



League of the Immaculate Heart *Newsletter*

"MY IMMACULATE HEART WILL TRIUMPH"

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Mother of Mercy

(Feast: Saturday before the 4th Sunday of July)

by Msgr. Arthur Tonne

*"By Me, His handmaid, He hath fulfilled His mercy which
He promised to the house of Israel."*

— Judges 13:18

For a whole year the town of Calais, France, was besieged by the English, who lost many troops. Starvation finally forced the French to give up. But the English king, Edward III, would not accept their surrender unless six citizens of Calais came before him bare-headed, bare-footed, dressed in rough shirts, and each with a halter about his neck. He demanded the keys of Calais, and that these men accept his pleasure, however severe, before the rest of the citizens would receive mercy.

Imagine the sorrow of the besieged city. No one wanted to give his life in such a way. At length a nobleman by the name of Eustace de Saint Pierre spoke to the assembly:

"I will be one to offer my head to the King of England as a ransom to save this fair town from sack and spoil."

At once five others volunteered. They put on the rough shirts and halters. Bare-footed and bare-headed, they went before the English king who angrily reminded them of the terrible losses he suffered through their stubbornness. At last he ordered the six citizens to be beheaded. The king's noblest and bravest warriors pleaded with him to spare them. But in vain. Then queen Philippa rose from her seat beside the king, knelt before him, and with tears streaming down her cheeks, she prayed: "My lord and husband, I have crossed the sea through many dangers to be with you. Let me now pray you to take pity on these six prisoners."

After a few minutes of deep thought the king declared:



Our Lady

"Madam, I wish you had been elsewhere this day. I cannot deny the boon you ask of me. Take these men and dispose of them as you will."

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The gracious queen gave the six hostages better clothing, presented each with a certain amount of money, and had them safely brought back through the lines and set at liberty to return home.

Mary, Mother of Mercy, whose feast we celebrate on the Saturday before the fourth Sunday of July, is in every sense a Mother of Mercy because she is the Mother of Christ, who brought mercy to the world. Mary is the Mother of Mercy for three special reasons:

1. She defends the sinner; 2. She tries to convert the sinner; 3. She receives sinners with joy when they repent.

1. Mary shows Her mercy toward sinners by shielding them against God's anger and punishment. We have many types of this in the Old Testament, particularly that of Nabal, who refused aid to King David and his people when they were in need. Abigail, the wife of Nabal, appealed to her husband and did secure the needed aid.

In the "Hail, Holy Queen" Mother Church has taught us to address Mary as Mother of Mercy. We say that prayer after every low Mass. "Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope." Mary appealed for sinners during Her life; She still does from Heaven. Into Her mouth can be put the words of Sacred Scripture:

"I desire not the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn from his way and live." Ezechiel 33:11.

Defending sinners is Mary's occupation, as it is the task of every queen to defend those who need mercy. The king takes care of the justice, but the motherly heart of the queen goes out to those who need mercy. Every sinner needs mercy. We need it. Mary has defended us. Otherwise, how could a wicked world continue to exist, or how could sinners continue to live under the wrath of God? Mary shields us by praying to Her Divine Son for us, by holding back His avenging hand, by persuading Him to show further pa-

tience and mercy. She pleads with Him for us. She even promises that we will repent, that we will amend our lives and make reparation for our sins.

Yes, we appreciate this motherly goodness and mercy, but we must not abuse it. Should we be at this moment the objects of God's wrath, then this is the time to go to the Mother of Mercy. She will shield us just as Queen Philippa defended the six condemned men of Calais.

2. We call Mary our Mother of Mercy because She tries to convert sinners by sending Her servants, particularly Her priests, to exhort and guide and direct souls, to bring them back to the sacraments of Mother Church. She converts sinners by placing in their path a good book, a Catholic paper, pamphlet or magazine. She directs the sinner's gaze to a crucifix or to a picture of Herself. She even goes to the King Himself, and, like Queen Philippa, begs God for mercy.

We have all heard the story of St. Augustine, who was converted by the prayers and tears of his earthly mother, St. Monica. But St. Augustine himself declared that his conversion was due, not so much to the tears and prayers of his earthly mother, as to the tears and prayers of his heavenly Mother, Mary.

We must not presume upon that mercy, but betake ourselves to Her motherly heart and make this mercy of God a permanent fact in our lives.

3. Mary is the Mother of Mercy because the conversion of sinners brings Her so much joy. We know that there is joy in Heaven over one sinner that does penance. Certainly there is joy in the heart of the Queen of Heaven when a sinner repents. The Blessed Virgin once told St. Bridget:

"However much a man sins, if he returns to Me with a real purpose of amendment, I am instantly ready to welcome him; neither do I pay attention to the greatness of his sins, but to the intention alone with which he comes. I do not disdain to anoint and heal his wounds, for I am called, and truly am, the Mother of Mercy." †

How St. Thérèse Spent Her Childhood Sundays

from her memoir, *Story of a Soul*

The following is an example of how the Little Flower would spend the Lord's day with her father and her sisters: Celine, Pauline and Marie.



If the big feasts were rare, each week brought one that was very dear to my heart, namely Sunday! What a day Sunday was for me! It was God's feast day, and feast of *rest*. First, I stayed in *bed* longer than on the other days; then Pauline spoiled her little girl by bringing her some chocolate to drink while still in *bed* and then she dressed her up like a little Queen. Marie came to curl her hair and Thérèse was not always nice when Marie pulled her hair. Afterward she was very happy to take the hand of her King [her father, Louis Martin] who on that day kissed her more tenderly than usual. The whole family then went off to Mass.

All along the way to church and even in the church Papa'a little Queen held his hand. Her place was by his side, and when we had to go down into the body of the church to listen to the sermon, two chairs had to be found side by side. This wasn't too difficult, for everyone seemed to think it so wonderful to see such a *handsome* old man with such a *little daughter* that they went out of their way to give them their places. Uncle, sitting in the warden's pews, was always happy to see us come. He used to call me his little ray of sunshine.

I wasn't too disturbed at being looked at by people. I listened attentively to the sermons which I understood very poorly. The first I *did understand* and which *touched me deeply* was a sermon on the Passion preached by Father Ducellier and since then I've understood all the others. When the preacher spoke about St. Teresa, Papa leaned over and whispered: "Listen carefully, little Queen, he's talking about your Patroness." I did listen carefully, but I looked more frequently at Papa than at the preacher, for his *handsome* face said so much to me! His eyes, at times, were filled with *tears* which he tried in vain to stop; he seemed no longer held by earth, so much did his soul love to lose itself in the eternal truths. His earthly course, however, was far from completed; long years had to pass by before Heaven opened to his enraptured eyes and the Lord would wipe the *tears* from the eyes of His good and faithful servant!

I return once more to my Sundays. This *joyous* day, passing all too quickly, had its tinge of *melancholy*. I remember how my happiness was unmixed until Compline. During this prayer, I would begin thinking that the day of *rest* was coming to an end, that the morrow would bring with it the necessity of beginning life over again, we would have to go back to work, to learning lessons, etc., and my heart felt the *exile* of this earth. I longed for the everlasting repose of Heaven, that never-ending *Sunday* of the *Fatherland*!

The walks we took on Sundays before returning to Les Buissonnets left a feeling of sadness in my soul, for then the family was not complete. Papa, to please Uncle, used to permit Marie of *Pauline* to spend Sunday evenings at his home; I was happy when I was there with one of them. I preferred this to being invited all alone because then they paid less attention to me. I listened with great pleasure to all Uncle had to say, but I didn't like it when he asked me questions. I was very much frightened when he placed me on his knee and sang Blue Beard in a formidable tone of voice. I was happy to see Papa coming to fetch us. When we were on the way home, I would gaze upon the *stars* that were twinkling ever so peacefully in the skies and the sight carried me away. There was especially one cluster of *golden pearls* that attracted my attention and gave me great joy because they were in the form of a -T-. I pointed them out to Papa and told him my name was written in Heaven. Then desiring to look no longer upon this dull earth, I asked him to guide my steps; and not looking where I placed my feet I threw back my head, giving myself over completely to the contemplation of the star-studded firmament!

What shall I say of the winter evenings at home, especially the Sunday evenings? Ah! How I loved, after the *game of checkers* was over, to sit with Celine on Papa's knees. He used to sing, in his beautiful voice, airs that filled the soul with profound thoughts, or else, rocking us gently, he recited poems that taught the eternal truths. Then we all went upstairs to say our night prayers together and the little Queen was alone near her King,

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News from the Apostolate - International News

This has been an exiting winter and spring at the Fatima Center. We were barely back from the October conference “Last Chance for World Peace” than came the November publication of *Il Quarto Segreto di Fatima*, (*The Fourth Secret of Fatima*) by the Italian journalist Antonio Socci. (Perhaps you recall our story about the book in the last *Fatima Crusader*.) Socci, a well-placed and highly respected Catholic journalist had been disdainful of the Fatima Center’s argument that the Vatican did not release the entire Third Secret in its 2000 press release. His book recounts how he decided to investigate the story, assuming at first that the Fatima Center was wrong, and assuming that the Vatican had actually released the Secret in its entirety.

But his honest research led him to the surprising conclusion that the position of Father Gruner and the Fatima Center is true: the Vatican has yet to reveal the entire Third Secret of Fatima.

Socci’s book created quite a stir in Rome, for Socci is a mainstream Catholic journalist. In effect, he had held the Vatican’s feet to the fire, showing the discrepancies in Vatican statements and asking answers for many questions.

This past May, in response (or should we say ‘in retaliation?’) to Socci’s book, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the Secretary of State for the Vatican, published his own version of the Fatima history in *The Last Seer of Fatima*.

Cardinal Bertone sidestepped the evidence in Socci’s book and resorted to personal attacks about Socci himself, impugning the integrity of this well-regarded Catholic journalist, and even implying that Socci was doing the work of Freemasonry.

Mr. Socci responded forcefully to the spurious attacks from the Vatican bureaucrat, pointing out that Bertone’s “response” had not answered any of the questions raised in Socci’s book. (A summary of his animated response is

posted on our website at www.fatima.org/news/newswiews/051607socci.asp) In a Fatima Center Press Release, Father Gruner took the opportunity to comment, too, with words of encouragement:

“Now that the mainstream press in Italy can see there are holes in what the Vatican has presented regarding the Third Secret, we believe that with more prayers and sacrifices, as well as the faithful continuing to respectfully ask for complete, direct, forthright answers, the world will finally get to know the precise, soul-saving words Our Lady of Fatima said after the ‘etc.’. That is, we will learn the full sentence that follows Our Lady’s words, ‘In Portugal, the dogma of the faith will always be preserved etc.’”

Sometimes it takes a while before one sees the fruits of one’s labors. Please keep up your prayers and sacrifices for the Apostolate, for the success of the conferences, for all the programs you support in spiritual and material ways. Our Lady’s voice is *being heard*. It is not too late. It is never too late to have recourse to our holy Queen and Mother. †



HOW ST. THÉRÈSE SPENT HER CHILDHOOD SUNDAYS
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having only to look at him to see how the saints pray. When prayer was ended we came according to age to bid Papa good night and receive his kiss; the *Queen* [lit-

tle Thérèse] naturally came last and the *King* took her by the two elbows to kiss her and she would cry out in a high-pitched tone: “Good night, Papa, good night and sleep well!” Every evening was a repetition of the same thing.

Then my little Mama took me in her arms and brought me to Celine’s bed. I would say: “Was I very good today, Pauline? Will the *little angels fly around me?*” The answer was invariably “Yes,” otherwise I would have cried the whole night. After she and Marie had kissed me, *Pauline* went downstairs and poor little Thérèse was left all alone in the dark; in vain did she picture the *little angels flying around her*; fright soon took over, the darkness filled her with fear, for she could no longer see the stars twinkling away serenely. †

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