

MARIA VALTORTA READERS GROUP

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BULLETIN No.103-SEPTEMBER 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

PRAYING WITH MARIA VALTORTA

(To the Holy Spirit) May the light of divine Grace descend upon us and bring us the wisdom to understand what is really necessary and make us capable of asking for it. May it descend to lighten our hearts which have lost the science of Life and no longer know how to do much of anything, except commit sins. May it descend to teach us prayer and love.
(*Maria Valtorta Prayers*, p. 26)

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)

EDITORIAL

Dear Maria Valtorta Readers,

Bulletin: It is with great disappointment that the new lockdown and restrictions in Melbourne and in the other States and Territories in Australia are currently taking place again. All year, I had hoped and prayed that a little window of opportunity would present itself in October, where we could be assured of the **Maria Valtorta Annual Gathering**, especially this year which marks the 60th anniversary of her death. However, this is not to be the case due to recent events. Please refer to **60th ANNIVERSARY REQUEST** to see if the MV Readers Worldwide can help make our next edition truly memorable and worthy of Maria Valtorta.

Therefore, while remembering the anniversary of her death, I did a search and found an informative and beautiful video called **The Tomb of Maria Valtorta** which presents the journey of Maria Valtorta's remains. As I was watching it, I was drawn to the words and the melody of the Italian song being played in the background. The lyrics were interesting and the melody was very soothing. It was called **Gelsomino della Notte (Jasmine of the Night)**. At

the end of the video, I noted the information about this tune and the English translation of these lyrics that appeared on the screen. Music by Ivano Conti, Sung by Benedetta Amelio and **Words by Maria Valtorta**. I knew these words were about our mother, Mary, but I wondered in what context they were said and by whom. After reading the chapter in question, I was pleasantly surprised! Refer to the **Readers' Choice** column for this passage but in the meantime, here is the short video.(5:33)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otzJj3IQLYg>

As the month of the Holy Souls also falls in this quarter, let us remember to pray for the deceased. Here is a video link to the **Description of Purgatory** from the writings of Maria Valtorta (5:47)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C1calaw3-ME>

Supplement: The theme is the Holy Spirit which was inspired by a curious question asked by my students. Please refer to the **Catherine's Classroom** column before you read the Supplement so you will understand why these passages were chosen.

Growing in faith,

Catherine Loft (catherine@valtorta.org.au)

DAVID'S JOURNEY - CONTINUES

TWO OUTCOMES OF REMORSE

A search in *The Pilgrim's Guide To The Poem Of The Man God* (or *Where Is It? The Gospel As Revealed To Me* guide) reveals more than 50 references to the word "remorse" in the five (or ten volumes) of Valtorta's works. It is a word that permeates throughout Maria Valtorta's account of the lives of Jesus and Mary, and of all whom they encountered in their public lives.

(As the death of Jesus was fast approaching, both Simon Peter and Judas Iscariot were plagued by remorse – Peter for having denied Jesus, and Judas for having betrayed Him. How they each dealt with this provides a lesson for all of us...)

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Jesus is speaking:

'Consider Peter. He denied Me. Why? Not even he knew why. Was Peter a coward? No. My Peter was not cowardly. Facing the cohort and the guards of the Temple...he ran away, without the will to do so. Then he denied Me, without the will to do it. Later, he did remain and proceed on the bloody way of the Cross, on My Way, until he reached death on a cross. And then he bore witness to Me very efficiently, to the point of being killed because of his fearless faith. I defend My Peter. His bewilderment was the last one of his human nature. But his spiritual will was not present at that moment. Dulled by the weight of his humanity, it was asleep. When it awoke, it did not want to remain in sin, but it **wanted** to be perfect. I forgave him at once.

Judas did not **want**... He who is guilty, sees shadows of fear in everything. It is his conscience that creates them. Then Satan instigates such shadows, which might still bring a heart to repent, and turns them into horrible ghosts that lead to despair. And despair leads to the last crime: suicide... A useless sacrifice...

But he **did not want**. *Meditate on the power of free will, of which you are the absolute arbiters. Through it, you can have Heaven or Hell. Meditate on what persisting in sin means...*

(Poem, Vol. 5, pp. 580-1; Gospel, Vol. 10, pp. 87-8)

Jesus says to Peter, '[Remorse] is a torture, that is true. But it serves to pass to higher stages, both in good and in evil. In Judas of Kerioth, as he moved away from God, it brought about desperation and damnation. In you who have never come away from the closeness to God... it will cause a trustful repentance that will lead you to wisdom and justice...'

(Poem, Vol. 5, p.772; Gospel, Vol. 10, p.325)

May God bless and keep you all,
David Murray (david@valtorta.org.au)

CATHERINE'S CLASSROOM

We had been studying Rites of Passage (around the ages of 10-14) and had a closer look at one Catholic rite of passage – Confirmation. We tried to recall the preparation, the people who were there, the roles they played, the words of the bishop during the rite and the celebration afterwards. I asked the class to list the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit after which the question was asked if the Holy Spirit ever spoke audibly to anyone. After all, God spoke to many people such as Adam and Eve, Moses and others in the Old Testament, and His voice was heard when Jesus was being baptized, 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.' Equally, as Jesus was divine but also human, He spoke a great deal which is also documented. The class said that so far, everything they have learnt about the Holy Spirit suggests that He doesn't seem to have a Voice but

that He spoke **through** people such as Jesus, Mary and the prophets, and that the New Testament was written by people who were inspired by the Holy Spirit but never has He been quoted directly. I stopped to think about it but I kid you not, I didn't have a definitive answer to this and I told them I needed time to look into it.

How right the students were that in their learning along the way, and therefore their recall, the Holy Spirit was there but what He said was never highlighted or emphasised like God the Father and God the Son are. So, after some research, I pointed out that the bible documents that the Holy Spirit did speak through people but he also spoke to the apostles on His own on three occasions.

Firstly, He spoke to the church at Antioch to separate the ministry of Saul and Barnabas.

'While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them".' (Acts 13:2 RSV)

Secondly, there is also the account of the Holy Spirit forbidding Paul to go to Asia to preach the gospel.

'And they went through the region of Phry'gia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come opposite My'sia, they attempted to go into Bithyn'ia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; so, passing by My'sia, they went down to Tro'as.' (Acts 16:6-8 RSV)

Thirdly, Paul was told that things would happen to him if he went to Jerusalem.

'And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, bound in the Spirit, not knowing what shall befall me there; except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me.' (Acts 20:22-3)

It is still unclear if this was audible or through the senses but it was the Holy Spirit that communicated with them, after all, Jesus did promise that *'... the helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you everything. He will remind you of everything that I have ever told you.'* (John 14:26 RSV)

I then mentioned Maria Valtorta and that during her life, the Holy Spirit spoke to her in an audible way.

I read them the following words presented in the Supplement to satisfy their question.

I SPEAK WITHOUT WORDS

The Eternal Spirit says:

'I am Love. I do not have my own voice because my Voice is in the whole creation and beyond the creation. [...] I am in every word of Christ and flower on the lips of the Virgin. I purify the mouths of the prophets and saints and make them luminous. [...] I shall be the one to place on the lips of the last man the supreme invocation: 'Come, Lord Jesus!'

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I AM NOT SILENT (Maria says:) 'A very light, gentle, cheerful voice. Yes, just hearing it fills me with joy. The voice of the Holy Spirit. The most immaterial, most exuberant voice. Light and delight, along with peace and joy, enter one's heart with it and flow through all of one's being. Oh, [...] this Voice of Love...! Since, when He calls me, I respond, "Here I am" and ask, "Why were You silent for so long? Why do You speak so rarely?"'

He says to me: 'No, I am not silent and do not speak rarely. I *always speak to you*. I am never silent. I speak for all. I speak to you alone. I speak on the lips of the Word and use the tongue of Mary, my Most Holy Spouse, to give you my teachings.'

I planted the seed.

Catherine (catherine@valtorta.org.au)

BROWSING THE SUMMA

Prof. Leo A. Brodeur, M.A., Lèsl., Ph.D., H.Sc.D., wrote:

[For those who state] that Valtorta's writings were not supernatural in origin, did they investigate to see what kind of person Valtorta was? Had they done so, they would have quickly found that she was a good, earnest, devout Catholic, an invalid who had a deep prayer life and lived according to high moral standards. They would have found that she often claimed, explicitly, in no uncertain terms that she was having visions and dictations from Jesus and other heavenly persons, and that she fully realized the gravity of her claims.

Now had her visions and dictations been mere literary forms of her own deliberate invention, she would have been an unscrupulous liar; but this hypothesis is excluded by the testimonies of all the priests and nuns and lay people who knew her.

Or what if Valtorta had been insane and had imagined all those visions and dictations and mistaken them for real mystical occurrences (and thus escaped the accusation of being a hoaxer)? This hypothesis of lunacy falls flat in the light of her daily living during the years that she wrote. Within the limits of her physical handicaps, she functioned very well: she cared for people, kept up-to-date on current world events, wrote coherent, insightful letters, and had a witty, bright, keen mind as observed by all her visitors, some of whom were Church scholars or university educated laymen.

Maria Valtorta died on October 12, 1961. An article relates: "The rector of the Third Order of the Servants of Mary, Fr. Innocenzo M. Rovetti, assisted her at her deathbed. At the very moment the priest recited the words: Proficiscere, anima Christiana, de hoc mundo ("Depart, o Christian soul, from this world"), Maria breathed her last. Ten years after Maria Valtorta's death, on October 12, 1971, her mortal remains were exhumed from the earth and placed in the family niche. On July 2, 1973, however, with civil and ecclesiastic permissions, they

were transferred from Viareggio to Florence to be entombed in the Capitular Chapel in the Grand Cloister of the Basilica of the Most Holy Annunciation [the mother church of the Servite Order], where the tomb of Maria Valtorta is still venerated.

Fr. Gabriel Roschini, O.S.M., world-renowned Mariologist, wrote that after her death, "People noticed that her right hand – with which she had written so many sublime texts – contrarily to her left hand, retained the color, suppleness, and beauty of someone alive rather than dead. Fr. Roschini presided over the relocation of the remains of Maria Valtorta from Viareggio to the Grand Cloister of the Basilica of the Most Holy Annunciation, including presiding over the Mass, giving the appropriate discourse for this occasion, and giving the blessing for her burial. The inscription on her tomb reads: "**Divinarum Rerum Scriptrix**" (Writer of Divine Things).

[Ed: To read the references and the footnotes cited, please refer to Stephen Austin: *The Summa & Encyclopaedia to Maria Valtorta's Extraordinary Work*, pp. 10].

60th ANNIVERSARY REQUEST

As it is the 60th Anniversary of Maria Valtorta's death, my hope that the MV Readers Worldwide will be able to celebrate Maria Valtorta and her writings in a special edition of the Bulletin and the Supplement #104 in one of two ways.

Letters – please write/email me a letter which tells of your introduction to Maria's works or how her writings have impacted you spiritually, your family or your faith. These will be included in #104 Bulletin. Just sign off - **A Reader** in your city and country.

Reader's Choice- Please send in a passage that is meaningful to you from any of Maria's works (one page or less please.) and say why it is significant in 80 words. You do not have to type the passage out yourself but give me the volume number, the page number, the few words where it starts and the few words where it ends. Just sign off -**A Reader** in your city and country. This will be for the #104 Supplement.

As a teacher, I know what you are thinking – 'Yes, I think I can do that' but you will never get around to it. I have been a teacher for many years and I know for a fact that despite all good intentions, out of sight is out of mind. So unless you do it immediately (within the next few days) you never will. So strike while the iron is hot.

Now I will change hats.

As a humble servant in this apostolate, I implore you to contribute. Don't let this world-wide social distancing we have to endure, distance us spiritually too, and impact our love of sharing the faith, especially during these months of complete closure of churches for some, and Mass restrictions for others.

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ERRATA

Thank you to the reader who kindly informed me of an error in the wording of the prayer to our Guardian Angel in Supplement #102. The line 'To whom God's love commits me here' should read 'To whom God's love commits Thee here'. The error on that Supplement will be corrected and uploaded again on the website.

READERS' CHOICE

(The video, **The Tomb of Maria Valtorta** had the song, **Gelsomino della Notte (Jasmine of the Night)** playing in the background (refer to **Editorial**). The whole chapter where these words are noted is worth reading but here is the passage which gives the context to the lyrics of this song. The apostles have hired a boat as they leave Ptolemais for Tyre. The weather, and therefore the seas, are very rough but they arrive at their destination safely.)

'...The wind in fact fills the sail, although not very much, but enough to make rowing less necessary and the boat glides, as if it had been lightened, towards Tyre, the promontory of which, or rather, its isthmus, is white, to the north in the last light of the day.

And night falls fast. And it is strange, after so much dullness of sky, to see stars appear in an unforeseeable clear sky and the Great Bear shine brightly in its stars, while the sea is illuminated by placid moonlight, which is so white that it seems to be dawning after a painful day, without an intervening night...

John of Zebedee looks at the sky and smiles and he suddenly begins to sing, pulling his oar with his song and modulating his words to the rhythm of rowing:

"Hail, Star of the Morning,
Jasmine of the night,
Golden Moon of my Heaven,
Holy Mother of Jesus.
The sailor hopes in You,
Who suffers and dies dreams of You,
Shine, holy pious Star,
Upon those who love You, Mary!..."

He sings out happily in a tenor voice.

'What are you doing? We are talking of Jesus and you are singing of Mary?' asks his brother.

'He is in Her and She is in Him. But He is because She was... Let me sing...' And he starts singing with his whole heart, leading all the others...

They thus reach Tyre where they land without any difficulty in the little port, south of the isthmus, lit up by lamps hanging from many boats, with the help also of people present there.'

(Poem, Vol. 3, p. 227: Gospel, Vol. 5, pp. 144-5)

How wonderful that John (who else?!) would sing this song, this lullaby as they row or sleep under the stars, and how wonderful that Ivano Conti gave these words a tune so that we can really hear and

appreciate this moment with John. If you would like to listen to it sung by a male voice, watch the link below but it is live so you don't get the full impact. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=but57s5-0p0>

A TRIBUTE TO A READER

In loving memory of Joseph (Joe) Mifsud, Joe was on a mission for many, many years and his favourite tool to promote Maria Valtorta to others was the ***Passion, Death and Resurrection*** booklet. Joe would pass many copies around, but especially during Lent, where he would gently invite people to read it. Even if they accepted the booklet, Joe was never sure if they would even read it or if it would lead on them to read Maria's major work. He never knew if he was making a difference.

However, he was so happy when I would ring him and tell him that yet another person contacted me to order a set, saying that Joe was the one who got them on to Maria Valtorta and they too, fell in love with these works. Our chats on the phone about these writings were truly memorable and, for years, Joe knew that if people would just read them, their love for the faith would grow. On the phone, he would talk about other passages and comment on them too. I enjoyed listening to him. He never talked about his private life and rarely would I hear about his health and well-being – it was all about Maria's writings and his personal mission to lead people to the faith more through these works. Sorting through a person's affairs is not easy but his son found a letter that he wrote to me a month before he died but had not yet mailed. This is a truly precious and heartfelt letter that I have laminated and will keep in my personal copy of the ***Passion, Death and Resurrection*** booklet because that is where Joe's mission lay. God has called him home during this year of St. Joseph and I have no doubt that Maria Valtorta herself will thank him for loving and promoting her works.

Joe Mifsud lived interstate and we never met in person, but I am truly richer for having known him.

† REST IN PEACE †

Please pray for the soul of
Joseph (Joe) Mifsud
(a long-time reader & promoter of Maria Valtorta)

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. Bulletins are sent every three months. A subscription of \$10.00 per year is requested (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.]