

# League of the Immaculate Heart Newsletter

**"MY IMMACULATE HEART WILL TRIUMPH"**

**VOLUME 10 ~ ISSUE 31 ~ APRIL, 2007**

## Feast of the Seven Sorrows

(Friday after Passion Sunday or September 15)

Rev. Arthur Tonne, O.F.M.

Queen Alexandra, the consort of King Edward VII of Great Britain, died in 1925. Two of her three sons had preceded her in death.

After her first son had passed away she spent most of her time at Sandringham. It seemed that the only thing which could arouse her interest was some case of sorrow or bereavement that she might lighten.

One morning while out walking the queen met an old woman toiling along the road to Woferton Station with a heavy load of packages on her back.

"Why are you carrying those things yourself?" asked the queen, "it is too much for you."

"But it cannot be helped, ma'am," was the tearful reply, "my poor boy Jack used to carry them for me; but he is dead, and I must do it myself, or starve."

After expressing a few kindly words of sympathy, the queen passed on. A few days later a trim little donkey cart arrived at the old woman's cottage, a gift of the royal lady who had also lost a son, and who found solace in ministering to the needs of those who were similarly bereft.

There is another Queen Mother who lost a son, one who was infinitely more precious, infinitely



more loving than all the sons of earth. There was another Mother, the Mother of us all, who felt in Her loving heart the pain of several swords of sorrow. On the Friday after Passion Sunday, Mother Church officially asks us to recall the principal sorrows of Mary, our Sorrowful Mother.

Rightly is Our Blessed Mother called the Sorrowful Mother. She is indeed the Mother of Sorrows. She is the Queen of Martyrs. In fact, Her whole life was a martyrdom. The sufferings of the poor, for instance, She had to bear all through Her life. Mary was poor, as poor, perhaps poorer, than the poorest of us.

A thread of sorrow ran through all Her years in that She could see ahead to the time when Her only Son, now an Infant, now a little, curly-headed Boy, now and obedient and respectful young Man, would have to die a most painful and disgraceful death.

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And oh, Her sufferings during the Passion of Jesus, Her anguish as He carried His cruel cross, Her agony as She stood beneath that cross watching Him die. Who could ever measure Her grief or count Her tears?

It was most fitting that the Woman whom God gave us for our heavenly Mother should be a Mother of Sorrows, a Woman who had to suffer. As we all know, suffering is the lot of every human being. There is not, nor was there ever, a man, a woman, or a child but had to suffer. Not a person ever living that had not at least one sword in his heart, at least one sorrow, at least one affliction.

“But so and so has no trials in his life?” How do you know he has none? In judging the sadness or gladness of another life we are much like the tourist who went to visit the pyramids of Egypt. On beholding the great pile of stone and brick from one side, he exclaimed:

“How wonderful!”

The guide, however, beckoning the tourist to follow, took him to the summit from which they could see all four sides of the great work. His wonder and amazement grew, but he was in for still greater surprises when the guide told him to follow him into the interior.

Thus it often is with us in our judgment of people. We too often see only one side. The fact remains: Every human being has some sort of sorrow. Is it not consoling then that we children of Mary have for a heavenly Mother one who has borne a many-sworded sorrow? Children of Mary all, we are glad that we have a Mother Who suffered too; because only one who has suffered can rightly console, can satisfactorily comfort the sufferings of others.

Yes, everyone has a cross. Bitter indeed are some of our crosses — death of dear ones, sickness, poverty, misunderstanding, difficulties in our home and in our work.

What is your cross? Thank God for it. Ask Mary to show you how to carry it. Our Blessed and Sorrowful Mother, She who sits at the side of Her divine Son, with Whom She suffered here on earth, Mary is now in Heaven waiting to help you, waiting to console you, waiting to be a sympathetic Mother to you.

On March 30<sup>th</sup> we will recall Her principal sorrows. She had many more, but Mother Church centers our attention on the seven swords that pierced Her tender heart:

1. *The prophecy of Simeon that a sword of Sorrow would pierce Her heart, was a bitter pain.*
2. *The flight into Egypt made Her experience the sadness of exile.*
3. *The three-day loss of Jesus made Her heart ache.*
4. *What anguish when She met Jesus on the way of the cross.*
5. *One would think Her heart would break as She stood beneath the cross at Christ's death.*
6. *Only a mother who holds a dead child in her arms can know anything of Mary's grief as She held Jesus taken down from the cross.*
7. *Only a mother who puts her child to bed in a grave can understand at all how Mary felt at the burial of Jesus.*

Queen Alexandra became a sympathetic and helpful soul through the untimely death of one of her sons. She showed her sympathy to those who grieved and suffered. She had been through it.

Mary, our Sorrowful Queen, reaches out Her sympathy and help to everyone who suffers. She, more than any other woman, knew the pang and pain of sorrow. We will go to Her and take others to Her. Amen. †

# Mary Watches Over the Sacred Hosts

*We know that Our Lady keeps watch on each of us, and on all, for the sake of Her Son. As She did not leave the foot of the Cross, neither does She leave sight of us. She attends Her Son's wishes and loves perfectly. How feeble we creatures are by ourselves, how easily we become discouraged. But Mary is ever-faithful. She cares for our salvation, She comes to us with Her Son in the Host; She brings us to Him in the Blessed Sacrament: these, that Our Lord may be consoled, and that we may be strengthened and increased in love for Him.*

*Here is a little story recorded by the French priest Father Eugene Couet, which shows Our Lady's attending Heart, as She brings others to Her Son.*

PATERNO, ITALY – 1772: On January 28, 1772, the village of Saint Pierre de Paterno, situated about two miles from Naples, was the scene of a frightful sacrilege. Thieves carried away from the Tabernacle two ciboria containing a hundred consecrated Hosts.

It was only through a miraculous intervention that these Hosts were found. Lights appeared over both places where they had been buried. First, on the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup> of the following February, a priest from Naples digging into the earth at the foot of a poplar tree, whence a dazzling light had burst forth, had the consolation of recovering forty of them.

Notwithstanding a most severe winter and heavy rains they were white, intact, and in a perfect state of preservation, the edges had only been slightly stained with mud. Moreover, the earth which had come in contact with the Body of Jesus Christ, and which had been gathered absolutely dry into a clean linen cloth, began to give forth clear water. On the evening of the following Thursday the rest of the stolen Hosts were found in the same miraculous manner; they were as perfectly preserved as the ones previously discovered.

It is fitting to cite here the following testimony which we owe to the parish priest of Paterno, Father Matthias d'Anna, and which is the echo of an unchanging tradition in that part of the country. During the interval which elapsed between the sacrilegious theft and the apparition of the lights, a mule-driver named Francis Jodice, twenty-seven years old, whose custom it was to return to Naples towards evening, often saw in the field where the sacred Hosts had been buried, a Lady leaning against a tree. One evening he plucked up courage and asked Her what She was doing all alone in that field. "I am here," she replied, "to watch over My Son." When the consecrated Hosts were found, everyone understood clearly that the Lady was the Most Blessed Virgin Mary.

As to the sacred Hosts around which the Divine Power had multiplied these wonders, the Vicar General of Naples made the canonical examination, and placed them in two crystal cylinders closed with silver bands, so that later they might be exposed for the veneration of the Faithful. †

## 'My soul magnifies the Lord...'

**D**uring the terrors of the French Revolution, which was still raging in 1793, Catholics in France suffered much. In a humble convent near Paris some nuns were keeping a prayerful vigil. Their sacred hymns lent an air of added piety and devotion to the holy place. It was at the hour of Mass and the time of Communion was drawing near. After they had received Jesus into their hearts, the Sisters intoned the *Magnificat* which echoed far and wide. A furious mob of revolutionaries, thirsting for blood, interrupted the angelic voices and burst into the sanctuary shouting, "Down with the idols!" They turned on the nuns and ordered them to sing the song of the Revolution. "You will either sing the *Marseillaise* or go to the guillotine. We've had enough of the *Magnificat*."

But the fearless Sisters continued to sing until they were forced to leave the sacred place. Even then the small band of virgins went on their way to death in holy exultation. Soon the blood of those holy women was trickling down from the platform on which the guillotine was set. Nevertheless, the song continued, although with ever increasing feebleness... three voices... then two voices... finally with the voice of the youngest novice the song died away. The earthly *Magnificat* of these martyr virgins was indeed over; but in Heaven the *Te Deum* had been intoned. †



The activity and growth of the Fatima Center the past few years has forced employees to work in cramped spaces, sometimes even doubling up on the use of the desks. Little by little, the facilities had been expanded with the purchase of a house, and then another, adjacent to the Center property. But about a year and a half ago, the Fatima Center was able to purchase at a very reasonable price an old grocery store and small shopping center in the middle of Fort Erie. Zoning hearings, renovation plans and so forth drew out the preparations to move into the new building. But finally, on a snowy day in February, the move to the more spacious quarters took place. More than twenty-five employees from several departments transferred their offices to the new quarters on Central Avenue. A few days later they welcomed other employees in an Open House to visit the new building.

The physical arrangement of the new building is particularly helpful to the Fatima Center for reasons over and above the more appropriate setting for the employees; it allows us to consolidate various operations that had sometimes required a commute across town. Moreover, the Center is only occupying 15,000 of the 30,000 square feet available in the entire complex. The remaining 15,000 square feet is currently rented out to good tenants. When the Fatima Center is ready for the next phase of consolidation, the space will be available. But in the meantime, the rent from

the excellent tenants will help the Center to carry the cost of the new facility! We are grateful to Our Lady for making this possible.

Even while the Fatima Center has been regrouping the facilities at home, the devil has been hard at work abroad. The Portuguese referendum on whether to allow abortion there has kept several of our volunteers and staff busy. The Fatima Center placed a two-page ad against the referendum in a major newspaper, *O Seminario*. We also mailed copies of this ad to over 600,000 households, mostly in the north of Portugal. The referendum, held on February 11, was declared null because too few people came out to vote on the issue! The government, however, announced that it was the will of the people that abortion be legalized. But the



next day, the southern part of the country, which was the source of most of the votes in favor of abortion, was struck by an earthquake registering a magnitude of 3.6! What will happen there now? Will the people realize the warning from Almighty God? Dear Crusaders, please lift your arms to this battle. Pray a

great deal, offering an *extra* decade or two of the Rosary each day for Portugal. Do not desist in your daily Rosary for all your own needs, and for the good of the world. Our Lady promised us that in the end, Her Immaculate Heart would triumph. †

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