

The Holy Father Invites Us To Be Profoundly Moved By God's Word

By His Grace Archbishop T. Prendergast, S.J.

In his recent letter about the Word of God in the life and mission of the Church (*Verbum Domini*), Pope Benedict XVI stresses that the Word of God must be at the heart of everything we do in the Church. This should interest in a particular way the members of the Order of Malta in our desire to serve the Church and our lords, the poor.

Lent is an ideal time for Knights and Dames to begin to put the Holy Father's insight into practice by learning about, and praying with, God's Word.

Scripture tells the story of God drawing near to his people in love. It records how God's chosen ones turned away from him and how God always drew them back.

The Bible is our story too. We are Abraham and Sarah, called to live by faith, going where God directs us. We can see ourselves also in David, the



Resurrection of Christ and the Women at the Tomb (Fra Angelico 1441)

man after God's heart who sinned grievously and repented.

And we're invited by the Word to model ourselves after Mary, saying yes to God's plan for our lives, struggling to ponder its meaning.

In Scripture, God not only has a voice, he has a face, that of our Lord Jesus. The gospels and epistles invite us to live our lives in union with Jesus. We do this in the household of God—the Church—for it was there that we were united to Christ's risen life in baptism.

During Lent, we are called to pray for those about to be baptized and by prayer, fasting and almsgiving to renew our own commitment to holiness of life.

The gospel for the First Sunday of Lent shows that what God has revealed about himself in Scripture can directly guide and help us meet the challenges we face. In Jesus' rejection of Satan, we see how Scripture can help us overcome any temptation.

The Devil's three temptations of Jesus represent everything and anything that leads us away from God. Satan tries to

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Continued from page 1 draw us away from God by concerns about personal comfort and well-being, or by the lure of power or this world’s riches.

The Bible says God does not “tempt” humans but “tests” them to see what is in their hearts. Forces opposed to God are sometimes put in impersonal terms: “the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life” (1 John 1: 16). In effect, all of these forces try to drive a wedge between people and God so that they are tempted not to trust God.

Jesus resisted all of the Devil’s flattery by falling back on His intimate relationship with the Heavenly Father.

The Word of God, in the Book of Deuteronomy, provided the scriptural texts Jesus used to resist each temptation: “One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Deut. 8:3); “Do not put the Lord your God to the test” (Deut. 6: 16); and “Worship the Lord your God, and serve only Him” (Deut. 6: 13).

In the liturgy of Ash Wednesday, we hear Jesus speak about the great works of religion: almsgiving, prayer and fasting (whenever you give alms..., whenever you pray..., whenever you fast... (Matthew 6: 1-18).

In affirming these ancient practices Jesus gives them a new direction, one that avoids self-seeking, is rooted in hiddenness and joy, and seeks to please God alone.

How can we enter into Lent with Jesus? The first answer is by sharing in Sunday Mass and, when possible, the daily Eucharist. A key part of Mass, of course, is God’s self-communication in the Liturgy of the Word.

Each day we can find a few moments to read a portion of God’s Word, from the Bible, a missalette, or even the internet. This can be done alone or together with family members, neighbours, members of the Order or fellow parishioners. Sharing with others how God’s Word touches our lives helps them in their struggle to be faithful.

The method known as Lectio Divina is an excellent way to draw out the riches of the Word. We can reflect in prayer on the Sunday readings throughout the week or meditate for 15 minutes on the scripture readings of each Lenten weekday.

The Holy Father highly recommends this ancient practice in his letter on the importance of the Word of God (see *Verbum Domini* #86-87).

May God’s Word nourish and strengthen us all as we prepare to celebrate the Easter mystery with mind and heart renewed!

Instituto De Educación Rural, IER



In parallel with the Tapacari project, The Order sponsors the education of 21 young women from the project region, ages 17 to 24. Women are important decision makers within the family. Their involvement in the project will encourage sustainability and will help them to assume a leadership role in the family and in their community. It is an important contribution to the quality of life in the communities.

22 year-old Huanca Francisca Mercado from the Altiplano community of Challa Grande, Tapacari is one of the great successes of this program. With the Canadian Association’s long-time support for her in the I.E.R., she finished first primary school, high school and now she is an auxiliary nurse. Pictured here, second from the left, on her graduation’s day, along with her mother. “Thanks be to God, thanks be to you and to all the members of Order of Malta.” Sister Murielle.

Unfortunately CIDA does not contribute funding for education projects, therefore donations are much appreciated. For more information, or to make a donation, please visit our website at www.orderofmaltaCanada.org

Lourdes Pilgrimage 2012

By Roman J. Cieciewicz, KMOB



The Order of Malta's 54th annual international pilgrimage of the Order to Lourdes will take place from May 3 to 8 May 8 2012. In excess of 6,000 order members, malades and volunteers, from some 35 countries attend annually. They all join in prayer and procession to honour the shrine where, 54 years ago a fourteen year-old girl, Bernadette Soubiroux, had received visions of the virgin Mary. Since then, the site has become one of the most visited religious shrines in the world and pilgrims come from every corner of the globe to seek peace and succour, in a place where the sick are surrounded by love and care and every pilgrim, whatever his need, is aware of the serenity of the environment. Pope John Paul II visited Lourdes in August, 2004 and had made Marian piety one of the centerpieces of his papacy.

As Knights, Dames and volunteers of the Order of Malta, the Lourdes pilgrimage reminds of duty to our lords the sick and fulfills our commitment to participate in this, one of the Order's greatest works. The role of pilgrimage and the care of those who undertake Christian pilgrimage has been central to the ethos of our Order from its beginnings, and thus provides members with a direct link to our very foundations so many centuries ago.

"The Order of Malta pilgrimages must be stages, or rather steps in the spiritual ascent of the members of the Order," said Archbishop Angelo Acerbi. "The fruits they produce are

measured by the growth in their Christian life and in their commitment to works of charity."

Passing through the very large crowds multiple times during the day, walking with malades or on the way to and from duty, it becomes very clear that this was a place of deep faith. The daily scene of thousands of people, young and old, well and sick, walking and in wheel chairs spoke volumes of the spiritual nature of this place.

Each National Association of the Order of Malta brings a large number of sick pilgrims to Lourdes (referred to as malades). The Order of Malta arranges an extensive program of spiritual activities and visits to the Holy sites, while providing continuous care for the malades and respite for their caregivers. Many malades and their caregivers are provided accommodations in a hospital ward type setting, others in hotel rooms. The malades receive the amount of care that each requires based on their illness, and can include getting the malades up, showered, shaved, dressed, fed; or cleaning-up in the ward and dining room; or preparations for bed. Daily mass, stations of the cross, the rosary, touring some of the areas of significance including, the baths and the grotto, all along ensuring the malades are well taken care of.

The week is one that reinforces faith, hope, charity, spirituality and humility.





Conference of the Americas

By Roman J. Ciecwierz, KMOB

“We need to involve ourselves personally and motivate others to personal action – this must become a priority in our life vs. other social activities.”

The Order held its conference of the Americas from November 3 to 6 in Lima, Peru. I had the privilege to represent the Canadian Association along with our Hospitaller, Dr. Luigi Castagna. The conference helped to deepen the camaraderie and sharing between our brothers and sisters. It also became obvious that North, South and Central America have very different needs, and so, by inviting those of us that live far from the misery and suffering of the truly poor to witness the enormity of the challenge was enlightening.



Conference attendees were shown one of the projects of the Peruvian Association where the Order provides food daily to the children of the fifty poorest families living in this incredibly poor region outside of Lima.

As in many cases when involved with activities of the Order, discussions with confreres, hearing of personal activities, projects etc., was both a humbling experience and at the same time truly inspiring.

The following is a synopsis of key points:

Grand Master's opening remarks:

“We need to concentrate on the promotion of personal commitment for works of the Order. We need to develop a sense of belonging and learn from each other and to stress the importance of communications; internally to support one another; externally to make our works known. It is also

important to find new ways of financing and methods to fund international projects and expand our activities.

Need to focus on attracting the leaders of tomorrow by finding ways to recruit more young members into the ranks of the professed; to nurture their interest; to find those who are willing to commit their lives to the Order at an earlier stage in their life.”

Grand Hospitaller's opening remarks:

“Our Order can only play its part in the new evangelization, the Holy Father's mission to the whole Church, by fulfilling its own true mission. It is not a question of inventing something new, but of updating and renewing our fidelity to our own mission. The situation of the first class is unsatisfactory (when one part of the whole is not healthy it affects the rest). Is this a result of problems in other areas of the Order or of external forces? Regardless, we do need to provide conditions for success to those devoting their life to the Order.

“The Council's decree for religious orders, *Perfectae Caritatis*, calls on orders to uphold in honour their original founding charisma, and to examine from this perspective everything that has been accumulated or lost in the course of history. Our Order began with Brother Gerard and the Hospital in Jerusalem with service to the sick, the poor and those in misery.”

Brother Gerard names two prerequisites for the survival of the Order:

1. The brotherhood (we) must be rooted in the misery of the world

2. The vocation of people depends on the will of God.

- we need to open the eyes of those who live far from misery
- we need to take notice, letting it shock us
- we need to make our own personal decision to help and then to convince others to help, to get close, no matter how uncomfortable

We need to involve ourselves personally and motivate others to personal action – this

must become a priority in our life vs. other social activities. The works of the Order must be properly rooted in the Association – this does not exclude supporting activities outside the Order but our Order's works must be in the forefront.

Prelate's opening remarks:

The formational aspect is very important; we must focus on doctrinal, liturgical, spiritual and pilgrimage – orientation of new regulations & commentary. The Chaplains are important for continuous formation and they must be committed to perform their role. Our role in the New evangelization is to protect our charism, bear witness to and promulgate our faith. Vocations are an important role in all Associations and we need to seek out suitable candidates. We must remember that Pilgrimages are at the heart of what we do.

The Plenary sessions reinforced much of the opening remarks by highlighting key points: *membership, diplomacy and Hospitaller activities.*

The challenges of our Latin American confreres and the magnitude and condition of the truly poor in their countries, convinces me further of our obligation, in North America, to become more involved in South America. This seems to be consistent with the message of the Grand Hospitaller.

Becoming more deeply rooted in the charisms of the Order, remembering that we are first and foremost a religious order, founded to help the sick, the poor and the disenfranchised while ensuring that the work of the Order can be clearly identified as such, are critical points for us in Canada to remember as we continue to develop.

Note: a more detailed summary of the conference is available through the Executive Director.



"Hospitaller activities are the essence of the Order; they provide unity of purpose. Personal participation is critical; we are chosen for sanctification."

Most Reverend Colin Campbell, B.A., M.A., R.S.W., D.D., Litt.D. (1931-2012)

By Robert Pichette, Knight Grand Cross of Grace and Devotion in Obedience



Bishop emeritus of Antigonish (N.S.) since his retirement in 2002 for health reasons, Bishop Campbell died in Halifax on Tuesday, January 17, 2012 after a long illness. Ordained bishop of Antigonish on

March 19, 1987, he became a conventual chaplain ad honorem of the Order of Malta a year later, on May 18, 1988. Never one to be content with a sinecure, he took as active a part as he could in the Order's activities, particularly in Atlantic Canada.

It is a hopeless task to try and reduce a full and active life to a few lines. Spirited, with a tremendous drive, courageous even, he was eminently pastoral having had the responsibility of several large parishes before his appointment to Antigonish. A Nova Scotia daily noted following the prelate's death that he had been "a teacher, social worker, journalist, author and administrator."

Extremely involved in social work on a large scale after having obtained a master's degree in social work from Université de Montréal,

this flawlessly bilingual Anglophone from Antigonish also studied journalism at Southern California University. For many years, he wrote a weekly religious column for the Halifax-Dartmouth dailies. To the point, fearless, they were not written in the manner of Barbara Cartland! On becoming bishop of Antigonish where the diocese owned a venerable and musty weekly, Bishop Campbell quickly put new life in the hoary paper.

A pillar of Catholic orthodoxy, Bishop Campbell had firm beliefs and opinions that he never shied from expressing, sometimes loudly but always forcefully. They bothered some and, to be frank, certain opinions were seriously flawed and carelessly tossed to the public at large. To a small clique of disgruntled persons who accused him of leaning too much to the right, Bishop Campbell replied in no uncertain terms that he was neither on the right nor on the left but that he was a Catholic bishop!

The Canadian Association of the Order of Malta has benefited greatly from the wise counsel of this exceptional chaplain. May he finally find everlasting peace in the Lord after a lifetime of unstinted service.



resident's message

By *André A. Morin, KMOB*

Membership in the Order stems from our wish to serve our Lord Jesus Christ, and, as Christians, we must strive on earth to work towards the advent of God's realm in the fullness of Christian life by helping the needy and the sick. By living fully in Christ's footsteps, we are striving for holiness in our daily tasks. In order to attain holiness in our daily lives, it is essential to live in accordance with our condition and to become involved in the works of the Order, the life of our parish and within our society. Our responsibility is to be receptive to others, to one's neighbour. The Order of Malta, a unique body of international law, is an organization urging us to achieve this goal. Indeed, it is a lay religious order, by tradition military, chivalrous and nobiliary, as defined in its Constitutional Charter.

In my view, commitment to the Order relies on the commitment to serve the needy and the sick within society. The Order of Malta is neither a social club nor a country club, and the cross we are wearing is not a decoration. It reminds us that Christ, our Saviour, died on the Cross for our redemption and the promise of eternal life. In this sense, the Constitutional Charter of the Order clearly defines its purpose. "The purpose of the Order is the promotion of the glory of God through the sanctification of its members, service to the faith and to the Holy Father, and assistance to one's neighbour, in accordance with its ancient traditions". The Order carries out its charitable works for the sick, the needy and refugees without distinction of religion, race, origin and age.

This agenda is both ambitious and very challenging. We cannot achieve this alone, but, with the help of the Church's teachings, by complying with the Magistry, by reading the Bible, by praying and by following the advice of our chaplains, we will contribute significantly to the purpose of the Order.

We should not despair, for the Holy Spirit is at work in the world and will help us to strive joyfully toward the achievement of these goals. Our Association is integral to this great project of service to the needy and the sick. I have set for myself two goals in order to help us fulfil our mission of Dames and Knights.

The first goal is member training and recruitment. The Order has implemented a training program for its members and postulants. Postulants are required to undertake one year of training about the goals and the works of the Order as well as its history. They must contribute to its works and its spiritual activities. Members are required to accompany them and help them while being involved in charitable and spiritual works of the Order. Recruitment is essential to our Association which must grow in order to fulfil the noble purpose of the Order. Recruitment must be custom-tailored, so I urge members to bring friends to our events, to talk to them about the Order as well as its history and achievements.

The second goal is field work which may take various forms, but should always be tied to the purpose of the Order, serving the sick, the needy and the refugees. In the Canadian context where the government has been responsible for many years for a large part of hospital activities and who is interested in refugees, our main task is to serve the needy. I urge you to become involved within your respective areas in activities related to this important task.

By achieving this ambitious agenda, we should always stay alert, be salt and light, and be true witnesses of Christ in the world and in our daily lives. By working to achieve the purpose of the Order, we are committing to further the human condition in order to promote respect for the human being. Our society is in great need of witnesses to announce the Gospel's message. With the help of Our Lady of Philermos, we will succeed in raising to the challenge and become Christ's witnesses in the world.

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