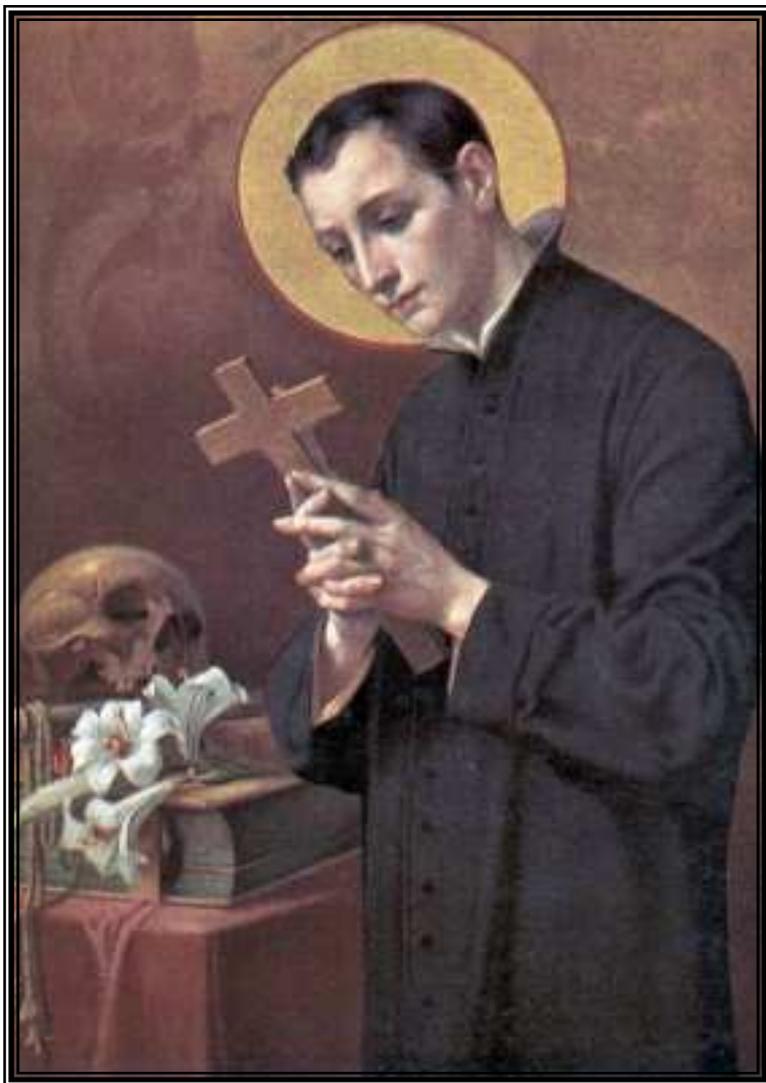


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The **SERAPH** stands opposed to any and all heterodoxy, particularly as manifested in today's heresy of Modernism. It holds to the principle that good will without truth is a sham and that truth without good will is a shame.

The **SERAPH** seeks to serve and unite in spirit all Roman Catholics, faithful to tradition, and all men of good will, for the betterment of society according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of Saint Francis of Assisi.

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*In essentia - Únitas. In dúbio - Libertas.
In ómnibus - Cáritas.*

SPIRITUAL INDUSTRIALIZATION

Bishop Giles, OFM

The industrial revolution has brought forth many good things for us. However, along with increased productivity, lower-priced merchandise, and ever increasing efficiency, we must not overlook some negative results. There appears to be an endless pursuit of maximizing returns. We want to put as little effort, or as little material into production, but we want the maximum return or result.

The assembly line has given us many relatively inexpensive automobiles. Design and diversity have been sacrificed for the sake of expediency. They all look terribly similar and sometimes almost indistinguishable from one another. There is no doubt uniformity and consistency in what is produced, but the human touch seems to be lacking. The stamp of the craftsman or artist is lacking. We see this in most everything we can buy today. There are many good and serviceable products that are cheap – but they are built for obsolescence, they are meant

to be discarded after a short time – to be replaced with the new and improved models. The once American durability and serviceability are fading memories.

This process has invaded the agricultural realm as well. We now produce so much grain that we have to store it and destroy it – but it is cheap to buy. We have mechanized the process so that we put as little labor in as possible, we return as little as we can to the soil, but we seek to maximize the harvest. We have produced more commodities that we can consume. This drives down the price but demands that producers either make more with less, switch to some more profitable production, or go out of business.

At the root of industrialization and specialization seems to be an insatiable greed. In the Old Testament, we read of God's demands that the Israelites only take enough manna for the day. They were not to try and store up any for the next day. If they did, it would be-

come corrupted overnight. In the planting of fields, they were required to leave the field fallow every seventh year. They did not remove every grain from the field but left some for the poor to glean after the harvest. God is generous and bounteous in all He gives us, we do not need to hoard or exact every last thing we can. We need to return some to the earth or leave some for the poor, and a portion is to be offered to Him in recognition that we owe everything to Him.

There is an ever-increasing specialization in almost every aspect. Instead of the family farm that had a variety of animals, and raised a variety of crops, we now find farms that only produce: milk, beef, chicken, eggs, or only produce corn or soybeans, etc. This is definitely more “efficient” but it is also the most susceptible to complete loss or failure. With all the “eggs in one basket”, we gamble on an all or nothing approach to production and life. It only takes one pest to find the weakness of a crop to multiply rapidly and unhindered and ruin countless acres – not to mention the human lives that are depending on the

crop. When the farmer had multiple crops the pest or weather may destroy one, but usually not all the different ones, and so there was something to fall back upon.

It is not only the threats of natural pests or enemies that can break us, we are also terribly vulnerable to “the marketplace”. The demand for a product can disappear in the blink of an eye. A short while ago we read of the sad plot of so many small dairy farms. Unable to find a profitable market for their milk production, they either have to quit or operate their dairies at a loss. They are no longer resilient as they have put all their hope in a single product.

An apiarist (beekeeper) wrote concerning the mysterious colony collapse disorder that was destroying so many hives that are vital for agricultural farming that we do not need ten apiaries with thousands of hives. This is the problem. What we need is tens of thousands of small farms with one or two hives each. The high density of bees promotes cross-contamination. When they are spread out there is less cross

contamination and better chances for success.

The education of our children seems to be ever more specialized. We become masters in one area, but helpless in every other. We have gone from being a “jack of all trades, but a master of none” to the completely opposite extreme.

While all these things seem relatively important for our lives here and now, they may apparently have little to do with the future life of our souls. Yet, appearances are deceptive. We are made up of bodies and souls, and because of this what we think and do in the material realm affects what we think and do in the spiritual realm.

We find specialization in the realm of religion. We find souls that are attracted to one particular devotion or one aspect of religion and live their lives as if this were everything. In this, they think they do well but they are sorely mistaken. The man who is chaste and pure, but is also avaricious or covetous, is not devout or pleasing to God. The man who prays, but will not give alms, has done nothing. The gener-

ous soul that would give the shirt off of his back, but gossips and slanders has built up nothing at all. All the virtues must come together. They must be united and practiced. If we fail in one, we have failed in them all. In our spiritual lives, we need to become like the farmers that once were. The farmers who once knew how to: plant, nurture, harvest, and store crops; as well as how to feed and care for livestock; and could build, repair and maintain structures and machinery – these farmers made our country great. They may not have been the most efficient, but they were the most resilient. This is what we need to imitate and strive for in our spiritual lives – spiritual resiliency and diversification.

We must be able to pray, to fast, to do penance. We must be able to see Christ in the poor, and love our neighbors as we love ourselves. We must become able to love even our enemies for the love of God. It is not enough to study the Scriptures or to even work miracles. All of this is nothing if we are lacking in the other graces and virtues. If the love of God is lacking, all is for nothing.

In striving for the life of our bodies, we study and work to improve: nutrition, exercise, health, shelter, clothing, etc. If we focus on one without the others, we cannot thrive. We end up with an exposed “Achilles heel”, which invariably brings us down. This we know in the material life, but we often fail to understand or implement it in our spiritual lives.

Our souls need to be nourished with the Word of God and the Sacraments, they need to be sheltered from the storms of Hell, the world, and our fallen nature – which always threaten to destroy us. Our souls must be exercised in good works – principally the love of God and our neighbors; this love is the true clothing of our souls.

In the Litany of the Saints, we recognize various categories of saints, such as penitents, martyrs, confessors, doctors, virgins, and widows. We tend to think of these as having “specialized” in one aspect of sanctity. This is true; they practiced or lived a predominant virtue or grace and this showed forth in their lives, however, they were not devoid of any of the other virtues. All these

saints were filled and motivated by charity. They all did penance for sins, they all were martyrs in that they denied (died to) themselves so that they could live in Christ Jesus. They all confessed the true faith and were doctors that taught (if not by word, at least by example). Likewise, they all were or became pure as the virgins and widows.

In our own lives, we may be inclined or given the grace to advance in one grace or virtue. These may come easily or naturally to us, but we must not leave undone the other virtues. Far and above all the virtues, we must have Charity (or love). Charity is the mother of all virtues, to have her is to have them all. We must not set aside any of the graces that God gives us, but put all of them into practice.

This is not an impossible goal. All the saints in heaven have accomplished it. With the grace of God and the true desire of our wills, it can be ours, too. All things are possible when we live in the love of God. “I can do all things in Him Who strengthens me.”

DEUS VULT

Brother Anthony Lentz, OFM

“Deus Vult!” or “God wills it!” was the battle cry that rang throughout the nave of the cathedral of Clermont, France in the year 1096. During the Council of Clermont, Pope Urban II gave a speech entreating the Western Empire (Western Europe) to take up arms for the cause of retaking the Holy Land. This was the beginning of those often debated expeditions called the “Crusades”. The true purpose of the Crusades was basically threefold. First, as it was already mentioned, to retake the Holy Land, in order to restore the prestige and honor of those sacred Shrines that were built on the land where Our Lord had walked. Second, to answer the Eastern Emperor’s plea for help to save the Empire from Muslim take-over. A take-over which had already made its way to the gates of Constantinople! Closely connected with this is the protection of the thousands of Christian pilgrims in the Holy Land, who were being raided and slaughtered by the Muslims. Third, to be a bulwark against a Mus-

lim invasion that was coming from both the South and the East. It was this invasion of European soil that the Catholic popes and monarchs had to contend with and stave off for over 450 years. These points were, simply, the reasons for the Crusades.

Yes, we are well aware that there were some crusaders, both nobleman and peasant, who disregarded, if not perverted, the original purpose of the Crusades. They were driven by either greed or fame or possibly even bloodlust. In truth, this number was relatively small when compared with the greater number of those who “took up the Cross” with a faithful and pious intention. Let us remember that the sins of a few do not destroy the good works of the many, nor the holy or good ideal of any expedition. If this were the case, then we would have to say that everything God had created was evidently evil because Adam and Eve sinned. Such a thought is not only ridiculous but also, and more especially, blasphemous.

The reader may find it hard to believe, after such a lengthy explanation, that the purpose of this article is not, primarily at least, to be a defense of the Crusades. Its actual purpose is to understand the spiritual lessons that we can learn from them.

Before we begin, it would be wise to learn the meaning and origin of the very word, "crusade." *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (Volume IV, page 543) says, "The origin of the word may be traced to the cross made of cloth and worn as a badge on the outer garment of those who took part in these enterprises. Medieval writers use the terms *crux*, *croisement*, *croiserie*, etc." The *Encyclopedia* gives us a little more insight into the use and/or abuse of this word, "Since the Middle Ages the meaning of the word *crusade* has been extended to include all wars undertaken in pursuance of a vow, and directed against infidels, i.e. against Mohammedans, pagans, heretics, or those under the ban of excommunication." The *Encyclopedia* continues with its explanation, "But modern literature has abused the word by applying it to all wars of a reli-

gious character, as, for instance, the expedition of Heraclius (Roman Emperor 610 – 641 A.D.) against the Persians in the seventh century and the conquest of Saxony by Charlemagne." We must then, my dear readers, come to understand the real and the only historical idea of the Crusades. "The idea of the Crusades," again says the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, "corresponds to a political conception which was realized in Christendom only from the eleventh to the fifteenth century; this supposes a union of all peoples and sovereigns under the direction of the popes. All Crusades were announced by preaching. After pronouncing a solemn vow, each warrior received a cross from the hands of the pope or his legates, and was thenceforth considered a soldier of the Church." From this explanation, we can gather one very simple concept: **to fight in the Crusades, or to be a crusader, meant to take up the "cross" and fight for Christ and His Holy Church!** Now we are ready to understand and appreciate the spiritual lessons of the Crusades, which transcend both physical reality and history.

To daily take up the cross is the duty of every Christian; for Our Lord said, "Take up thy cross, and come follow Me!" (St. Matthew 16:24) From this, we can conclude, in the spiritual sense, just exactly Who was the first crusader. The first crusader was, in fact, Christ Himself. He Who took upon His shoulders the Cross of Our Redemption! He Who suffered torture and death for the Will of His Father, and to satisfy His own burning love for souls! The example of Our Lord is the inspiration of all the examples of fidelity and loyalty. He is truly the King for whom any crusader should be willing to fight.

Yes, all Catholics, young and old, are called to be crusaders for Christ the King. All are called to take-up this holy enterprise – the salvation of souls! The main duty of a crusader then consists in rendering *unflinching fealty (or faithfulness) to his Lord*. In the spiritual realm, this unflinching loyalty is expressed in our willingness to not only avoid mortal sin but to also overcome our imperfections which have their roots in our stubborn self-love. We are called to this spiritual combat against

the world, the flesh, and the devil the moment we are baptized; and we must continue onward until we draw our last breath. We should not fear though because Christ, being a benevolent and faithful Sovereign, does not leave us to fend for ourselves. He gives us the spiritual armor and weapons needed to conquer our enemies. St. Paul teaches thusly, "*Therefore take unto you the armor of God that you may be able to resist in the evil day and to stand in all things perfect. Stand therefore having your loins girt with truth and having on the breastplate of justice, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in all things take the shield of faith, wherewith you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one. And take unto you the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the sword of God.*" (Ephesians 6: 13-17) (1) To have your "loins girt with truth" is, both as to doctrine and a good life, keeping your baptismal vows. (2) "Having on the breastplate of justice" means not just having the virtue of justice, but all virtues in general. (3) "Your

feet shod with the preparation of the gospel” is being prepared to walk in the ways of the gospel, as a crusader must be prepared and in readiness to march or to fight. (4) “*The shield of faith*” is a lively faith working by charity which will enable you to conquer your greatest enemies. (This spiritual analogy for *Ephesians 6: 13-17* was taken from Father Goffine’s *Explanation of the Epistles and Gospels*.)

Who does not feel a sense of loyalty to a King who was the first to enter into the battlefield? A King, Who did not just give the command, but Who set the example? We see this example most clearly displayed by His Dolorous Passion; for it was through His Passion and Death on the Cross that He conquered sin. The Cross, then, is the Spiritual Crusader’s banner and under this banner, he, too, will conquer because the King came first to show the path and to make the yoke sweet and the burden light.

Remember the battle cry at Clermont: “Deus Vult! – God wills it!” What does God will for the spiritual crusader? St. Paul tells us very clearly, “For

this is the will of God, your sanctification.” (1 Thess. 4:3) Work towards achieving this noble ideal. Develop your prayer life; make use of the Sacraments – especially those of Penance and Holy Eucharist, and respond to God’s plentiful gifts of grace, so you may perform holy works of charity. Be faithful to this holy enterprise so you may retake the “Holy Land of your soul” from the clutches of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and so it may be returned to its rightful owner – Christ, Our Crusading King.



NOTE:

THE SERAPH is not published in July and August.

We wish all our readers a most blessed Summer, and look forward to being with you again in September in our 39th year of publication.

Sister Agnes' Favorites

The Tabernacle Door



They tell me of grand, seraphic prayers,
They speak of the light that is gathered there,
They say that to mountain heights above
Fly up the eagles of holy love:
I hear them, but never ask to soar
While I gaze on the little Golden Door.

I open a book of inspired thought,
Treasurers that saints may have dearly bought—
At another time, in another place,
It might be a fount of the richest grace,
But I close the volume and read no more
While I gaze on the little Golden Door.

I bring before Him the crowded day:
I try to hear what His voice would say
If others are right, and if I am wrong,
Am I the weak, and they are the strong?
I pass my thoughts and my feelings o'er
While I gaze on the little Golden Door.

He so calm untroubled still,
We so tossed by our wayward will,
So often sinking, so prone to fall,
He heareth, He knoweth all:
Give me, O Lord, of Thy wisdom's store
While I gaze on the little Golden Door.

I only ask for one word to show
The way Thou wouldst have my footsteps go;
One little beam of Thy truthful light,
For the path grows dark, it will soon be night,
And the hour is coming when never more
Shall I gaze on the little Golden Door?

GENERATIONAL LOSS OF FAITH

Fr. Joseph Noonan, OFM

Reader's Note: *Fr. Joseph visited Catholics in England and the Czech Republic in late April/early May of this year. The following article was written while he was visiting in the Czech Republic.*

The thoughts are not particularly new. The information is not "Breaking News." What is different is seeing the universal or international effects of known facts of the past and present.

One of the first changes by the Modernists was to remove and replace the teaching of the Catholic Faith to students of all ages, from elementary to young adults.

This writer experienced this first-hand in a parochial school in the mid-1960's. If I wasn't blessed with good Catholic parents, I fear to think where I would be today. I would also like to mention that my parents were not highly educated, but did know the Faith, and came to know when something wrong was being taught. This observation is noted here to counter the argument that a parent needs

to know the Faith so well that they are able to counter every argument which comes their way. This is hardly possible for most any parents.

Yes, it is better to know the Faith well, but when this is not the case, knowing the simple difference between the Faith and heresy can mean the difference between retaining the Faith and losing it. To say it another way, how many Catholic parents kept their children in the "Catholic" schools either because they didn't know the Faith or trusted those who would quickly indoctrinate their children in a new religion which is not Catholic?

Since this began to occur in the 1960's, how many generations have grown up with little or no religion? I believe one can safely say two generations. Looking back it seems generally that those who were taught in the 60's and 70's knew some of the basics of the Faith but not much more.

Before long, this generation married and began to have children. These children were

sent to the Modernist schools where they learned less than their parents or were sent to the public schools where they learned nothing of the Faith but were shielded from the direct assaults of the heretics in the schools that claimed to be Catholic.

This first generation after the false council of Vatican II saw many situations of the spiritually blind parents leading their more blind children down a road that would lead to the second generation of children being nothing more than baptized pagans, if that.

There have been situations where the families were decently educated in the basics of the Faith, but these are the exceptions rather than the rule. The education cannot be said to have been complete simply because they chose to remain with the heretics of the Modernist sect.

There is an ongoing blind spot among “well-meaning conservative” Catholics in the Modernist sect. They are convinced they must remain with what they perceive to be the Catholic Church although they have witnessed heresy being preached, written or taught.

Little do they understand (if they were taught) that Catholics are obliged to end all association with heretics once they understand what is taking place.

Apparently, they know little of their Catholic history. Lay Catholics have come face to face with heretics throughout the two-thousand-year history of the Church. Sometimes they made the right decision and at other times the wrong decision was made. *Arius and Luther did not go to Hell alone*. There is no indication as to how many parents made the wrong decision in the fifth and sixteenth centuries especially and misled their children.

As a side note: I have spoken to numerous Hispanic persons in West Texas who are now practicing Protestants. One wonders if generations in the past were practicing Catholics? How do I know they were once Catholics? Some have retained the use of the Sign of the Cross, own a Rosary or have addressed me as Father. It is quite telling when a middle-aged Hispanic man, while leaving the Protestant church across the street from Corpus Christi Church on a

Sunday morning, waves and says “Hi, Father.” I have been told of numerous others, who attend this same church, who bless themselves before they eat a meal.

Unfortunately, the twentieth and twenty-first centuries will be no different from the past. We do not know how many generations will be lost. Recent history has evolved from being concerned with the loss of the Faith of a person, then a family and now entire generations of Catholics.

To believe someone is safe from eternal damnation is approaching the subject far too naively. All Catholics have been subject to the assaults of the Devils and their own personal failures. In a world where the Faith is assaulted on all sides all of the time, the uneducated and uninformed are particularly vulnerable.

There are far too many Catholics who have little understanding of the war that has been taking place within the Church. By this time they should know, but because they do not know it is a clear indication of either their ignorance of the Faith or their indifference. Whichever it is, the ef-

fect upon the second and now third generation of those who would otherwise be Catholic is devastating beyond description.

Some of the effects have been a dramatic increase in mixed marriages, marriages outside the Church, hundreds of millions of Catholics leaving the Church, artificial contraception being used by about 90% of “Catholic” couples today, a wrong understanding of the Mystical Body of Christ and the One True Church resulting in mass religious indifference, wide use of abortion, a dramatic drop in general morality (living in sin, among others), etc.

It is no wonder there are less than 20% of the Catholics in the Modernist Church who attend their “mass” each weekend!” What is it that supernaturally draws them to attend? Is it the opportunity to speak to their friends in the “gathering spaces” or is it the songs they sing to Gaia (an ancient Greek false god who is recognized in some Modernist churches!)?

The serious tragedy is that the apostasy from the Faith continues to produce fallen-away

Catholics by the generation, unbaptized grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, neo-Protestants now attending numerous Protestant sects or starting their own, and a growing indifferentism concerning the True Faith.

As a result of this general apostasy, families no longer attend Sunday Mass together, celebrate Christmas and Easter as religious holydays, discuss the important moral issues of the day (abortion, homosexuality, transgenderism, invitro, proper modesty, etc.), pray the Rosary together each evening, celebrate Baptisms and First Holy Communions with large family gatherings and continue other local Catholic customs.

An added topic that seems to be rarely discussed is the avoidance of womanly degradation. This deplorable situation continues to worsen even among otherwise decent Catholic women. The lack of common decency and decorum plunges so many women to depths which would otherwise be unthinkable or permitted fifty years ago. Far too many women present themselves in public as nothing more than loose women of the

past. They have become a mass of non-thinking females who are only concerned with fashion and style. Modesty and purity be damned!

The apostasy is certainly universal. It has devastated Europe faster than the United States. The Freemasons began their plan of destruction decades before it was implemented in the U. S. A. The Modernists, working with the Freemasons, have completed the destruction. Now you have the legal invasion of the Moslem sect which for so long was fought and defeated by Catholic warriors. The depth of the apostasy in Rome is illustrated in the statements of Jorge Bergoglio (a.k.a. Pope Francis) who has condemned Catholic Europe and its efforts in the past to remain Catholic while presenting a grand welcoming mat to those Moslems who would cut off the heads of all Catholics including the Marxist heretic leader himself!

The world and the family have become a devastated wasteland with lost souls filling the streets of the cities and the fields of the countryside. There is the occasional live, loyal, Catholic soul who fights

on regardless of the battles which take place around him. He knows the importance of remaining in the state of grace, attending only the True Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, receiving the Sacraments and avoiding all occasions of sin when possible in this immoral world. His loyalty is to Christ and His Bride, the Holy Roman Catholic Church, not the false church of the Modernists. It continues to cost faithful Catholics dearly. Families are divided, sometimes permanently, because of the Faith. Those generations of Catholics of many racial, cultural and nationalistic backgrounds who ought to be gathering on Sundays and Holydays in their respective local Catholic Churches to assist the priest in celebrating the Holy Sacrifice

of the Mass and receiving the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist are now scattered to the four winds of the Freemasons, Jews, pagan gods and ultimately to Hell.

Those family members who suffer through a spiritual martyrdom because of the loss of their loved ones who have left or never knew the Faith experience a grief in some small way similar to that of Our Lord when He cried over Jerusalem. He cried because the Jews of His time did not recognize their “moment of salvation.” It is quite safe to say that those apostatized Catholics of today did not recognize their “moment of salvation,” either. Yes, it is a good and wholesome thought to pray and cry for the spiritually dead even while they live.

The Catholic Faith

RADIO PROGRAM

THE CATHOLIC FAITH RADIO PROGRAM is broadcast live each Friday from 1:30-4:30 p.m. (CST) in the studios of KRFE AM580, Lubbock, Texas. It is streamed live on <http://catholichour.org>. If you are unable to listen live, you may go to the website anytime and listen to the recorded broadcasts at your leisure.

The call in telephone number is (806) 745-5800.

You may also email your questions or comments to father@catholichour.org

MOTHER IN ISRAEL

C. C. MARTINDALE, S.J.

THE OLD TESTAMENT is a collection of singularly masculine documents — I suppose that any oriental literature really is that. Perhaps it is due to this that most of the women mentioned in the literature of the Older Covenant stand out so vividly.

Eve, we need not say, is unique. Mother of All the Living; Mother of all who must die. *Mater pulchrae Spei* — Mother of Fair Hope; then Mother of Tears (so Eastern sailors still invoke her daughter Mary in their long litanies); but Mother, too, of the Promises. The interminable Calvary that seemed destined to Eve's Offspring was the hill where should grow that Tree of Salvation, which, as the lovely ancient legend says, was the far-distant offshoot of the Tree of Destruction from which she took the fruit and to Adam gave it and he ate.

Next, after Eve came Sara, wife of Abraham. In *Gen. xviii*, we read of the visit of those three mysterious strangers to Abraham, in return for whose hospitality they promised that Sara should bear a son. In a vision, the same promise had been made to Abraham, and he "laughed." How should Sara have a son —

she that was ninety years old? Still, he obeyed God's orders, as Zachary, many centuries later, was to do despite initial incredulity. But when Sara overheard the promise made by the strangers she too laughed, wholly disbelieving them, and when she was taxed with her unbelief, was frightened, and denied that she had laughed. . . . But the months went by, and Isaac was duly born, ancestor of Our Lord according to the flesh.

Alas, that our human sympathies are so often on what turns out to be the "wrong side!" When Isaac was born Sara's mocking laughter was turned into glee: "God hath prepared laughter for me; every one that heareth will laugh with me!" But no. Agar, Abraham's second wife, but a slave-woman, had already had a son, Ishmael, and Sara refused that the son of the slave should be co-heir with the son of herself, the free. She demanded the expulsion of the slave-woman and her son. Abraham grieved: he loved them. But again God told him not to fear — expel them as he might, the child should grow into a mighty nation. Abraham gave a water-skin to Agar and turned them adrift in the southern deserts of the land. The water was

soon exhausted: she laid her son under a piece of scrub and went and sat down a bow-shot distant, saying: "Ah! let me not see the child die!" And forthwith she perceived a spring and revived herself and him, and he became very strong, but a wild man, living in the wilderness, and afterwards he married an Egyptian.

"Ah! let me not watch the child dying!" On the lips of how many a mother has not that sentence been heard! Saddest is it of all when the contemplated death is spiritual. When a son "goes wrong." When a father breaks the solemn oaths that he swore when marrying a Catholic wife, and brings a child up deprived of his birthright of the Faith. To us, tragic beyond all else when a Catholic mother has come to feel that "it does not matter very much," and allows her children to slide at ease out of the Church.
...

Not to look so far forward, we may recall that there is in the world a race of Ishmaels. Pariahs and outcasts. What the poet called "gentlemen rankers" — "damned from here to eternity" — or, indeed, men in no social sense "gentlemen" — "rankers" if they are able so much as to get into any "rank" — often quite isolated, true Ishmaels, their hand against every man's and every man's hand against them.

Ah! If but one might be privileged to know even one such — to be his friend unshakenly; to endure, even, his dying without apparent faith and certainly without sacraments or any sort of act (to human eye) of faith and of contrition, and yet to be able to affirm to God that one had tied up one's heart and life with him, and that apart from his salvation heaven itself would hardly be worth having — well, one would be talking nonsense; but it would be a nonsense talked both by Moses and St. Paul; it would be a way of laying down one's own life for the sheep — only, Our Lord made it quite clear that such a laying down of life would be the supreme form of finding it, one's own life, and the life of my Ishmael.

The generations passed: idyllic stories are to be read, like that especially of the wooing of Rebekah, the pastoral charm of which is hardly to be surpassed: she became the mother of the twins, Jacob and Esau. Here again, the promises of God passed through Jacob, who twice so disgustingly cheated Esau: and did so the second time at the instigation of Rebekah herself. Making every allowance for the oriental delight in duplicity, we have to say that the stories are ugly; we acknowledge that God can, and often does, make use of very imperfect instruments; Esau

went off to the descendants of Ishmael and took a wife from among them; Jacob married Rachel, who could not shake off her ancestral paganism, and has but little "personality" in her story; and since it is not the story of Jacob that we are recalling, we leave her shadowy figure to melt into the distant dazzle of oriental sunlight.

No other Hebrew woman now emerges from that earlier dazzle save her whom we prefer to name Miriam (for who, save one, in that long history must be called "Mary"? Despite the "Magdalen," for whom we keep *that* name). She was the sister of Moses, and undoubtedly a leader among the women of Israel during its escape from Egypt. She clashed her cymbals — she led the triumph song — but afterwards she, too, was disloyal, and was struck with leprosy. She was healed and had a "future" in Hebrew memories, but on the whole, I think, for her brother's sake.

Moses died, having seen the Promised Land from the top of Mount Nebo, but he did not enter it.

In the troubled times of the entering of the Hebrews, startling as it may seem to us, the only woman's name that we care to retain is that of Rahab, the courtesan of Jericho, who saved the

lives of Josue's two spies, and so, speaking human-wise, of the whole people. The red cord was bound around her window-bars, and her entire household was exempted in the sacking of the city. But Josue, too, died, and a period of all but chaos followed. There was no law: every man "did that which was right in his own eyes." Here and there local personalities arose, who "judged" the people and exercised brief and local authority. Of these, strange as it may seem, one was Debora (*Judges iv*). "She judged Israel at that time . . . the children of Israel came up to her for judgment." When the soldier Barak was told to advance against Sisera, he refused to go unless she came with him. She promised that she would: "nevertheless the journey shall not be for thine honor." For the Lord would give Sisera into the hands of a woman. This woman was Jael, who cajoled the exhausted Sisera into her tent, sent him to sleep, and drove a tent-peg completely through his skull. Concerning this event, Debora sang a psalm which may be almost the oldest piece of Hebrew poetry that has come down to us. "The rulers ceased in Israel — they ceased — until I, I Debora, arose — till I arose, a Mother in Israel!"

This story is savage: the hymn is superb: with such reverses, and

slow, slow advances, did the History of God for the Hebrews proceed.

As though to refresh us, during this very period occurred the romance of Ruth. A man from Bethlehem of Juda had gone with his wife Naomi into the land of Moab, where the savage Kemosh was worshipped. His two sons married Moabite women — Orpa and Ruth. All three men died. Naomi resolved to return to her own land;¹ and of her two daughters-in-law, though Naomi begged them both to leave her and stay in their own land, Ruth chose to go with her. The Scriptures have bequeathed to our language, as a treasure forever, her exquisite chant:

Entreat me not to leave thee

Nor to return from following after thee:

For whither thou goest, I will go;

And where thou lodgest, I will lodge: Thy people shall be my people,

And thy God, my God!

Where thou diest, I will die,

And there will I be buried —

¹We are apt to forget how small was the scene of the Palestinian drama. Naomi had only about thirty miles to go; and Bethlehem could be seen from the mountains of Moab.

The Lord do so to me, and more also,

If aught but Death separate thee and me!

It is this part of the story which has made it immortal, though the rest is full of interesting Israelite customs and romance. In the end, Ruth married her kinsman Boaz and became the grandmother of King David.

But before that had occurred the episode of Samuel, which begins with the pathetic history of his mother Anna, who at first could have no child. She went year by year to Silo, where the Ark was, and prayed with such desperate earnestness to be freed from this "disgrace," that the chief priest, Eli, who was watching her lips move, thought that she was drunken and bade her leave the House of God. "Nay, my lord," she said: "but I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: neither wine nor strong drink have I drunk; but I was pouring out my soul before the Lord!" He bade her go in peace; and in due course, Samuel was born. In I *Kings* ii, her song of thanksgiving is related. None can help comparing it with the Magnificat. Whole verses are similar. Yet what a difference! Both poems must be read throughout if we are to savor that. Our Lady's is as Jewish as possible — traditional in phrasing, exultant, thrilling with praise

and gratitude: yet how gentle, how sweet, how without any taste of rancor or triumphing over critics and the scornful! But you cannot help feeling precisely that in the earlier psalm, late though it may have been when the traditional words were actually written down. The later this was done, the nearer the time of Mary, the deeper the gulf is cleft between all the hymns (and the Magnificat in particular) handed down by St. Luke, and these Old Testament paeans.

I cannot bring myself to find beauty in any of the stories of women to be read in the remainder of the Old Testament. Assuredly there is romance in those of the women who helped Elias and Eliseus; and that of Bathsheba is of extreme pathos; she, too, was an ancestress of Our Lord: St. Matthew in his genealogy names her curtly "Uriah's wife"; St. Luke, quite uncharacteristically, omits all names of women in *his* genealogy². But after this, the brief incidents, where women are concerned, are not attractive;³ the episode of Jezabel is grim and dramatic — it, too, has left inefaceable marks upon our language. And to our taste, that of

²*The place of Tamar, who sinned with Juda, in Our Lord's ancestry, has often been commented on; but she remains without distinct personality.*

the heroine "Judith" (let alone Susanna) is unpleasant.

No doubt *Psalm* xlv introduces the almost hierarchic figure of the Princess whose marriage hymn it partly is: no doubt the splendor of her robes is dwelt upon — but all this is rather to exhort her to "forget thy people and thy father's house," and to look forward to children, rather than back to the home of her girlhood. Nor can we doubt but that the Jews saw a symbolical religious value in the "Canticle," else it would never have found its way into their Canon. But the symbolism is obscure.

There are, of course, not a few references to "good women" and their value, up and down the Old Testament; and the famous passage in Proverbs where the idea is much expanded; otherwise I can think of nothing save the great prophecies of *Micheas* v, 2-5, and *Isaias* vii, obscure though these be, unless, I think, we accustom ourselves to the "prophetic vision," which included one thing within another — depth upon depth of meaning; width beyond width of horizon.

³*The Queen of Saba, visiting Solomon, has bequeathed to us two sentences "The half was not told me," and "There was no more spirit left in her" but how vulgar, if I may say so, she remains!*

Thus Micheas was envisaging the sack of Samaria and the deportation of its citizens by Assyria. He wished to say that this devastation should not last forever, but only until from Bethlehem should come forth God's ruler for the People, one whose goings-forth (origin) were from of old, yes, from ancient days. When she, who was destined to bear him, should do so, then would victory be assured, and the scattered people return. It is not difficult to argue that the prophet meant, at first, that from David's city should come forth one of David's ancient stock, a military leader who should restore freedom and unity to Israel — all under divine Providence. And were one to attend only to the beginning and the end of this passage, where attention is so definitely concentrated on the Assyrian enemy, it would be harder to suppose that the prophet meant more than that, than to confine his meaning within just those limits. But so high does his inspiration rise between these earlier and later texts that you can be sure that he was contemplating also the true Messiah, as it were shining forth through the immediate conqueror, and spreading his rays much further than he.⁴

⁴*I think everyone recognizes that this passage is Messianic — it may actually allude to Isaias vii.*

There is little if anything that can count as "Catholic tradition" about these words. It is quite otherwise with the prophecy in Isaias. Here Achaz, king of Juda, was seeking to make an alliance with the pagan empire of Assyria in view of the attack made on him by the kings of Damascus (Syria) and of Israel (the northern kingdom). This meant inviting the pagan into God's land, and trusting to man rather than God, and deliberately making the Chosen People into a state vassal to the pagan. Isaias rebuked, yet encouraged him, and offered him any "sign," however amazing, that he might choose, as proof that the unholy alliance was not needed for his rescue. Contemptuous, despondent, or just unbelieving, Achaz refused. Indignantly Isaias said that God Himself would then provide a sign. Let but the Maiden now conceive and bear a son — and before the boy were of age to discern good from evil, the land would be desolate, and he would be living a life of all but destitution. Egypt and Assyria alike would devastate all Palestine — as indeed they did during the next reign. Yet should that devastation not be everlasting — for the boy should be called Immanu-El: "God (is) with us," and as God's agent should deliver the land.

We must remember that a "sign" need not mean something physi-

cally obvious or immediately intelligible, let alone some startling prodigy such as had been offered to and refused by Achaz. It could be something that might be recalled and interpreted only when what it foreshadowed had occurred, and because it occurred. Thus, what our Lord said about the destruction of the Temple and its rebuilding, the disciples did not fathom till after the Resurrection; so Achaz may have taken these words merely on their face value. Should a maiden now conceive and bear a son, before his boyhood should be over, Egypt and Assyria would have devastated Palestine. Nor is there anything essentially, intrinsically, Messianic (let alone incarnational) in the name Immanuel.⁵

There is, however, the disconcerting fact that Isaias does not say "a maiden," but *"the*

⁵It is, I think, admitted now by all that the word translated "virgin" is rightly so translated. Not all, however, would see in the words, as such, a prophecy of a virgin birth. If I say: "The blind shall see," I mean that those who now are blind shall see, having by that very fact ceased to be blind. Nor indeed is Isaias here insisting on the virgin birth of the Rescuer: he is announcing dates and times, "that when it shall come to pass you may remember that I have told you" (John xvi, 9).

maiden." It is, to my mind, perfectly impossible to see in this a reference either to Achaz's wife or to Isaias's, nor can any other definite "maiden" be suggested as alluded to. I certainly think that the prophet meant, directly, that should the destined maiden, mother of the promised Messias, now conceive and bear her son, the land would be devastated before he was grown up. But from the outset, within this, he sees the Messianic history of the People, and similarly, even when (viii) he speaks of his own son — before *he* could so much as speak, the devastation should have occurred. But into such splendors of vision and diction does he forthwith ascend as to leave no doubt that his state of mind through this great section is prophetic, that he envisages the ultimate and actual Messias, and indeed, His transcendent relationship with God. The Church, since the Christian revelation of the Incarnation and the Virgin Birth, has consistently seen in this passage a true prophecy of both. Hebrew prophecy must then be acknowledged as constantly disconcerting a modern reader, especially one trained in the rigorous methods of Greek philosophy, of Latin explicit and legalized formulas, and even of ordinary English, which likes to "say what it has got to say" as simply and straightforwardly as

possible. The divine Sun peers through the clouds of human Hebrew thought, shoots forth a ray, withdraws itself, reappears through a different rift in the tumultuous swirling vapors, and leaves us hesitating as to what exactly we have seen. The moment you think you have reached the eternal and infinite plane, you are distracted by allusions to ancient wars between long-ago dead empires: and, when your mind is fixed on these, the prophetic vision suddenly opens out and such marvelous things are written that you know yourself in a world into which no other literature admits you. Only under the full Christian light can the history of the Hebrews — a substantial enduring "prophecy" in itself — be properly understood. Isaias is to me unintelligible unless I affirm that in these passages his mind went also, and after a while chiefly if not wholly, to the Messiah who should come, he knew not when, born truly of a mother, he knew not whom, and should effect a rescue far transcending the defeat merely of this king or that, or of any passing Empire.

Was the vision of the Mother of the Messiah habitually before the eyes of the Hebrew people, or even of their prophets? We can hardly think so; nor, certainly, the idea that she should be a virgin-mother. Much later on,

vague suggestions floated about in rabbinic literature to the effect that His birth would be somehow extraordinary: "When Messiah cometh, no man knoweth whence He is" (*John vii, 27, 28*); but this refers not only to immediate ancestry or parentage but also to place of origin. Not only Eve but Adam, seem to drop almost wholly out of Hebrew imagination and literature, unlike Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David and quite subordinate personages, like Dathan. Perhaps this is because the attention of the national mind was concentrated rather on the future than on the past — this is one point in which Hebrew religion differed so much from other religions that surrounded it — they put the Golden Age in the past. All, Our Lady herself, normally expected the Rescuer to be born of human wedlock. Anyhow, we have seen that despite a few notable figures — national heroines on the whole — the divine process leaps straight from Eve to Mary, and it is on this transcendent vision of the Woman, ever present in God's plan, and actively sharing in the working-out of His Purpose, that St. John, in the very last book of the Bible, will fix his eye.



FRANCISCAN SAINTS

June 8th

Blessed Baptista Varani

Virgin, Second Order

Baptista was the daughter of Duke Julius Caesar of Camerino, Italy. She was born in the capital city of that prince in 1459. In her earliest years, she took pleasure in the vanities of the world. Her heart, indeed, remained unstained, but nevertheless, she liked to appear in costly garments and beamed with joy when she was adorned with glittering jewels.

But one day she heard a sermon by a Franciscan on the bitter sufferings of Christ. The touching portrayal so wrung the heart of the young princess that she bewailed her previous vanity with many tears and was henceforth a changed person. From then on, not a day passed on which she did not meditate on the sufferings of our Lord. Under the spiritual direction of

Blessed Peter of Mogliano, a Franciscan, she also practiced various bodily mortifications and arose every night to pray the rosary to the Mother of God.

Meanwhile, her father was contemplating marriage for her, but Baptista desired only to devote herself to God and the contemplation of the divine mysteries in some quiet convent cell. The duke opposed this wish of his beloved daughter for the space of two years.

At last, however, he consented that she take the veil in the convent of the Poor Clares at Urbino. Now Baptista was happier than if she had received a royal crown, and later she often said: "Oh, what sweetness I experienced in the holy convent at Ur-

bino." Some years later, there was an urgent request that the praying daughters of St. Clare establish themselves in Camerino. The duke built a convent for them, and Baptista was sent there with several other sisters.

But now the servant of God, already firmly established in her vocation, was not to escape the test of suffering. She endured long and painful maladies, to which were added violent interior struggles and also persecution by misguided people. But she thanked God for them all, feeling that she was thereby more intimately united with her suffering Savior. She prayed for those who persecuted her; and when her father and brother were cruelly murdered, Baptista prayed to God for the murderers: "O Lord, do not hold this sin against them!"

Because of her fidelity in suffering, her crucified Love constantly drew her more closely to Himself. Christ revealed to her what suffering His own Heart endured and had her record much of it for the benefit of others.

After she had served her Divine Spouse in the convent for more than forty years, Baptista died blessedly on the thirty-first of May, 1517. Thirty years after her death, her body was exhumed and the tongue which had so often prayed for her enemies, was found in-corrump and fresh, and it is still preserved that way in a special reliquary.

Baptista was venerated immediately after her death. By process of beatification, Pope Gregory XVI conferred upon her the honor of the altar.

ON DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART

1. Consider how our Divine Lord led Blessed Baptista from the contemplation of His bodily sufferings to the consideration of the sufferings of His Sacred Heart. He wished to direct her to honor His Sacred Heart long before He commended this devotion for the universal Church through St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. Our Baptista did indeed worship the Sacred Heart perfectly. In contemplating the sufferings of our Lord, her heart grew inflamed with love

that was at the same time contrite and willing to make sacrifices. That induced her to forsake the vanity and glamour of the palace in order to belong to God alone. Seldom has anyone fulfilled the appeal of our Lord, "Give me thy heart" (Prov. 23:26), more perfectly. During this month, which is especially consecrated to the Heart of Jesus, He directs this request also to you. For, devotion to the Sacred Heart consists above all, in offering one's own heart to the Heart of Jesus, and in sacrificing whatever is apt to lead our heart away from Him. — What sacrifices of the kind have you to offer Him during this month?

2. Consider how, out of love for our suffering Savior, Blessed Baptista practiced mortification and cheerfully offered up to God sickness and interior affliction. Because she saw the Heart of Jesus grieving over the sins of men, she found consolation in suffering with Him, and she prepared sweet consolation for the Sacred Heart by offering her sufferings in atonement for sin. Such an atonement is an es-

sential part of true devotion to the Heart of Jesus. Have we no need to render it for our own sins? Offenses committed against God by those who are otherwise numbered among good Christians wound the Heart of Jesus most painfully. He Himself complains: "With these, I was wounded in the house of them that loved me" (Zach. 13:6). — Have you, too, given occasion for this complaint? In what manner do you offer atonement?

3. Consider how Baptista imitated the Divine Heart in His perfect love. Not only did she sincerely forgive the gravest offenses, but she even pleaded for forgiveness for the murderers of her father, as Christ prayed to His Father for His executioners. Such prayer and forgiveness in imitation of the Heart of Jesus are the most pleasing honor we can render Him. They satisfy in great measure for our own failings against the Sacred Heart. — Frequently look at the pierced Heart of Jesus on the cross and draw from It strength, as did Blessed Baptista, to imitate His sentiments.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

O God, who in the contemplation of the sufferings of Thy only-begotten Son didst inflame Blessed Baptista with the fire of love, grant through her intercession that we may always devoutly honor these holy sufferings and deserve to receive the fruits thereof. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.



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A Chance to Live

Monsignor John P. Carroll-Abbing

V

TWO WORLDS UNITED IN CHARITY

*“And the greatest of these is
Charity . . .” St. Paul*

(Continued)

The committee for the building of the Boys’ Village of Palermo, promoted by the manufacturers, contractors, and amalgamated clothing workers in the men’s clothing industry of New York, was a typical concern made up of men of Italian origin, but also of many other national groups.

The first time I met with them, I spoke to them of the plight of the Sicilian children, many of whom were lost and homeless. If I remember correctly, I also told them the story of Giuseppe.

Giuseppe was one of the first Sicilian boys I met in Naples after the fall of the Cassino front. He had no father or mother. Alone, he had put his few possessions in a knapsack and had left Sicily. He was a

dark-haired, dark-eyed boy, his glance loyal, with an undercurrent of deep sadness in its depths. His independent air, his open smile had attracted the sympathy of the American soldiers who adopted him. For a time, he lived on the fringes of an army camp.

The soldiers would willingly have given him food and clothing, but the natural pride of his race made him despise begging. He wanted to earn his keep by his own labor, so in return for his meals and whatever else they might give him, he offered his services. He was tired at night after working all day at small jobs, but he was happy. The money he earned was his and he had kept intact that dignity of independence that I had seen instinctively defended by these small outcasts.

After that meeting in Naples, I had not seen him for a long time.

One day I found myself at the station in Rome. The place was crowded with travelers and with boys helping with

bags and packages. Suddenly a dark-haired boy popped up beside me.

“Giuseppe, what are you doing here?”

It was really Giuseppe, the small dynamic street boy. Sad to say, he was still a wanderer. He had his shoeshine kit with him and he had been busy getting customers when he spied me.

“I tried to carry the suitcases, but sometimes they were too heavy. I just couldn’t make it all day long. Besides, the regular porters don’t like us to take their work away from them.”

And so Giuseppe had joined the army of the *sciuscìa*, not a thief, not an evildoer, but a little man who only wanted to live and be independent of anyone who might lead him astray.

He slept wherever he could, in a doorway or under an archway. I found a family willing to give him food and shelter. After that, I saw him often and I suggested the idea of having him enter a home and live with other boys.

“Oh no, Father, school is not for me.”

His way of answering me reminded me of a wild pony rearing in anger at the sight of a bridle.

“But you will be with other boys and you will be well treated.”

“Sounds like an institution.”

“What do you know about institutions? You have never been in one.”

“I’ve never been in one, but a lot of the boys around here have and they ran away.”

“Why?”

“Listen, Father . . . just like that, a bell rings . . . no reason, see . . . and then you can’t talk . . . you have to walk in single file like soldiers, and then they tell me the food’s no good.”

“If I opened a boarding school, would you come?” “Sure . . . why not?”

“But . . .”

“But then it wouldn’t be an institution.”

I let the conversation drop there. I was not interested in knowing why mine would not be an institution, but his words often came back to me.

Sometime later I met a Sicilian friend and his wife. They saw Giuseppe and liked him immediately. He was invited to their home and Giuseppe certainly must have used all his charm, for they adopted him. They had two other sons. They went to school and Giuseppe went also. Why shouldn't he?

"Of course I'm going . . . why not?"

That was Giuseppe.

His life as a *sciuscìa* is now a closed chapter. Two, three years go by and I see him again. No more rags. He is tall, serene, but he has not changed. He is still the proud, vibrant boy. His bright soul still shines out of his dark eyes.

Not many of the Sicilian orphans had the same luck.

I visited Palermo again after my return from America. The miserable condition of the poor quarters of the city had not changed. In the hovels around the port, where the air raids had caused so much destruction, the children lived under pitiful conditions. The houses were just mere walls, a roof on top. Not a window, no foundation. The air within was stifling, sour. The lack of

sunlight, the wretched food had turned the children into pale, listless wraiths.

I saw them with the bleary eyes of old age, rickety, thin to emaciation. Among the very small, I noticed several with fingers that had been gnawed by rats. Desolation, horror, squalor, lost hope.

Another month went by, but at last, on November 30, 1948, in the presence of representatives of the Italian government, of the highest personalities of Sicily, of the American ambassador and of representatives of the American donors, Boys' Village New York, as it was called, came into being.

The Conca d'Oro (Golden Shell, the name given to the plain of Palermo) lies smiling amid shimmering orange groves. The sea's waves do not bite into its beaches and rocks. They touch its shores with a tender caress, they lap softly, almost reverently the ancient land that has seen so many brilliant civilizations. Here Nature has showered beauty with a lavish hand. Even the most unfeeling, the most callous are charmed by the panorama of garden and hill ariot with bloom. Here rises the Palermo

Village for Boys.

Near it, there are narrow streets and alleyways, such as are found in monotonous frequency in harbor towns like Genoa, Marseilles, and others, a little more narrow, perhaps less corrupt, but as filled with misery and hunger. From these byways, dreary and wretched, from the miserable huts where no real living can take root because man loves light and air, the boys wend their way to the Village for moral and material good.

It would not be right to attribute all the evils that have weighed down on the homeless children of Italy to the war and its consequences. The scourge and what followed had served to bring to the surface the moral poison of years, to accentuate existing social deficiencies.

The question of the children of convicts has been a problem facing society for centuries. In the literature of the last century, especially in English literature, in Dickens, for example, we can find many a moving passage on the miserable status of these children, who were not orphans and yet were worse off, deprived as they

were of home, while father or mother, or both, served time in prison for the commitment of a crime.

Many people have been interested in this social problem, but often their efforts have been only half-hearted, as though they were doomed to failure, as well as the children.

The good little Calasencian Sisters in Rome, who had dedicated themselves to the care of these children, had no such fears. Their humble houses were beautiful in the gaiety of their atmosphere and in the affection poured forth on the little ones they sheltered.

Time and again I had marveled at the happiness of the youngsters, the sweetness of their faces, especially when I thought of their sordid background, the bitter experiences in their lives.

The inevitable increase in crime immediately after the war also increased the problems of the little ones: more crimes, more children of criminals. The war and its consequences, the exasperation provoked by sorrow and misery, family tragedies, conjugal infidelity, the unbridled desire for easy gain, the grave deficien-

cies in the police system — reduced also by Allied orders — caused the explosion of passions with dire results for the protagonists and for the boys and girls who were innocently involved.

The Sisters spoke to me of the necessity of opening a home for these children in Leghorn, the busy seaport reduced to rubble by air bombardments, the Mecca of thousands of vagrant boys attracted there by the colossal deposits of war material.

In a few months, the home became a reality, an oasis of peace in an old villa on the hills surrounding the port. It was a small place if it were to be compared to the more pretentious ones of the Foundation, but the love found within its walls was the same. The port is a good distance away with its noise and its bustle. The name, Montenero. There is a shrine close by. It is dedicated to the Virgin of Montenero, who watches over her little ones.

Palermo, Rome, Marinella, Leghorn . . . and Pozzuoli. If I go over the road I have traveled, I am forced to note that, more often than not, the spots

where Nature has poured its gifts more abundantly, where the sun is warmest, in places dear to the heart of the tourist, there poverty seems to have become more rampant. In compensation, the houses of the Foundation, clean and new, rise close to this poverty, but in the midst of unrivaled panoramas.

Within ten minutes from the center of Naples, other children have found peace and tranquility and freedom from want.

The view is different from that of Sicily, but the children are the same. They have the same material and spiritual needs, the same reactions, the same feelings.

At Pozzuoli, close to the great port, the Children's Village "Local 48," fruit of the generosity of the members of I.L.G.W.U., is today another dream realized. High on a terraced bluff, it overlooks the sparkling blue waters of the bay.

If the men who were chiefly responsible for it were to return to Italy now, and see the bright cottages in the shade of tall pines, among the fruit trees fragrant with bloom, the little

theater, the busy laboratory where the boys are learning to be good tailors, the vast dormitories with windows opened wide on sun-drenched terraces, the glistening showers, the school, and the chapel serene and peaceful, they would have enough recompense for the sacrifices they have made.

Time and the unselfish kindness of good men and women have made the villages grow in number and in usefulness, from the more important ones, such as the "Boys' Citadel" on Monte Mario in Rome, to the smaller, less pretentious ones built with prefabricated cottages. Existing Institutes were enlarged, furnished, improved; recreational centers opened; summer camps inaugurated; sporting fields laid out. More than two hundred thousand children were temporarily helped, more than twenty thousand of them firmly established on the right road and given a chance in life.

In the enumeration of these cold figures, behind each one of which a child in peril is hidden, or a family who may be living in sickness and misery, many, so many facts remain untold.

The work of regeneration did not and when older, wiser, better, the boys left the Institutes and had to face the world again. True, they had grown stronger in resisting temptations, the temptations of old, but they were still asked to face hardships, the hardships of unemployment, of competition, of the search for work that at times cannot be found.

Twenty-year-olds returned to see me, looking for advice, for help, for someone on whom to lean, when all doors seemed shut. Gino, who did not return home at night empty-handed after a day of fruitless search, because "mother is working twice as hard in order to help me," or Adrian, who had been falsely accused of a wrong he knew he had not committed...

More than once have I learned the lesson that even the hardest case cannot and must not be given up. Only patience, unquestioning and indefatigable patience, the patience that bears with and forgives anything and everything, serene in the knowledge that, with the Grace of God, even for these young souls the day of redemption will not be far distant.

To be continued.

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The SERAPH
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