

MARIA VALTORTA READERS GROUP

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MARIA VALTORTA READERS' GROUP

BULLETIN No.108 - DECEMBER 2022

'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)

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



PRAYING WITH MARIA VALTORTA

Jesus taught Maria: "Come and ask. Don't be afraid to ask. You can ask everything because God can give everything. Ask for yourselves. Ask for others. I have shown you how to do it. Ask for those who are present and for those who are absent. Ask for those who have already passed away, those who are alive now, and those who are yet to be born. Ask for your present time and for your eternity which will come. Apply that to yourselves and to those you love. (*Maria Valtorta Prayers p. 86*)

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

This December issue is the Christmas edition but I felt I had already covered it all. I was at a loss for a theme for December 2022. I looked over past Christmas editions and stopped to read about the Shepherds again (#80 & #81) with admiration for them. How interesting that the simple Shepherds were instant believers after the angels appeared to them once. They received the news and needed nothing more. The Shepherds whose belief never wavered and who evangelised Jesus their whole lives, were part of Jesus' story throughout. They were there at His birth, they were personally impacted by the death of the Innocents, Jesus came to find them one by one when He started His ministry. The Shepherds were there during the Passion and Death of Jesus, and Jesus appeared to them when He rose from the dead. Furthermore, what a joy that the man to replace Judas as apostle was the Shepherd, Tobias who changed his name to Matthias. In short, the simple Shepherds followed Jesus unquestioningly through faith after one solitary sign from the angels. I could not do the Shepherds again but I was prompted to follow up an idea after a discussion on Gamaliel during a Maria Valtorta Zoom meeting. Gamaliel spent 21 years looking for a sign to become a believer. Gamaliel was in the presence of 12-year-old Jesus, he was surrounded by Jesus' many miracles and an audience to Jesus' extensive knowledge and insights.

What a contrast with the poor Shepherds who believed with their hearts, while the learned Gamaliel searched with his mind. I looked no further - the theme for the Supplement was going to be on Gamaliel waiting for a sign and revealing his journey and struggle. However, this edition is six pages long instead of four.

Growing in faith,

Catherine Loft (catherine@valtorta.org.au)

A NOVEL BY MARIA VALTORTA - DESTROYED

I had completed Supplement #108 but just after I put in the final entry in the Bulletin, I was unable to finalise it because I felt a sense of dissatisfaction – as if something were missing. I let it sit and started watching Dr. Emilio Pisani's video called: Emilio Pisani: Memories and Testimonies no. 29. The content really engaged me so this led me to follow up with the very last entry in Maria's Quadernetti and this, in turn, led me to Maria Valtorta: Autobiography. Why? Because apparently, Maria Valtorta had written a novel and I wanted to know more.

I already held Dr. Emilio Pisani in high esteem for his preservation of Maria Valtorta's original manuscripts, which he has digitalised electronically so that they could still be read and studied but not handled, damaged or destroyed. I was also impressed that he bought Maria's house to preserve it and to allow devotees to visit it. However, while watching Dr. Emilio Pisani's video, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECyUnJ7hySU> - 16 minutes in Italian – no subtitles), I was really touched by his complete obedience to Maria's will.

In this video, Dr. Pisani begins by commenting that the four evangelists were not writers. St. Matthew was a publican. (In biblical times, that was a Jewish tax collector. In our times, that term refers to someone who runs a pub - a 'watering' hole, a drinking venue!). St. Mark became a writer of sorts for St. Peter. St. Luke was a doctor and St. John was very spiritual person but not a writer.

Dr. Pisani points out with amusement that at last, Jesus finally chose a born writer, a skilled writer to present His dictations and visions. Dr. Pisani continues to point out that Maria's family underwent economic hardship before she received the dictations and visions. Her father retired early because of illness and later died, while her mother taught French to earn money because servicemen pensions and government handouts were not available

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like in later times. So Maria Valtorta used her writing skills to write an autobiographical novel so that she could contribute financially. She wrote a book called Il Cuore di Una Donna (The Heart of a Woman) and it was the size of Margaret Mitchell's huge book, *Gone with the Wind* -1,010 pages. It is believed it covered Maria's life but no one knows for sure because no one read it. In Maria Valtorta: Autobiography, (How did I miss this years ago?!) (Maria writes:) "At that time, following expert counsel, I had set about writing a book The Heart of a Woman which would have given me financial gain in addition to moral satisfaction. But can you believe it? All the sharpest criticism and the most Machiavellian obstacles were presented by Mother so that I could not [complete it]. Now the work is almost finished, and now my mother would like me to finish it for money...But she should have left me in peace when I was able to. Now it's too late. I am sorry because it is an upright work. And there is a need for upright books. My book could have done good, led people to God over paths they would have traveled without realising it. That was my purpose. I have been kept from even doing this. I shall thus die without having anything of myself. Neither children, whom I would have so loved, or the book - the child of my thought, beloved as a child of living flesh...Ah, I have no satisfaction on earth. None. Ever. I have received all my joys from heaven and shall find them in heaven."

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(Maria Valtorta: Autobiography pp.392-3)

How ironic that the Work Jesus was to entrust to her would lead people to God a trillion times better! After she had written the novel and then began her life for Christ, she asked Marta Diciotti, her friend and carer to destroy it - to burn it. In the very last entry of Quadernetti, the reason is revealed.

(Maria writes:) "Even if I find a hitch, I always reach the mark." Ferrobaldò

"A storm doesn't turn me off, it makes me more alive. "Fuocardo

"From the lowest point to the top without shame" Selvaggio

"Not according to the Lion, by God and by me." Leomoro
These four mottos of the ancient Laurana of St. Cristina, (these are made-up names and mottos) which were in the novel written by me, and in which, hidden under other names and a different social setting, was the story of my life, always so torn, full of oppression, misunderstandings, and never-ending pain. It was a perfect and powerful work that I hoped to publish. But, as always, I was also going to miss out on this joy. [Firstly,] I was prevented from doing so by the lack of money, which was used up by my long illness. Then, the command of Jesus came to destroy everything: 'Burn everything. You must be known as a writer for My Work only'. And very obedient to Him, I had that masterpiece burnt. An obedience that cost me a lot, and still weighs on me, but God's will must always be done, whatever it may be, whatever the cost!!!"

Maria believed that Marta had done as she had asked. However, Marta could not bring herself to do this. In the very last entry of the Quadernetti, pp. 249-50 it states:

This entry, without a date, that has been added at the end of the Quadernetti, was written on a piece of paper, put in an envelope, on which Mother Teresa Maria of St. Joseph, the discalced Carmelite nun who was a great confidante of Maria Valtorta had written: A little sheet of Maria V regarding the novel: The Heart of a Woman.

On another sheet were the following few lines from Marta Diciotti:

This correspondence and writing is with regard to the order given by Maria Valtorta to burn the book The Heart of a Woman which I did not want to burn, and therefore still exists without her knowledge.

Maria Diciotti, 15 February, 1962

So she gave the manuscript to Dr. Pisani, wrapped up nicely and protected. She asked him as a publisher to do something with it but not before Marta's death. (Marta died in 2001). The voluminous manuscript was then delivered to the publisher Emilio Pisani with the following letter:

Viareggio 18 August, 1978

Dear Emilio,

I entrust to you the manuscript of The Heart of a Woman that must be destroyed, as Maria told me and which I did not do. You who have the means to burn it, you can do it whenever you want but not until after my death.

Marta Diciotti

A few months before Pisani's beloved wife Claudia died (2012), they opened the package and flipped through the pages, never reading any of it at all, but noting that it had corrections and edits throughout (like a true writer working through their novel) but in stark contrast to Maria's Work for Jesus that did not have any corrections whatsoever.

Claudia and Emilio Pisani decided to obey Maria's intentions and destroy the book which they emphasise was never read. They burnt the book and scattered the ashes under a rose bush which bloomed beautifully, much to the horror of Fr. Corrado Berti OSM, not because of his devotion to Maria Valtorta, as such, but more because of her legacy. It was Pisani's obedience to Valtorta that he just could not understand. He felt it should never have been destroyed. Absolutely never! However, in his defence, Dr. Pisani points out that Fr. Berti read the Poem of the Man-God but not the Quadernetti in which Jesus' order was written in the final entry.

Maria Valtorta gave her all, and as Marta Diciotti pointed out in her book, Maria even offered to God the only thing left she had to give – her intellect which others perceived as just Maria losing her faculties at the end of her life.

BROWSING THE SUMMA - PRIVATE REVELATIONS

Should we just ignore authentic private revelations because it is merely private revelation and Catholics aren't required, strictly speaking, to believe it or make use of it? Should we ignore this private revelation (of Maria Valtorta)?

One must understand that no Catholic is required to believe any approved private revelation, nor is the belief in or following of the private revelation necessary to attain holiness and salvation. Public Revelation (the Deposit of Faith), however, is required to be believed by all Catholics to save their soul and to attain holiness. However, we must understand that while authentic private revelation is not, strictly speaking, required or necessary, it should not be ignored by most people. I will give the greatest example: At the Fatima private revelation apparitions, Our Lady of Fatima requested the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart to be done by the Pope in union with all of the bishops of the world. She said: "If my requests are heeded, Russia will be converted and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions against the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated." Now look at the consequences of the Holy Fathers not

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following this private revelation even though, strictly speaking, the teaching of the Church is that Catholics are not required to believe in private revelations! Do we really want “annihilation of nations”, which we have yet to see (maybe a nuclear world war, a major comet striking the Earth, or some other comparable or worse chastisement)? Let me give another example. In a private revelation to a canonized saint, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, Our Lord commanded that France be consecrated to the Sacred Heart by the King of France. He gave 100 years for it to be done. It was not done and misfortune resulted. As an article relates: “On June 17, 1689 the Sacred Heart of Jesus manifested to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque His command to the King of France that the King was to consecrate France to the Sacred Heart. For 100 years to the day, the Kings of France delayed and did not obey. So on June 17, 1789 the King of France was stripped of his legislative authority by the upstart Third Estate, and four years later the soldiers of the French Revolution executed the King of France as if he were a criminal. In 1793 France sent its King, Louis XVI, to the guillotine. He and his predecessors had failed to obey Our Lord’s request that France be consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and thus misfortune had befallen both the King and his country. When King Louis XVI saw what was happening in France, while he was still a prisoner at the Tuileries Palace, he made a solemn vow to the Sacred Heart of Jesus repenting of his mistakes and promising that if he were to ever recover his crown and royal power, he would make a solemn act of consecration of France to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as was requested by Him through St. Margaret Mary Alacoque.”

At Rianjo, Spain in August 1931, Our Lord communicated to Sister Lucy [the seer of the Church-approved Fatima apparitions] His dissatisfaction with the Pope’s and the Catholic bishops’ failure to obey His command to consecrate Russia. He said: “Make it known to My ministers, given that they follow the example of the King of France in delaying the execution of My requests, they will follow him into misfortune. It is never too late to have recourse to Jesus and Mary.” In another text, Lucy wrote that Our Lord complained to her: “They did not wish to heed My request! Like the King of France they will repent of it, and they will do it, but it will be late. Russia will have already spread its errors in the world, provoking wars and persecutions against the Church. The Holy Father will have much to suffer.” Apparently, God takes acceptance of important authentic private revelations somewhat seriously! So it seems that we should not neglect authentic private revelation, merely because it is, strictly speaking, not absolutely necessary for our salvation.

Let us not be hard-headed, scrupulous, and proud by disdain the *Poem of the Man-God (The Gospel As Revealed To Me)* because it is private revelation. Yes, we must be very careful and very skeptical about new claims of private revelation, especially because in our day there are hundreds, and possibly thousands, of verifiably false private revelations, apparitions, locutions, miracles, etc. But the *Poem of the Man-God (The Gospel As Revealed To Me)* is not one of them, and it has more verifiable scientific and other types of evidence than almost every other private revelation in the history of the world! Verily, we have no excuse to not accept it now, given the resources [geographic, medical and scientific etc] available to us to know the truth about it and to benefit

from it. (Stephen Austin, *The Summa And Encyclopedia Of Maria Valtorta’s Extraordinary Work*. pp. 175-7)

READER’S CHOICE

The victim soul and mystic, Maria Valtorta, was graced with over 20 visions of the heroic witness and martyrdom of the early Christians (e.g. St. Cyprian, St. Agnes, Pope St. Cletus), which occurred during the seminal years of the Catholic Church. The following depiction of St. Paul holding Mass for imprisoned Christians condemned to death under Nero is based on a detailed vision granted by the Lord to Maria & recorded in 1944. **Frank Rega, USA**

St. Paul’s Prison Mass and the Early Martyrs

It is one of the earliest persecutions, and St. Paul will soon be holding Mass in a dark chamber for the future martyrs incarcerated there by the Emperor Nero. It is not Rome’s Mamertine, but the Tullianum jail. It is a large, dark cellar made of blocks of stone and oozing moisture. Its small size is not sufficient for the great throng of Christian prisoners held therein. They are from every age and social condition, from the elderly who were not mercifully allowed to die a natural death, to little children only a few years old who should have been left free to play their innocent games.

Packed together, the rich and poor, the Romans, Greeks, Iberians and Thracians, and others of different origins, have one thing in common, their love for one another. The strongest give up their places, on seats of stone, to the weaker, and the healthiest aid those who are sick. They surrender their cloaks and togas to help bind the wounds of those suffering from tortures previously undergone.

They sing from time to time, until a child moans in the darkness, halting the song.

Someone asks, “Who is crying?” and the answer comes: “It is Castulus. The fever and the burns give him no relief. He is thirsty and cannot drink because the water burns his lips, scorched by the fire.”

The face of the child, Castulus is one big burn; perhaps once handsome, now he is monstrous. There are no longer cheeks and a nose, but a bright red swelling, and instead of eyes and lips, there are just open wounds. Apparently they must have held his face over a flame, and only his face, for the rest of his body is not burnt.

An imposing matron says, “I am a mother who no longer has her baby to give milk to. Have Castulus brought to me - milk burns less than water.” It is Plautina who is sitting on one of the blocks of stone against a wall. A man comes forward and carefully takes the child of about 8 years into his arms and lays him along the lap of the matron, as if upon a bed. Plautina looks like the mother of sorrows, as tears roll down her cheeks. She squeezes her breast so that the milk trickles into the mouth of the boy, and lets some of it fall upon his face to medicate it with its balm. Castulus caresses her hand in thanksgiving, and lets himself be rocked to sleep by the Roman matron.

The singing resumes, until interrupted by a voice that says, “Fabius is dead; let us pray.” They all pray the *Our Father* and another prayer. An old man exclaims, “How fortunate is Fabius, he is already seeing Christ!” Another person answers, “We too shall see Him, Felix, and go to Him with the two-fold crown of faith and martyrdom. [...] We sinned greatly – we who were pagans for long years – and it is a great grace for the jubilee of martyrdom to come to us to make us new, worthy of the Kingdom.”

Suddenly a voice thunders: “Peace be with you my brothers and sisters.”

“Paul! Paul! Bless us!”

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"Peace be with you," the Apostle repeats, as he advances into the area with two other priests.

"What about the Pontiff?" many ask.

"He [Peter] is alive for now and safe in the catacombs; he sends you his greeting and blessing. He would have come but he is too well known among the jailers. I, less well-known and a Roman citizen, have come. Brothers and sisters, what news do you have for me?"

"Fabius is dead," "Castulus is suffering martyrdom."

"Sexta has now been led to torture."

"Linus has been taken with Urbanus and his sons to Mamertinus or to the Circus, we do not know."

And Paul, with his arms opened in the form of a cross, prays in the middle of the dungeon: "Let us pray for them – whether alive or dead – that Christ may give all of them his Peace" After their prayers, Paul asks: "Where is Castulus?" He is told that he is on Plautina's lap, in the back of the jail.

Paul cuts through the throng and blesses the child and matron. Castulus has awakened, and meekly raises a hand to Paul, who says to him: "Be strong, Castulus, Jesus is with you." But the child cries, and moving his scorched lips with difficulty, laments that he can no longer receive his Lord (in the Eucharist because of his burns) .

Paul responds: "Don't cry; can you swallow a single crumb? You can? Well then, I'll give you the Body of the Lord. Then I'll go to your mother – what should I say to her?" "Tell her fire does not hurt when the angels are with us and that she shouldn't fear for my sake or for hers. The Savior will give us strength."

The Apostle then relates to the jailed Christians how a fourteen year-old girl named Lucina ". . . was tortured with a thousand torments: beaten, hung, stretched out, and twisted with tongs. And she was always healed by the work of God. [...]"

"Courage, brothers and sisters. I had fed her yesterday with the Bread of Heaven, and with the taste of that Bread she went to her final martyrdom. I shall now give that Bread to you as well. [...] The Circus awaits you. And you do not fear. In the beasts and snakes, you will see celestial appearances for God will work this miracle for you. And the jaws and coils will seem to you to be loving embraces; the roars and hisses, heavenly voices."

Paul prepares for the rite of Mass.

"You shall be our altar," he says to Castulus. "Can you hold the chalice on your chest?"

The child answers "Yes," and a linen cloth is spread over his little body as he lays along the lap of Plautina. The chalice and the bread are set upon the cloth. The Mass is served by Paul and the two priests accompanying him.

The Mass seems to contain "...parts now lacking, and to lack parts now in use [in 1944]. It lacks the epistle, for instance, and after the blessing – 'May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit bless you' – there is nothing else. But the parts are the same as now from the Gospel to the Consecration. The Gospel read was that of the Beatitudes." [St. Matthew's gospel was possibly written about ten years before Nero's persecution began.]

After breaking the Host, Paul is about to bend over the little martyr as the first of all to give him Communion, with a tiny particle; but Plautina says, "He is dead." Paul pauses for an instant, and then gives the matron the particle meant for Castulus. The child has remained with his fingers closed over the base of the chalice in his final contraction, and they have to disengage them from it in order to take the chalice and give it to the others.

The Mass ends after Communion has been distributed. The Apostle removes his vestments and places them and the linen cloth, the chalice, and the receptacle for the hosts in a bag he is carrying under his cloak. Paul then takes the body of the little martyr Castulus, in order to give him a proper burial. As he goes out carrying the child, he blesses everyone: "Brothers and sisters, may peace be with you, and remember me when you are in the Kingdom." (*The Notebooks 1944, February 29, pp. 176-186*)

LETTERS

I have been following your newsletter since David Murray started it and I am enjoying your leadership. I particularly enjoyed the Lazarus passage reading started by Denise the other night [at the Maria Valtorta Zoom meeting]. I was amazed that she picked Lazarus since I had him in mind too! Also important is to always to keep the reality of hell in mind from Ed's reading. I hope to form some friends with this Zoom group. You certainly did a good job getting everyone involved and it's a good idea to use the hand raising feature on Zoom. Looking forward to the next one, my friend.

Gerard Beer, USA

My name is André Chilano. I am a Brazilian enthusiast of Maria Valtorta's Work. I am contacting you to present my Youtube videos where I read the writings in Portuguese.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-v1PJRoid6DGFzY1jVU3hg>

If I there is anything I can do to promote Maria Valtorta even more, please tell me.

Andre Chilano, Brazil

[Ed: how heartwarming to see so many people using their love and their skills to promote Valtorta.]

I would like to send you some cards that I have put together containing some extracts from Valtorta's writings. These can be shared with friends and even printed as photographs in 4:3 format. Good results in A5 format, around 15X20 cm (so that it is easy to read when printed). If you put the pictures on a USB, then the automatic printing machine which are in shopping malls do a good job to print the photos.

Nunzio Sparano, Switzerland

[Ed:For email members, attached are two of Nunzio's cards.]

ZOOM MEETINGS

The monthly Maria Valtorta Zoom meetings are becoming more populated, and they are being embraced by many people throughout the world. A sharing of passages and discussion has been interesting, fruitful and nurturing. No need to reply when an invitation is emailed but if your calendar is clear, come meet other Readers "face-to-face".

† REST IN PEACE †

Please pray for the soul of

FRANK MURRAY

An avid MV reader, husband of Margaret & brother of the Readers' Group founder, David Murray.

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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. [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.]