

MARIA VALTORTA READERS GROUP

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BULLETIN No.104 - DECEMBER 2021

'Lord, I do not ask You for the glory of Your visions, but for the grace to love You more and more.' (*Notebooks 1944*, p. 439)

*'When we pray, we speak to God,
But when we read, God speaks to us.'*
– St Jerome



'Publish this work as it is... whoever reads it will understand...'
– Pope Pius XII

EDITORIAL

Dear Maria Valtorta Readers,

On Tuesday, 12 October, it was the 60th Anniversary of Maria Valtorta's death, and MV Readers Worldwide have responded by sharing letters and passages that reflect their love of these Works which is a beautiful lead up to Christmas. This edition shows that Maria's writings have reached more than 'a single soul' as stated in **Maria Valtorta's Mission. The Bulletin** consists of a series of personal letters from our Readers while **The Supplement** consists of selected passages from Readers worldwide.

Growing in faith,

Catherine Loft (catherine@valtorta.org.au)

MARIA VALTORTA'S MISSION

Jesus says: 'Do you know what you are doing by writing? My Will. The will for the mission I want you to perform. Even if a single soul, one alone, were to find the way through this effort of yours willed by Me, the exertion, which to human sight seems inhuman, would be justified.'
(*Notebooks 1943*, p. 229)

NEWS FROM THE MV FOUNDATION IN ITALY

A momentous event in our times: 12 October, 2021

(Taken from Fr. Ernesto Zucchini's article in the **Foundation of Maria Valtorta** newsletter n. 12/21)
On Tuesday, 12 October 2021, the Archbishop of Lucca, His Excellency Monsignor Paolo Giulietti, concelebrated the Holy Mass for Maria Valtorta with seven priests and a permanent deacon in front of a church filled with the faithful in the parish of Sant'Andrea in Viareggio. (See image above.)[...] This event has monumental significance because never before, in the sixty years since her death, has an Archbishop of Lucca publicly celebrated Holy Mass for Maria Valtorta; and in addition, in his own city of Viareggio. Perhaps a combination of factors had so far prevented such an event: ill-informed clerics, anti-clericals of various types, enemies of the faith in Christ, prejudiced atheists, and devout but imprudent people, all of whom may have led others to believe that even simply praying publicly for her was out of place. We acknowledge Msgr. Giulietti who accepted with benevolence that Maria Valtorta and, of course, her monumental writings may be known in his Diocese and under his direct authority!

However, this event does not mean that a successful outcome has been obtained. A single - but fundamental door - has publicly opened because only the Diocese can, and must, decide on Maria Valtorta. We repeat that it has not yet obtained any of those approvals so desired and invoked by Maria but this sought-after yet unexpected opening can be seen as a happy omen: that the true path for the process of verifying the heroic virtues of Maria Valtorta can finally begin, and then end in the best way possible, until she is fully accepted by the Holy Church as a model to imitate, and to ask for her intercession publicly. The door has opened. Now those who want to, can get busy so that the longed-for goal can be reached: studying, discovering, making known, publishing and praying, praying, praying, are the activities that await all the defenders and devotees of Maria Valtorta.

Here is the Mass in Italian (48 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCUIfzEhoRY>

This is the prayer for the 60th anniversary given by the Centro Editoriale Valtortiano (the MV Foundation in Italy) to ask God for the ecclesial recognition of the virtues and work of Maria Valtorta.

O God, infinite and eternal Mercy,
Who, in Maria Valtorta, your humble creature,
You manifested the wonders of Your love,
glorify this daughter of Yours
who agreed to join the passion of Your Son
with total consummation until the end,
in a bed of pain.
O Lord of inexhaustible goodness,
let the life example of Your handmaid,
her heroic testimony,
and her perseverance to the point of her total gift,
convert the hearts of sinners,
kindle the love of the lukewarm,
and let charity flare up in everyone.
O Lord, who have united with Christ, Man-God,
as crucified bride, Maria Valtorta,
let the holy Church
recognise her virtues and her mission,
and offer it to all the faithful as a model to imitate
and ask for Your intercession.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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60th ANNIVERSARY LETTERS

I cannot recall the exact booklet found in my 40-something son's library at our remote family farm property, where he went to live to abandon his city career as civil-industrial engineer for the silence of our farm [working as a] full-time owner of many hives. Over summer, I would drive an hour and a half into the country to spend time with him – and had heard Santa Ana's holy day was to come a few days later on 26 July. Having been born an observant Anglican in the US, marrying a Chilean Catholic and moving to Santiago's very Catholic culture offered an extraordinarily different life, one thing of which turned out to be consuming Maria Valtorta - eventually reading the 10 volumes in Spanish, four times. Consumed.

Knowing that my son's library was entirely spiritual, I asked him if he could loan me a book on Jesus' grandmother, Santa Ana. Eventually, he handed me five little books, most of which were less than 100 pages - and were from a series by 'Foyers de Charite' (Houses of Charity), a group of missionaries approved by Rome. Their condensed booklets achieve a lyrical adventure of great depth & beauty – and as I turned the last page with utmost sadness, I began it again and then three times more. Maria Valtorta's name finally appeared from behind the small print. 'Foyers de Charite' had done good work introducing *The Poem*: also San Jose, San Juan Bautista, Maria Magdalena, Judas Iscariote. And I devoured them all many times. Then I was determined to find more 'by that author' back in Santiago. Our parish bookshop suggested the American nuns who taught at the parish school - then finally trying the bookstores in the city. After phoning every single bookstore, the same parish storeowner suggested the school for poor girls, an hour towards the edge of Santiago. A treasure trove! All ten volumes of *The Poem*, *Notebooks* & more. I was so thrilled that I selected another set to be delivered to the parish library in the farm town. *The Poem* volumes are translations from the Italian, each about 425 pages, which transported me, as had the little booklets. Others would have to know them. MANY others. My son who lived at the farm, in turn, has also read them four times. Sadly, my other three sons have not been as receptive.

This may seem like a rambling but it is because the condensed booklets were so extraordinary and unexpected...

A Reader in Santiago, Chile

I was attending Sunday morning Mass in the suburbs of Atlanta, Georgia, USA in the early 90's. After mass, a group of nuns (that I believe were from Canada), had setup some folding tables and were having a book sale. I had already wandered through all the tables without anything really catching my eye, when I overheard a conversation between an older woman and one of the nuns.

'What are these Maria Valtorta books about?' she asked. 'They make the Gospels come alive for me!' the young nun responded.

That was all I needed to hear and bought one of the books. I've been reading her works continuously ever since. So much solace comes to me through her writings, and lessons learned, or at least sometimes learned, and remembered. I'm always amazed at the thought that Maria Valtorta was actually alive during much of my youth.

A Reader in Boone, North Carolina, USA

I read *The Poem of the Man-God* at the end of my day so that Maria's descriptions fill my last thoughts before I sleep. I'm particularly fond of Jesus' Hidden Life and the Meeting of the Shepherds, just to name a couple. When Jesus meets Judas, my heart sinks ... For me the *Poem of the Man-God* emanates pure Love and gives one much to ponder. Oh, if only it were more widely read.

A Reader in New Zealand

I started reading *The Poem of the Man God* in 1988 and have been reading it, and all her other published writings, ever since, almost on a daily basis. I feel myself extremely fortunate and blessed to have been introduced to the Works so long ago now. They have become a mainstay of my spiritual life along with Mass and the Eucharist. I have a strong conviction on their authenticity despite the Church being seemingly tardy in openly supporting these revelations to help the faith in this increasingly faithless era. No human could concoct such a work. The Works have brought me much closer to Jesus, Mary, and the Trinity, particularly the Holy Spirit whom I had always felt I knew little of and felt I wasn't close to. I have found that when I am down, reading a section or two will lift me up, and when I am feeling good, it elevates me further. These Works as a whole also give a great insight into the key persons and personalities in Jesus' preaching days, such as Peter, John, James and particularly Judas, along with Lazarus, Joseph and Nicodemus etc., and this is helpful in giving more context to the Gospels. The full explanation given by our Lord of His teaching, expands on the Gospels and brings us right to the heart of His message. These things are an immense gift from our Lord to help us in our faith. The works certainly do that. It is my intention to continue a daily reading of the works while I can. Every time I reread them, I pick up much more than I did the time before.

A Reader in Mount Lawley, Western Australia

I discovered [the writings of another mystic] mid-2019 just before I heard of Maria Valtorta. I read [the] whole book and I believed it was Jesus immediately - that this was a divine working. I couldn't discuss it with anyone - I didn't know there were prayer groups [connected to this mystic] around the country going on so I set it aside. Then I heard of Maria Valtorta's writings from a contributor to the EWTN Catholic T.V. named Fr. Mitch Pacwa – who was putting down all mystics including Maria Valtorta. I just had to check out this Maria, and on Amazon, I saw the whole five-volume set and all her writings. If you thought I was curious, you'd be putting it mildly. I had to get hold of these books and I did. I started to read them and they blew my mind. I wished they would never end. These books are a big reason why I became Catholic. I had been seeking Jesus but it was more of a historical Jesus I was reading about by bible scholars. [On the other hand, *The Poem*] was like Jesus bursting through the pages saying to me, 'This is who I am, lady'. Hahaha. Wow, sometimes I still can't believe it.

A Reader in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

In the late 1990s, I was approached by a Group from Sydney to present a talk during their Marian Retreat here in Canberra. Upon reading their Talk Guide, I informed them that they needed to get someone else, for I found it hard to believe that Mary was still a virgin after giving birth to Christ and that the Bible mentioned that Jesus was

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informed that His Mother and 'brothers' had arrived. The Group lent me *The Poem of the Man-God* Volume 1, and asked me just to read from the start and up to the Chapter of the Birth of Christ. After doing so, I informed them that I would go ahead and present a Talk at the Retreat. When it was over, I felt that *The Poem* belonged to me; so I paid for and bought the complete second-hand set, and asked them to buy a new set. Up to this day, I am still reading and re-reading *The Poem*, for it has taught me to be forgiving and patient in dealing with people, which is otherwise hard to do, when one feels like walking with Christ and having an intimate relationship with Him. I bought another set that I sent overseas to my family and friends to read and hopefully get to know Christ better.

A Reader in Canberra, Australia

Someone told me about *The Poem* back in the 1990s. A mystic received revelations from God. I have always been somewhat suspicious, so when I began reading Volume 1, it took a while for me to accept the writings as real. Probably when Jesus began his ministry was the time when I was totally convinced. I then read Volumes 2 & 3, and then Maria's *Autobiography*. I loved *The Poem* but I did not like the Maria that was portrayed in the *Autobiography*. Why? She was too wussy! Just like Albert Facey in *A Fortunate Life*. It annoyed me that he never lost his temper with people who were not at all nice to him. I had to wait for Volume 4 as it had not been translated, and then years more before Volume 5 came out. I was just so hungry! I totally believed. I totally fell in love with Jesus, Mary and all. It changed my life and I began to see the many times that I had been protected in my life. In 2004, my husband and I went on a pilgrimage to Italy. But before Holy Italy, we indulged in Holiday Italy for 10 days. During that time, I *had* to visit Maria in Florence to personally thank her for all the time she spent writing and the knowledge I gained.

My first run through the five volumes was fairly quick, as I was anxious to find out all the interactions in the story. The second and subsequent readings enabled me to read the descriptions Maria gave - i.e. the diamonds glistening in the trees. I have seen them since and it is a great description. I have been able to interest some people into reading it, and I have my books out on loan often. But not many persevere. Back years ago, when I first wrote to David, it was to say that for me 'the story of the New Testament in the Bible is black and white. Valtorta has richly coloured it. I thank Jesus for Maria Valtorta - may she be named Venerable soon, then the anti-Valtorta people may be silenced. Interestingly enough in our area, we used to have 'Days of Reflection' and it so happened that Fr Mitch Pacwa was visiting W.A. and was the guest speaker. Well before EWTN ever did, I took every opportunity to mention *The Poem* but Father Mitch let loose vitriol against it **but he had not read it!** He was reacting to what had been told to him. He mentioned [two points], and his argument was that this would not have happened. I went home, found it, and it was taken out of context. I did not bother looking for the other error he pointed out. With so many pages of writing, it amused me to think that there were [only] two 'mistakes'. I feel sad for the people who have not discovered these wonderful books. They too would fall in love with Love.

A Reader in Northam, Western Australia

I've been a reader of Maria Valtorta for so long - since my early 20s (I am now 86). I was first introduced by a Community called *The Holy Spirit of Freedom*. They were Workers with street Kids. ... I've read all her books, I believe. More than beautiful. I've read *The Poem* three times and then gave them away, and now I sort of regret it. I can't give a special passage because there are too many of them, and as I say, I now haven't got the books.

A Reader in Victoria, Australia

I came back yesterday from Italy where I visited Maria Valtorta's grave last Thursday. Opening your September Bulletin a few minutes ago, I see the picture of the grave. By the way, it is a bit strange that Maria Valtorta is not mentioned anywhere in the Basilica in Florence or in front of the entry where the map is. You have to ask one of the Servites of Mary, and he has to open several doors for you. Then you cross an empty cloister and there she is in one of the chapels - isolated, lonely, forgotten it seems. If she were still in the Viareggio cemetery, she would have more visitors, I suppose. It's a bit sad.

I have sent you two photos: one of MV's grave and the other of the Annunciation painting above one of the altars about which Maria Valtorta said that it is the most realistic portrait of our Holy Mother.

A Reader in France

A sister of the order of the Notre Dames told me about *The Poem of the Man God*. That simple introduction changed my life and relationship with my Lord forever. I thank God often for allowing me to know of this intimate work, providing a way for me to know Jesus in a very intimate way that I could never imagine. I reread the five books and I am always touched with a new awareness of the life of Jesus. The lessons from Mary and Jesus in these books is very enlightening, almost like having a spiritual director to guide me. In this pandemic time, the Valtorta Readers Group has been a Godsend. There are not very many people to share this work with where I live. I have one sister who also appreciates these books, but otherwise I am alone, so the Valtorta Readers Group touches me immensely. Thanks to Valtorta, I have details and great joy concerning Mary's nativity. The details of nature's response to this great gift along with the family details adds such richness to my relationship with Mary. Bless you and the MV Readers Group Celebration to all on this great day!

A Reader in Iowa, USA

I took some time to get into the works of Maria Valtorta and I was in my sixties before the various prods I had been given by various people (the work of the Holy Spirit, no doubt) came to fruition and I accepted a small booklet on the Shepherds from [a priest] and read it. I eventually contacted our NZ agent, Mrs Gwen Storey, and with her encouragement, I started reading *The Poem of the Man-God*. It was not love at first sight but with the help of the map, I worked through Volume One and I was hooked. I have recently been reading a book by the American apologist, Karl Keating, written in 1988. It is called '*Catholicism and Fundamentalism*' and one passage struck me as being quite relevant.

'There is a tendency for religion to seem dry. Scholastic in the bad sense. This is easily overcome if one has a deep appreciation of the life of Christ. Help is needed to see the larger picture and there are several books that do a fine job in that.' For me, that book is *The Poem of the Man-*

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God. I do some cycle-touring in our beautiful country and **The Poem** is a wonderful companion beside a river or lake, beside the mountains or in my tent at night... as I travel on the West Coast of the South Island of NZ... **The Poem of the Man God** is a wonderful treasure. Thank you so much Maria Valtorta.

A Reader in Punakaiki, New Zealand

I was born in Italy in the 50s but came to Australia to work for a few years in the 80s only to return to Italy, marry and move to Belgium. Despite the baggage-weight restrictions, my Italian **Il Poema dell'Uomo Dio** always travelled with me. I was able to share these volumes with my Italian relatives in Australia who read them with pleasure. At times, what would start as a friendly game of cards each evening, which was customary for us, would be interrupted by a discussion on what we had read in Valtorta's Works while drinking a short black espresso, and those who had not read them would enjoy listening too. In these writings, Jesus, Mary and so many others were brought to life. I have shared these with my wife over the years but I always hope that my children and grandchildren will read them too one day.

A Reader in Genk, Belgium

It all began about 40 years ago when I was just browsing through all the magazines and booklets in a church foyer, and standing out was a rather graphic picture of the crucified Jesus on the front cover of a booklet entitled, **The Passion, Death And Resurrection of Jesus Christ** as related to Maria Valtorta. While I read the 64 pages with great interest, nothing major happened then but I believe that the seed was then planted within my soul.

Many more years rolled by and somehow by a twist of fate, I went to a MV & her Writings day conference. At the end of that day, I walked away with the 10 volumes of her writings, **The Gospel As Revealed To Me**, and I made a commitment, there and then, to read a few pages every day of my life until Jesus calls me home.

So after 10 years now, I am nearly up to my third read and by honouring the commitment I made all those years ago, I have truly found that the Bible Gospel writings really do come alive and I can clearly see Jesus, His mother Mary and all the other people in MV writings as real people that I can relate to. MV writings truly are Windows to the life and times of the greatest person, Jesus, who ever lived and died on planet earth, and they are just another example of God's gracious gift to us, his children.

A Reader in Melbourne, Australia.

It was 1990, and an American priest was in Australia conducting a series of talks. He was an inspiring speaker, and his talks were sprinkled with much humour. One of his talks was on 'forgiveness'. A little way into this talk he opened the booklet, **'The Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ** as related to Maria Valtorta,' and he told the congregation, "I'd now like to read a little from this booklet. I know, there are some of you saying, 'Oh Father, please don't read', but what I'm about to read is tied up with forgiveness'." He went on to explain that Maria Valtorta was a little Italian lady who received visions from Our Lord, and that these were part of her writings. This was the very first time I had heard Maria's name. Father then spent the next 20 minutes reading certain parts of the booklet. The audience was

engaged. What he was reading was powerful stuff. You could've heard a pin drop. He then closed the booklet and said to the congregation, "That is what forgiveness is all about. We must forgive. If we don't forgive, we are saying to Jesus, 'You might as well come down from that Cross because Your passion was a mistake.'" By the end of the talk, we were all very grateful that Father had decided to share some of that booklet with us. As providence would have it, within the year, I somehow heard about David Murray's "Valtortling" trips up to Sydney, and soon I would become a regular at these meetings. My mother bought the set of **'Poem of the Man-God'**, and our devotion took off from there.

A Reader in NSW, Australia

My mother is a very devout Catholic and I wanted to buy her a religious book in her native Italian for her birthday. I went to a Catholic bookshop in Auburn here in Melbourne on a Saturday, and as I browsed, an assistant was trying to be helpful. She suggested the Italian and original edition of **Il Poema dell'Uomo Dio** which consisted of 10 volumes. She could see I was not comfortable making a huge purchase on an unknown writer, especially with a title that had the word, **Poem** in it, which gave me the wrong impression. So she suggested **The Virgin Mary in the writings of Maria Valtorta** in Italian by Roschini for mum. She also recommended that I read the **Passion, Death and Resurrection** booklet in English. When I asked her what these writings were about, she said she could neither explain them adequately nor do them justice but when I read it, I would understand. So I did, and after the weekend, I went back and bought the whole set of **The Poem** in English. I truly understood. What absolute joy. I wanted to meet more and more kindred spirits so after the Auburn shop closed down, I found Fr. Joe Maher's shop in Hampton who had published these **Passion** booklets and he put me onto David and Patrick, through whom a Maria Valtorta monthly readers' bookclub was started and, many years after that, David passed the baton on to me. Thanks to this apostolate, I have since been in contact with so many people in Australia and worldwide, and the Maria Valtorta family has grown immensely. All we are waiting for now is for our Guest of Honour for this 60th anniversary celebration, **Maria Valtorta**, to be given her earthly Award - recognition, respect and a place of honour. Hopefully, His Excellency Monsignor Paolo Giulietti will successfully set the wheels in motion. **[Catherine in Melbourne, Australia as requested by a Reader]**

† REST IN PEACE †

Please pray for the soul of

Peter Podgorczyk

Husband of Lynne, both of whom are devout MV Readers

Maria Valtorta Readers' Group

This group is an online non-profit organisation, which retails publications of Maria Valtorta's writings and offers other supporting materials to its members and to other interested persons. Newsletters are sent every three months. A subscription of \$10.00 per year is requested for hardcopies within Australia (no charge for priests and religious). Email copies of the bulletins, supplements and catalogue are free and are also available online at our website. [The material in this publication is not intended to represent the opinion of the Church. The editor affirms submission to the official judgment of the Church regarding the information contained herein.]