Children are not formed to have the least devotion to their Blessed Mother! The practice of daily recitation of three 'Hail Marys' invites the Blessed Mother to pour out a laver of graces upon us, graces which overcome confusion, strengthen the weary and console the despondent. To learn the practice of saying three 'Hail Marys', is a first step for souls to approach their Holy Mother. We are confident that Our Lady will lead them in their next steps to grasp the holy Rosary.

Please continue to pray your three 'Hail Marys' for the success of this cause to bring souls to Our Lady.

Internet News:

Just in time for First Communion

Have you seen our new Internet gift store? With the season of First Communion, graduations and weddings upon us, you may be looking for appropriate gifts for your loved ones. Check out Fatima



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double witness: to Mary's protection against the ravages of the flesh occasioned by the Fall, and to Mary's influence as Mediatrix of graces, who covers our souls with the richness of Her Son's Redemption.

Mary has been constituted by Her Divine Son as the intermediary between our needs and His wants; such was the role She played at the marriage feast of Cana, when She interceded for the needy guests, to the miraculous power of Her Divine Son.

It is a singular fact that in answer to Her request Our Lord addressed Her, not as 'Mother', but as 'Woman', as if to imply that once She began interceding for the humanity whom He was to redeem when "the hour" would come, She entered into a larger relationship than merely that of being His Mother, namely, that of 'Woman', the new Mother of redeemed men. On the Cross this title is conferred again when Our Lord addresses Her as "Woman! Behold Thy son!"

She had brought forth Her "first born" in the flesh at Bethlehem, now She was to bring forth Her first born in the spirit at Calvary, namely John, the beloved disciple. John was the symbol of men, whose motherhood Mary purchased at the foot of the Cross in union with Her Divine Son. It is not by a figure of speech, nor by a metaphor that Mary is our Mother, but rather by virtue of the pangs of childbirth. As a woman can never forget the child of her womb, so neither can Mary forget us.

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Virgin...

We see the servant return the sixth time to be again sent by Elias to "look out over the sea". This seventh time he hastens back for, rising out of the sea at the foot of the Mount, he has seen a small cloud in the shape of a human foot!

In the near tomorrows, sainted Doctors of the true Church will explain to the world how this little cloud, rising pure out of its bitter sea and leaving all impurities behind, *is a figure of an Immaculate Virgin* [fore-told in Genesis] who will rise pure out of the [salty] sea of humankind, free of its universal impurity of original sin. As soon as Elias is told of the tiny cloud ascending over the side of the mystic mountain, we see him rise from his unusual position. Within an incredibly short while: "The Heavens grew dark with clouds and wind and there fell a great rain." (Kings III, ch. 18)

Shoppe, which was launched at the end of February. You can get to it from the www.fatima.org home page or by going to: www.fatimashoppe.org.

You can also obtain additional copies of *Fatima, Through the Eyes of a Child*, which was written to teach the whole Fatima story to children. Tuck one in with your other First Communion presents.

Fatima Radio: The Voice To Hear
'Round the World'

Taking the Fatima Apostolate to the Internet means that people who have never had the opportunity to hear our radio programs now have access to them from wherever they are in the world. Earlier this spring, we launched our website: www.fatimaradio.org. Join us in praying the Rosary three times a day, listen to interviews with genuinely Catholic writers and priests, learn your Catechism – all at our new 24-hour/day, seven-day/week web radio. Link to www.fatimaradio.org and click on "ListenLive"; or download programs to your i-pod for listening at another time.

Listeners' Comments

"Very pleased to have more than what is offered on regular radio, tv or the computer. I hope to join in much more, especially the Rosary, as my family does not join me in prayer. Thank you." *B.J.*

"WONDERFUL! I must say the site navigation was very easy to follow, I enjoyed the variety of programming, the subject matter, and the guests VERY MUCH!"

"I have listened to all the shows in the archive of Heaven's Peace Plan. I am very pleased with this radio station. Now I can listen to live and new shows. I also like the classic and Catholic music in between shows. Thank you for this traditional Catholic radio station. With friendly greetings (from the Netherlands)." *L.S.*

"What a wonderful program. May the Virgin Mary and Her Divine Son Jesus bless your work. Let us continue to pray that the Pope will consecrate Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary."

We'd Like to Hear From YOU!

Crusaders of Mary Newsletter

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