



MARIA VALTORTA READERS' GROUP

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'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

'May your Kingdom come, Lord, on earth, in Heaven, and in our hearts.'
(*Maria Valtorta Prayers*, p. 23)

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

Supplement: The theme is **Temptation** including one aspect which, in recent times, has presented, and continues to present disagreement, confusion or division among the Church, the clergy and the faithful. The wording of the *Lord's Prayer* '**lead us not into temptation**' has been a topic of discussion for many Catholics worldwide for quite some time. However, it wasn't until 2021 when Pope Francis changed the wording of 'LEAD us not into temptation' to 'do not ABANDON us to temptation' that a far greater number of the clergy, theologians and Christians of all denominations were drawn into this issue, some with understanding and acceptance, while others with contempt and fury. So much so, that only Italy officially changed the wording of the *Lord's Prayer* in their Italian Roman Missal because while it is an error to believe that an all-loving God would LEAD us into temptation, it is equally an error that an all-loving God has ever ABANDONED, or will ever ABANDON, His people.

One resource quoted the Gospel of St. Matthew 4:1 to support the wording of the *Our Father*. '*Then Jesus was led by the spirit into the desert, to be tempted by the devil.*' Another stated that this was only the case with Jesus because part of Jesus' mission was to willingly experience being fully human. However, with regards to mankind in general, it was agreed that God allows temptations and trials but He does not LEAD people there. Another resource suggested that the translation in

the bible was questionable. The **New Testament** was written in **Greek** because Greek was the language of scholarship during the years the New Testament was written. The writers did not, however, use high-class or classical Greek, but a very common and everyday spoken Greek – the vulgate or vernacular. The New Testament Latin **Vulgate** Bible was translated by St. Jerome from the Greek in 382 AD under commission by Pope Damasus I, who recognised the importance of having a standard translation in the language that most Western Christians spoke: Latin. In his translation, St. Jerome correctly translated that line of the *Lord's Prayer* as 'LEAD us'. Therefore, St. Jerome did not mistranslate at all. However, others point out that 'LEAD' should not be the only focus in the translation but the word 'TEMPTATION' should be too.

St. Jerome translated the Greek word *peirasmon* into Latin as *tentationem* over other word choices at the time such as 'trial' or 'test'. At a later date when Douay Rheims (and translators of other bible editions) translated the Latin *tentationem* (not the original Greek *peirasmon*) into English, they chose to use the English cognate - temptation (a similar-looking word). Therefore, the problem is not with St. Jerome's translation, but with our more narrow definition of 'temptation' against the original Greek meaning '**trials**' or '**tests**'. However, does this resolve the issue satisfactorily?

Another source points out that due to the fact that the *Lord's Prayer* has always been written in the **spoken** languages of Greek and then Latin, the constant change of the spoken language of any country will lead to further problems too. If precedence allows it to be changed once, this may open the door for a review every 20-30 years as the language changes. It would never stop. And if this stance of reviewing the language to make it more modern and clear were adopted, would this also cause the word 'trespass' to be reviewed because nowadays, it may not be considered accurate

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enough against the Latin word, debita (debts)? Or will 'art' be next because it is considered too archaic? What would happen to the *Lord's Prayer* then? One theologian quoted St. Thomas Aquinas as having said that if you change things, it erodes the confidence in the system. It makes it feel arbitrary. He continues to posit that this has been evident in the revisions made over time to the Liturgy and in the practice of fasting and abstaining during Lent.

What many of the theologians and the faithful agree on, is that it is best not to change anything that needs to be passed on. After all, isn't it heart-warming to know that we are praying the same prayer that the great saints and martyrs prayed such as St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Francis, St. Teresa of Avila, St. Padre Pio and hundreds more? They suggest that rather than impose a re-translation, it would be far better to use this as an opportunity to teach what this line of the *Lord's Prayer* actually means. The same can be said about the *Hail Mary...* **'Mother of God'** (another dispute) that Mary is the Mother of Jesus, but not of God the Father or of her Spouse, the Holy Spirit. However, Catholics have not changed this prayer but **they clarify it with the correct teaching.** It reminds me of Fr. James Altman's Bishop who admitted that the Church has failed to adequately catechise people in the last 60 years.

One theologian suggests that perhaps the *Our Father* should be taught in Latin but explained clearly so that Jesus' perfect prayer given to us will be universal, understood and untouched worldwide.

The written word of the Holy Bible and Tradition must always be our primary focus. And it is the duty of the Mother Church to clarify and catechise whenever necessary.

You are now invited to read a selection of passages in the Supplement from Jesus to Maria Valtorta where Jesus explains and enlightens us on what **'Lead us not into temptation'** means after which Jesus continues using these very same words when clarifying the many other facets of Temptation itself. For Readers who have only read the narrative visions of Maria Valtorta in *The Poem of the Man-God* or *The Gospel As Revealed to Me*, and not the four Notebooks which contain dictations by Jesus and others on many topics, this Supplement will give you a taste of the style and messages in these Notebooks.

Growing in Faith,
Catherine

READER'S CHOICE ONE

I have selected this passage because it is one of the times where we see Jesus engaged in humour in these writings.

ED, USA

Is Jesus Getting Married?

(The families are gathered in the little house in Nazareth. The women are working at the loom or doing needlework, and Jesus speaks to Simon and Marjiam.)

(Jesus says:) 'Mother, look at the contents of the parcel with Syntyche and let Me know whether you think it is enough.' And while the women are opening the parcel, Jesus sits down and talks to Simon.

'And what have You done, Master?' asks Simon.

'I made two chests to avoid being idle and because they will be useful. I went for walks. I enjoyed being at home.' Simon stares at Him . . . but does not say anything.

Marjiam's exclamations, seeing lengths of linen and woollen cloths, sandals, veils and belts coming out of the parcel make Jesus and his two companions turn round.

Mary says, 'Everything is alright. We will begin to sew at once and everything will be ready soon.'

The boy asks, 'Are you getting married, Jesus?'

Everybody laughs and Jesus asks, 'What makes you think so?'

'All these things for a man and a woman, and the two chests You made. They are for Your trousseau and for your bride's. Can I meet her?'

'Do you really want to meet My bride?'

'Oh, yes! She must be beautiful and good! What's her name?'

'It's a secret for now because she has two names, like you, who were first Jabez and then Marjiam.'

'Can't I know her names?'

'Not now — but you will one day.'

'Will you invite me to the wedding?'

'It will not be a feast for children. But I will invite you to the wedding party. You will be one of the guests and a witness. All right?'

'When will it be? Next month?'

'Oh, much later.'

'In that case why did You work so fast, You got blisters on your hands?'

'I got them because I no longer work with My hands. See, My dear child, how painful idleness is? Always. When one resumes working, one suffers twice as much because one becomes too delicate. Now if it hurts one's hands so much, how much will it hurt one's soul? See? This evening I had to ask you to help Me because My hands were so sore that I could not hold the rasp, while just two years ago, I could work fourteen hours straight without feeling any pain. The same happens to those whose fervour and will become loose. He becomes flaccid, feeble and tires easily because spiritual poisons affect the weak. But it is twice as hard to do good when before, one had a good habit. It never pays to be idle! One would never succeed.'

'But You have never been idle!'

'No. I have done other work, and not using My hands has been detrimental to them,' and Jesus shows his red and blistered hands.

Marjiam kisses them, saying, 'My mother used to do that to me when I hurt myself, because love heals.'

'Yes, love heals many things.'

(P3, pp. 163-4; G5, Ch. 306.3-4)

READER'S CHOICE TWO

In this passage, Jesus was giving Peter a lesson on what we know to be the Sacrament of Confession. This helps us to understand and appreciate the delicate and important work that our priests do with such due care in the confessional.

CATHERINE, AUSTRALIA

(It is the time of preparation for the passion of Jesus. It is night-time and Peter is not asleep because he is worrying

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about his ability to help people. Jesus gives him a lesson on how to examine sins)

(Jesus says:) 'One day, and that day is not remote, you and your companions will have to listen to the secrets of hearts. Not as you listen to them now as men, but as priests; that is, doctors, masters, and pastors of souls, as I am Doctor, Master and Pastor. You will have to listen, decide and give advice. Your judgment will have the same value as if God Himself had passed it...'

Peter frees himself from Jesus who was holding him close to Himself, and standing up he says: 'That is not possible Lord. Never impose that on us. How can You expect us to judge like God, if we are not even able to judge like men?'

'Then you will be able because the Spirit of God will hover over you and will penetrate you with its light. You will know how to judge taking into consideration the seven conditions of the facts proposed to you in order to have your advice or to be forgiven. Listen to Me carefully and try to remember. In due time, the Spirit of God will remind you of My words. But at the same time, try to remember with your own intelligence, as God gives it to you so that you may use it without laziness and spiritual presumptions that lead one to expect and pretend everything from God. When you are Master, Doctor and Pastor in My place and My stead, and when a believer comes to weep at your feet over his perturbation brought about by his own or other people's deeds, you must always bear in mind the following seven questions:

Who: Who sinned?

What: What is the matter of the sin?

Where: In which place?

How: In which circumstances?

With what or with whom: The instrument or person that was the material for the sin?

Why: Which incentives brought about the favourable environment to the sin?

When: In which conditions and reactions, and whether by accident or by unwholesome habit?

Because you see, Peter, the same sin may have infinite nuances and grades according to all the circumstances that caused it and to the people who committed it. For instance, let us take into consideration two of the most common sins: lust of the flesh and lust for riches.

A man has committed a sin of lewdness, or he thinks that he has committed such a sin because at times, **man mistakes temptation for sin**. Or he considers of the same degree, the incentives brought about artificially by an unwholesome appetite. And considers also to be equal, those thoughts [...] resounding inwardly, before the mind has time to be wary of them and suffocate them. He comes to you and says: "I committed a sin of lewdness". An imperfect priest would say: "Anathema on you". But you, My Peter, must not say so because you are Jesus' Peter, you are the successor of Mercy. So before condemning, you must consider and touch the heart weeping before you, kindly and prudently, in order to ascertain all the aspects of the sin or supposed sin, and of the scruple.

I said: kindly and prudently. You must remember that besides being a Master and Pastor, you are a Doctor. A doctor does not irritate wounds. If there is gangrene, he will cut it off but he knows also how to uncover and treat a wound with a light hand when lacerated tissues are to be re-united, not removed. And you are to remember that in addition to being a Doctor and Pastor, you are a Master. A

master adapts his words to the age of his pupils. And scandalous would be that teacher who should disclose animal laws to innocent children who were unacquainted with them, and would thus acquire mischievous knowledge precociously. And in dealing with souls, one must be prudent in asking questions. You must respect yourself and other people. It will be easy for you if in every soul you see a son of yours. A father is by nature the master, doctor and guide of his children. So love with fatherly love, every person who comes to you upset by sin, or by fear of sin, and you will be able to judge without hurting or scandalising anybody. Do you follow Me?'

'Yes, I do, Master. I have understood You very well. I must be cautious and patient, I will have to convince people to disclose their wounds, but I shall have to examine them by myself without attracting the attention of other people to them, and only when I should see that there is a real wound, I ought to say: "See? You have hurt yourself here by doing so and so". But if I see that a person is only afraid of being hurt, then... I should blow away the fog without giving, through useless zeal, explanations capable of throwing light on real sources of sin. Is that right?'

'Yes, quite right. So. If one says to you: "I have committed a sin of carnal lust", you must consider the person who is in front of you. It is true that sin can be committed at every age. But it is easier to find it in adults than in children, so the questions to ask or the answers to give a man or a boy will be different. Consequently, after **the first** question, comes **the second** one on the matter of the sin, then **the third** one on the place of the sin, then **the fourth** on the circumstances, then **the fifth** on the accomplice to the sin, then **the sixth** on the causes of the sin, and **the seventh** on the time and number of the sin.

In general, you will find that in the case of adults living in the world, a circumstance of true sin will appear to correspond to each question, whereas in the case of children by age or by spirit, for many questions you will have to say: "There is only the fear of sin here, but no real sin" [...]. They are souls so innocent and so anxious to remain such, that Satan frightens them with fanciful temptations or instigating the incentives of the flesh or the flesh itself, taking advantage of true diseases of the flesh. Those souls are to be comforted and supported because they are not sinners, but martyrs. Always bear that in mind.

And always remember to judge with the same method also those who commit the sin of greed for other people's riches or property. Because if it is a cursed sin to be greedy without need and without pity, robbing the poor, and acting against justice by harassing citizens, servants, or peoples, the sin of him who steals some bread to appease the hunger of his children and his own, after his neighbours refused to give him some, is by far less grave. Remember that if for a lustful man and a thief, the number, circumstances and gravity of the sin are to be taken into account when judging them, one must also consider what knowledge the sinner had of the sin when he was committing it. Because he who acts with **full knowledge**, sins more than he who acts out of ignorance. And he who acts with the **free consent** of his will, sins more than he who was forced to sin. I solemnly tell you that there will be deeds that are apparently sinful, but are really martyrdom and they will be given the reward that is granted to those who suffered martyrdom. And above all, remember that in each case, before condemning, you

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must bear in mind that you have been a man as well, and that your Master, in whom no one was ever able to find sin, never condemned anyone who had repented of having sinned. Forgive seventy times seven, and even seventy times seventy, the sins of your brothers and children. Because to shut the doors of Salvation upon a sick man, only because he had a relapse, is to want to let him die. Have you understood?’

‘Yes, I have. I have understood that very clearly...’

(P5, pp. 119-22; G9, Ch. 555.2-3)

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE INDEX

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LETTERS

I am really enjoying Fr Daniel-Maria Klimek's talks on Maria's writings and his extra meditations on them. He is very passionate about the teachings. It is encouraging to see.

GWEN, NEW ZEALAND

[Ed: Fr. Klimek has informed me he has been on a three-month hiatus and will resume videos in June after the release of his new book.]

At present, I am up to the 4th book of *The Gospel as Revealed to Me* by Maria Valtorta. It is *wonderful* - it has enriched my life in so many ways! So much of the Gospels has been embellished and made clearer to me through Maria's writings. I share so much with friends - especially from the booklet, *Praying the Rosary*.

BARBARA, AUSTRALIA

[In reference to Giovanna Busolini's booklet - *The Stations of the Cross*], my first thought was: what a wonderful companion to the *Praying the Rosary* booklet that David and Ed created. During Holy Week, or before, I normally begin reading in Vol. 5 [of the *Poem* edition], the events in Jesus' life as He is going toward Jerusalem. On Good Friday, I pray the pages that cover the passion and death of Jesus. These Stations can be prayed in just a third of the time as the many pages in Vol. 5 take. I will now be able to pray the passion and crucifixion as revealed by Jesus to Maria in between Good Fridays. Blessings on our generous benefactor! May the Holy Trinity be praised for bringing us such a gift as these Stations!

JACQUELINE, USA

Thank you so much for this precious material: what a wonderful treasure to dig from!!

A PRIEST, AUSTRALIA

[In reference to David Webster's *Atlas of Palestine*] Goodness!!! It was my dream to map out our Lord's journey, had I had the time to do it. This is awesome!!!

DERRICK, USA

How much I enjoyed reading about Joseph & Nicodemus. Amazing that – no matter how often it is read, it makes compelling reading. I could not put it down until I'd finished. You certainly put a lot of work into all of it. May God reward you.

A RELIGIOUS, AUSTRALIA

I was delighted to read about 'Joseph & Nicodemus', thank you so much. I had heard their names but knew nothing about them. I was a cradle Catholic and attended a Catholic boarding school but now, I have discovered how ignorant I am in many areas. Thanks to Maria Valtorta and her writings, I have a deeper understanding of my religion. Your contribution to our spiritual life via the Bulletins and Zoom, is much appreciated. Many thanks for sharing.

MARIE, AUSTRALIA

Praised be Jesus. I thought Supplement #113 on Joseph & Nicodemus was really something special. I can't remember reading these passages before - they are marvelous. It was great reading and will get read more than once, for sure.

JIM, USA

Thanks for the bulletin and supplement. It was engrossing to track the steady, if wavering, faith of Joseph and Nicodemus. They remind me of me. I downloaded the book, *The Sudarium Christi of Oviedo* by Giovanna Busolini and am half-way through it. It's impressive how she ties in facts from the investigation of the Veil with Valtorta's *Poem of the Man God*. I was in Oviedo about 10 years ago and got to see the chest but not the Veil and, in fact, was unaware of its significance. When I take my wife back to her hometown in Spain, we plan on paying another visit, hopefully on one of the three days it is exposed annually. In the meantime, I will be listening to the podcast links [of Fr. Daniel-Maria Klimek] you included in the bulletin.

ED, USA

Thank you for sending out these beautiful newsletters. They are so poignant and make the matters of Heaven so accessible.

PENNY, USA

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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.]