

MARIA VALTORTA READERS GROUP

Postal address: 162 Burke Road, Glen Iris, Victoria, 3146 Australia
Phone: (03) 9885 9710 E-mail: catherine @valtorta.org.au Website: http://www.valtorta.org.au



MARIA VALTORTA READERS' GROUP

BULLETIN No. 81 – MARCH 2016

'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,
As mentioned in the last Bulletin, a weekend Conference is being planned in October for the 55th anniversary of Maria Valtorta's death.

We have had a positive response to the Conference itself from several people in Melbourne, with ten people from interstate and one from overseas already expressing their intention to attend. I know that more people will respond once they have the details, and all of this will be finalised in the June Bulletin. The date is 22-23 October 2016. However, the venue is yet to be decided because at our last Maria Valtorta Readers' Group meeting, the idea was proposed that if the numbers coming from overseas and interstate were manageable, we may be able to create a more meaningful experience if these guests could be housed for the weekend with those locals who are also attending. We are fleshing out this idea, which is why finalising a venue and costs is on hold until 1st June, and why we need some feedback from you. Please send the following information if you think you will be attending.

Interstate and overseas visitors: From which state or country are you coming? Do you need accommodation (or will you be staying with family/friends)? Would you prefer to be billeted with a person for the few days? Would you prefer to stay at a venue (for privacy reasons or because you intend to stay in Melbourne longer)?

Melbourne residents: Are you able to billet a person from Friday – Monday? Are you available to pick someone up from and/or drop someone off at the airport? Are you able to pick someone up from an address/motel and/or drive someone back to that address from the venue on one or both days?

We understand that until details are finalised in the June Bulletin, you cannot commit, but a tentative indication would be appreciated as soon as possible. David Murray has kindly volunteered to be in charge of the logistics so please contact him at your earliest convenience by email david@valtorta.org.au or call him within Australia on (03) 9879 7853 or international calls +61 3 9879 7853

Supplement No. 81: This edition continues with part two of Jesus & His shepherds with excerpts during the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus, and after His Ascension. Wishing you all a holy and blessed Easter in the footsteps of the shepherds.
Growing in faith,
Catherine Loft (catherine@valtorta.org.au)

DAVID'S JOURNEY - CONTINUING ITS BEGINNINGS...

Dear Maria Valtorta Readers,

I previously spoke about a remarkable clarification I received, concerning an attack made to me about the authenticity of Maria Valtorta's *The Poem of the Man-God*, and a "word of knowledge" glimpse I was given, concerning a future role I was to play in my journey with her revelations.

From my early compilations of these writings on various themes (which I will speak about in a later bulletin), I undertook a prayerful trip to Italy to seek permission from the publishers (who owned the copyright), to publish extracts on the (then) 3 Rosaries. I returned to Australia with such permission being denied, but with two other "gifts" in its place: a wonderful testimony to Maria's writings by John Haffert, an American editor of *Soul* magazine – which was included in the first two issues of the Readers' Group's bulletin; and a miraculous rose petal with the imprint of the face of the crucified Jesus – which has been on the cover of each of the bulletins sent to Readers' Group members in the twenty years since. (If it's not God's Will to give us what we ask for, He often gives us something better in its place. Within twelve or so months after my return from Italy, the publishers of *The Poem* produced a compilation of extracts on the Rosaries themselves – reaching a much greater readership than I could possibly have managed. I'd like to think my visit had prompted them to do this.)

It was now early in 1996, and after conducting a couple of information talks in Melbourne, I thought of going "on the road" to speak about my discoveries with Maria's writings. I borrowed a mailing list from my friend Christine Draga, and sent out a proposal, including a copy of the miraculous rose petal with its story. I was delighted to receive invitations to speak to twelve groups in New South Wales and Queensland.

Having recently retired from lecturing in surveying and town planning at a university here in Melbourne, this was a very different audience for me, and I wondered if I was up to it. While in this frame of mind, I just "happened" to discover a passage in a little box of Bible verses on my fridge, which read: "*My face shall go before thee, and I will give you rest.*"

My journey took a fortnight, was restful and exciting. The reception from the groups I met with were very positive, and the first seeds were sown for numerous "valtortling" journeys throughout Australia and to a number of countries in five continents over the following years. What a privilege this has been, and what wonderful challenges I was able to undertake, which have constantly reinforced my dedication to Maria Valtorta's writings!

At the risk of omitting many memorable incidents and encounters with committed and prospective Valtorta readers, here begins

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just a sprinkling of events I've experienced, during these eighteen blessed years "valtortling on the road" with Maria Valtorta:

While traveling to different places, I've almost always stayed with, and been looked after by a Valtorta reader – very often whose spouse was less than interested, but who discovered that I didn't have two heads.

During the conferences I have spoken at, many Valtorta readers were glad to share their experiences with other Valtorta lovers for the first time, as they were living in towns without other Valtorta readers.

I once gave a talk in Darwin, in the chapel of a convent of Mother Theresa sisters, to the tabernacle with the words alongside: "I thirst".

In 2002 in New Zealand, driving late at night on a country road after a talk in a certain town, I remarked to myself: "I haven't seen any kangaroos here tonight." (Aussies and Kiwis would see the funny side of this.)

After a visit to my friend, Ed Ford in Phoenix, Arizona, and while half-dozing on a flight to Atlanta, Georgia, I noticed that the plane's engine had stopped suddenly, and I thought "how can the plane's engines stop in mid-air?" I looked out the window and discovered that the plane was still on the tarmac in Phoenix.

Perhaps I will end it here and I will continue this story in the next bulletin.

May God bless and keep you all.

David Murray (david@valtorta.org.au)

CATHERINE'S CLASSROOM

Dear Valtorta Readers,

It always bothered me that Protestants knew their Bible so well and Catholics did not. They are able to quote you chapter and verse, and they really keep those words close to their hearts. I admire them for their efforts to utilize the Bible to the fullest. Therefore, I started to wonder if, perhaps, I should start my RE lessons with an occasional Bible quote so that my students would grow in their familiarity of the Bible too, and see how we are guided by God to lead our lives.

However, I did not want to rush into this because the Church is wise, and if teaching specific Bible verses is not part of the religious program studied at school, then there must be a reason. I thought about it more and I noticed the same thing was happening at Mass. The selected Mass readings are never an isolated quote, nor does the priest ever give his homily on a random, isolated verse. So it makes sense that the school RE text books do not teach quotes in isolation either.

However, I continued to wonder about this, until recently, when I came across an explanation. It made so much sense, but I still wanted to put it to the test.

I was informed that as Catholics, we are supposed to read the Bible **in context**, so reflecting on a quote given to us in isolation could result in ambiguity or a misinterpretation. That is why a thematic index of quotes from the Bible is not part of the RE program for study, nor do our priests pick an isolated quote for reflection in their homily. A priest will always refer to one or more readings, and discuss what is said **in context**. That is the key phrase – **in context**. In its wisdom, the Catholic Church knows this and that is why, no matter which Catholic Mass you go to, the interpretation will always be the same as what was taught in the seminary. However, this is not always the case with other faiths where they can interpret and reflect on the Bible on their own.

It made so much sense to me...but I still wanted to put it to the test. I even had a control group.

At the beginning of one class, I wrote my favourite Bible quote on the board – Do not worry about tomorrow, let the day's own troubles be sufficient for the day (Matthew 6:34).

The class really responded well to this, but you can begin to imagine some of the misguided responses I got about living for the day or for the moment, no need to save because God would take care of everything, and no need to make plans for the future. There were others whose responses were not quite as literal, but they were too varied, and it was still not what Jesus necessarily meant in context.

With the other class, I read them the whole Bible passage, I pointed out the verse that I loved and then I asked them what they understood by this. The responses were far more accurate and more clearly understood because it was given in context. In fact, they liked that quote so much that I then read them the passage from Maria's works (*the Poem* Vol. 2 p.162, *the Gospel* Vol.3 p.119) which was even more clear and with no room for inconsistency or ambiguity. (By the way, I did rectify the situation with the other class too)

So what I have now started to do is begin the class with my seniors by reading a short passage, either from a Sunday or weekday Mass, which I try to plant in their hearts. They may not always remember chapter and verse, but they will remember its meaning in context.

So we really should be grateful to all those who have spent so much time studying the Faith and, in turn, teach the Faith to people of all ages according to the Magisterium of the Church. We should also pray that our priests will help us reflect more accurately on the liturgy at Mass so that we can bring that understanding to those around us.

I planted the seed.

Catherine (catherine@valtorta.org.au)

A READER'S CHOICE

Dear Readers,

I selected this passage where the pious women go to the sepulchre after the death of Jesus because when I read it **this time**, I was a little amused but very impressed by these clever women disciples who strategically planned their every move in an attempt to not arouse suspicion or be turned away at the Gate. Mary Magdalene may have been the first to arrive at the tomb, but the plan allowed for them all to get there sooner or later.

Madeleine Hunt. Mont Albert. Victoria

"The women, in the meanwhile, after leaving the house are walking close to the wall, shadows in the shade. They are silent for some time, all muffled up and frightened in so much silence and solitude. Then, recovering confidence seeing that the town is completely calm, they group and dare to speak.

« Will the Gates be already open? » asks Susanna.

« Certainly. Look over there at the first market-gardener who is going in with vegetables. He is going to the market » replies Salome.

« Will they say anything to us? » asks Susanna again.

« Who? » inquires the Magdalene.

« The soldiers, at the Judicial Gate. There... only few people are going in and even fewer are coming out... We shall rouse suspicion... »

« So? They will look at us. They will see five women going towards the country. We could be also people who, after celebrating Passover, are going back to their villages. »

« But... In order not to attract the attention of any malicious person, why do we not go out by another Gate and then we can go round along the walls?... »

« We would go the long way round. »

« But we shall be safer. Let us take the Gate of the Water... »

« Oh! Salome! If I were you, I should choose the Eastern Gate! You would have to go a longer way round! We must make haste and go back soon. » It is the Magdalene who is so resolute.

« Then [take] another one, but not the Judicial Gate. Be good... » they all beg her.

« All right. Well, since that is what you want, let us call on Johanna. She begged me to let her know. If we had gone

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straight there, we could have done without seeing her. But since you want to go a longer way round, let us call on her... »

« Oh! yes. Also because of the guards placed there... She is well known and respected... »

« I think we should call also on Joseph of Arimathea. He is the owner of the place. »

« Why not! To avoid attracting people's attention, we will form a procession! What a timid sister I have! Rather, do you know what, Martha? Let us do this. I will go ahead and have a look. You will follow me with Johanna. I will stand in the middle of the road, should there be any danger, and you will see me. And we will come back. But I can assure you that the guards, seeing this, I thought of it (and she shows a purse full of money) will let us do everything. »

« We will tell Johanna as well. You are right. »

« Go then, and let me go. »

« Are you going all alone, Mary? I will come with you » says Martha, who is afraid for her sister.

« No. You will go with Mary of Alphaeus to Johanna's. Salome and Susanna will wait for you near the Gate, outside the walls. And then you will all come together along the main road. Goodbye. » And Mary Magdalene cuts other possible comments short, as she goes away quickly with her bag full of balms and her money in her breast.

She flies, so fast she goes along the road, which is becoming more delightful in the first pink shade of dawn. She goes in by the Judicial Gate, to be quicker. And no one stops her...

The others watch her go, then they turn their backs to the crossroads where they were, and they take another one, narrow and dark, which near the Sixtus opens out into a wider road, where there are some beautiful houses. They part again, Salome and Susanna proceed along the road, while Martha and Mary of Alphaeus knock at the iron door and show themselves at the little window (judas-hole) half opened by the porter.

They enter and go to Johanna, who already up and all dressed in a very dark violet garment that makes her look even paler, is preparing some oils with her nurse and a maidservant.

« Have you come? May God reward you. But, if you had not come, I should have gone by myself... To find comfort... Because many things have remained upset after that dreadful day. And, in order not to feel alone, I must go against that Stone and knock and say: "Master, I am poor Johanna... Do not leave me alone, You, too..." » Johanna weeps silently but with deep desolation, while Esther, her nurse, makes large indecipherable gestures behind the back of her mistress, while putting a mantle on her.

« I am going, Esther. »

« May God comfort you! »

They leave the mansion house to join their companions. It is at this moment that the short but strong earthquake takes place, creating a panic again in the people of Jerusalem, still terrorised by the events of Friday. The three women retrace their steps precipitately, and they remain in the large hall, among maidservants and servants who are howling and imploring the Lord, fearing new shocks...

... The Magdalene, instead, is just on the border of the path that takes one to the kitchen garden of Joseph of Arimathea, when she is caught in the powerful and also harmonious roar of this heavenly sign, while, in the faint rosy light of dawn, that is advancing in the sky, where to the west a persistent star still resists, and that makes fair the so far greenish light, a very bright light appears and descends like and incandescent wonderful globe, cutting the calm air in a zigzag course.

Mary of Magdala is almost grazed and thrown on the ground by it. She bends for a moment whispering: « My Lord! » and then she straightens up like a stalk after the wind has passed by, and she runs towards the kitchen garden even faster.

She enters it quickly, and goes towards the sepulchre in the rock as fast as a bird that is chased and is looking for its nest. But, no matter how fast she runs, she cannot be there when the heavenly meteor acts as a lever and as a flame on the seal of

lime, placed as a reinforcement for the heavy stone, or when with the final crash the stone door collapses, causing such a shake that joins the one of the earthquake, which, although of a short duration, is so violent that it knocks the guards down as if they were dead.

When Mary arrives, she sees the useless jailors of the Triumpher thrown on the ground like a sheaf of mown corn. Mary Magdalene does not associate the earthquake with Resurrection. But looking at the spectacle, she thinks it is a punishment of God for the desecrators of Jesus' Sepulchre, and she falls on her knees saying: « Alas! They have stolen Him! » She is really disconsolate and weeps like a girl who has come, being sure that she would find her father whom she was looking for, and instead finds the house empty...

... In the meantime, Susanna and Salome, after leaving their companions and reaching the walls, are caught in the earthquake. Frightened, they take shelter under a tree and remain there, torn between their desire to go to the Sepulchre or to run to Johanna's. But love overcomes fear and they go towards the Sepulchre.

They are still frightened when they enter the garden and see the senseless guards...they see a bright light come out of the open Sepulchre...

... The third group, that of Johanna, Mary of Alphaeus and Martha, when they see that nothing new is happening, decides to go where their companions are certainly waiting for them. They go out into the streets, where by now there are frightened people, who comment on the new earthquake connecting it with the event of Friday, and see also things which do not exist.

« It is better if they are all frightened! The guards may be so as well and will raise no objection » says Mary of Alphaeus. And they walk fast towards the walls.

But while they are going there, Peter and John, followed by the Magdalene, have arrived at the garden. And John, who runs faster, is the first to arrive at the Sepulchre. The guards are no longer there. Neither is the angel there any more.

John, timid and sorrowful, kneels down at the open entrance to venerate and get some indication from the things he sees. But he only sees, heaped on the floor, the linen cloths placed on the Shroud.

(*The Poem* Vol. 5 pp. 703ff, *the Gospel* Vol 10 pp. 242ff)

STEPHEN'S UPDATE

Dear Valtorta Readers,

There are a number of exciting updates! Our website has a brand new page entitled "An Analysis and Refutation of All the Top Anti-Valtorta Articles". You can access it in the navbar on the left-hand side of our website. This page provides information and links to articles that (1) refute all the most frequently-read anti-Valtorta articles, (2) shows how Valtorta's works are orthodox and are free of error in faith and morals, and (3) shows why Valtorta's works cannot any longer be considered forbidden to Catholics and why every Catholic is free to read them. This is a great page to refer people to who have any doubts about the legitimacy of reading Maria Valtorta's writings or who have heard negative things about her or her writings from anti-Valtorta articles or people.

On the same page, you will also see links to three new refutations I wrote against anti-Valtorta articles composed by Anselmo de la Cruz (a Spanish-speaking blogger). Spanish translations of my refutations are currently being prepared and will be published once they are completed so that they can be made available to Spanish-speaking Catholics who may be interested.

I have another very important update: If you might recall, in our December 2014 bulletin, we asked for anyone interested in helping to translate a very important book by Jean-François Lavère to contact us. This book is entitled *L'énigme Valtorta, Une Vie de Jésus Romancée?* (*The Valtorta Enigma, a Fictionalized Life of Jesus?*). Jean-François Lavère, a professional engineer, has been studying the works of Maria Valtorta for 25

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years. Convinced that the historicity of Maria Valtorta's work would either prove itself, or show itself to be wrong, he undertook a systematic study of thousands of details provided in her work. He has methodically identified, over the years, more than 10,000 pieces of data in her writings in fields as diverse as the arts, astronomy, flora and fauna, ethnology, geography, geology, history and geopolitical science, technology, metrology, religions, social sciences, etc., and he has shown how these details correspond to authoritative sources with remarkable accuracy. Bishop Johanan-Mariam Cazenave, the Secretary of the Syrian-French Synod, wrote a preface for his book in February 2012, which is viewable online here (this is an English translation of his preface):

http://www.bardstown.com/~brchrys/The_Valtorta_Enigma_Preface.pdf

Jean-François Lavère released this work in June 2012. Marie-Claude, a very generous Maria Valtorta Readers' Group member, provided the first baseline translation and another Valtorta fan will be perfecting her translation for the final publication, which is expected to be completed by the end of July of this year. Let us thank Marie-Claude and I hope you will all enjoy reading this highly anticipated book upon its release later this year!

Lastly, as usual, there is a new Summa & Encyclopedia e-book update (available for download from our website).

God bless you all!

Stephen (stephen@valtorta.org.au)

QUARTERLY SPECIALS

As Easter is a time of love, penance and prayer, the following items have been made available at special prices this quarter. Please contact us (via phone or e-mail) for **postage costs**. All items are listed in Australian dollars.

1. **The miraculous Rose Petal photo and its story** (\$1.00)
2. **The Story of Mary Magdalene booklet** 30p. (\$2.60)
3. **Audio: The Story of Mary Magdalene** CD 73 minutes (\$5.00)
4. **The Passion, Death & Resurrection of Jesus Christ.** 56p. (\$4.50)
5. **Maria Valtorta- Victim soul-Her saintly Life, Mission and Writings** 72p. (\$9.00)
6. **Audio CD: My Journey with Jesus.** David Murray's Story CD 50 minutes (\$4.50)
7. **The Poem of the Man-God** Vol 2 - used but like new. \$40.00
8. **The Poem of the Man-God** Vol 3 - used but like new \$40.00

We have a few of Maria Valtorta's works available in Italian. Please contact me for further information.

BOOK REVIEW

Dear Readers,

A new book that was released a few months ago is called **Quello che i Vangeli non dicono – le private rivelazioni a Maria Valtorta (What the Gospels do not say – private revelations to Maria Valtorta)** by Dr. Emilio Pisani, the director and publisher of the works of Maria Valtorta in Italy.

As this book is currently only available in Italian, I thought I would share another three questions which are interesting to contemplate.

The first is: Perché Gesù non volevano farsi pubblicità? (Why didn't Jesus want people to publicise what He did?)

Jesus performed many miracles and yet on seven occasions, He tells people not to tell anyone about it. Mind you, they did not always obey, but He did command them not to. Maria Valtorta informs us after the Resurrection and the Ascension, Mother Mary explains, in a conversation with Lazarus and Joseph of Arimathea, that Jesus was a

private person and the attention, the curiosity and the scrutiny that came with His miracles caused Him suffering.

The second is: E giusto dare agli ultimi la stessa paga dei primi? (Is it right to give the same pay to the workers who arrived last as to the first?)

Through Valtorta's writings it is understood that Jesus was referring to our salvation. God is just and we can all be saved whether we loved and accepted Him all our lives, a portion of our lives, or at the very end.

The third is: L'intricato avvicinarsi delle Donne al sepolcro (The intricate arrival of the Women at the sepulchre.)

All four evangelists report this event differently, but Maria's account validates and brings all four together. See this issue's **A READER'S CHOICE** which is apt for this season of Lent and Holy Week.

God bless,

Catherine (catherine@valtorta.org.au)

LETTERS

(From Australia unless otherwise stated)

Lovely to get the newsletter – what wonderful readings on the Shepherds visiting the Nativity of Jesus. Just great!"

LOUISE DOWMAN, FEILDING, NEW ZEALAND

I have just received the latest supplement and Bulletin No. 80 and have already read it eagerly. I think perhaps I may photocopy the writing "The Shepherds visit Jesus" and enclose it with the Christmas cards I send out for others to share too."

MADELEINE LIKOS, MAUNGATAPU, TAURANGA, NEW ZEALAND

I was introduced to Maria Valtorta and her works by a friend who has known of Valtorta for many years, and her works are very significant in her life.

As I began reading Valtorta's works, I wished I had known of her sooner. It has made my life spiritually richer.

THERESE CUMMO, VIRGINIA, USA

POSTAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Please note that annual payment for the hardcopy mailout subscriptions are now due. While postage stamps have gone up, I will keep the cost to \$12.00 for another 12 months. Method of Payment –

- personal cheque payable to: **CATHERINE LOFT** at the address above or
- direct deposit into the Commonwealth Bank BSB: 063353, Account No: 10171176

Your subscription is due if the box is ticked.

Maria Valtorta Readers' Group

This group is a non-profit organisation, which retails publications of Maria Valtorta's writings and offers other supporting materials to its members and to other interested persons. Bulletins are sent every 3 months. A subscription of \$12.00 per year is requested (a little extra if mailed overseas, and no charge for priests and religious). E-mail copies of the bulletins, supplements and catalogue are free and are also available online at our website.

The writings of Maria Valtorta are considered by many to be among the most wonderful gifts given by Jesus to His followers and would-be followers in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The Readers' Group has much material available which supports their authenticity as Private Revelation. If you receive just a fraction of the knowledge, understanding and inspiration from Maria's revelations on the lives of Jesus and Mary, as testified by our readers, you will be very blessed. May God inspire us all on our journey to holiness.

[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.]