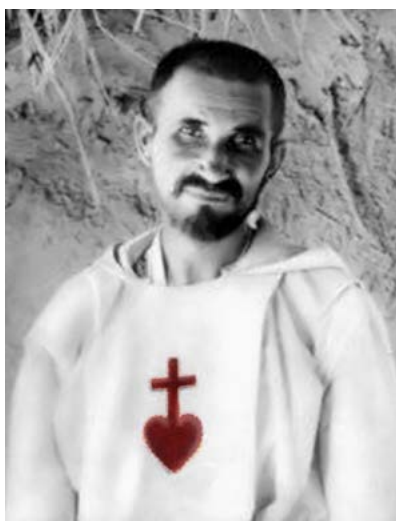




Maria Valtorta in Viareggio,
in a 1953 photo



Blessed Charles de Foucauld was born in Strasbourg, France on September 15, 1858. His taste for easy living was well known; he loved travelling, and took up a military career till he understood how God was important for his total conversion to Christianity he wanted to perfectly live through the Imitation of Christ. He spent sometime in a monastery as a Trappist, later he lived in Nazareth in the Holy Land. He wanted to be among the Tuaregs in the Sahara desert spending his last fifteen years in prayer, leading a contemplative life among those who were “the furthest removed, the most abandoned”: the last among the least of brothers and sisters.

Maria Valtorta Newsletter

Edited by Fondazione Maria Valtorta — MAY 15, 2018 — Newsletter N° 25

PROBLEMS OF THE PRESENT TIME

MARIA VALTORTA: MORE ABOUT ST. IGNATIUS AND ST. FRANCIS.

Let's add something more to what had been previously written.

“Locating God in everything” is the ultimate goal of St. Ignatius' exercises. This is the title of his last contemplation: “Contemplation to gain love” (*Spiritual Exercises*, 230-237). Therefore, the pouring prayer that flows from it, summarizes the complete conformity to Christ the Lord and the total gift of ourselves:

«Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my will – all that I have and possess. Thou gavest it to me: to Thee, Lord, I return it! All this Thine, dispose of it according to Thy will. Give me Thy love and grace, for that is enough for me».

If we would contemplate Jesus Christ Our Lord for as long as we live, we'll certainly reach conclusions, step by step, through mind change, swaying from one choice to another with the final acceptance from the bottom of our hearts. St. Francis of Assisi comes to the same fulfillment by calling “Love”, the very Jesus Christ who fascinated him. Starting with this absolute, immutable Love, he takes it and pours it into all creatures. The same creatures, through Christ Jesus, will respond to St. Francis's love by dwelling in him, they become a whole, annulling themselves, dedicating everything to the Giver of life.

More often, spiritual life's theologians make out three technical levels of a Christian life: *purification, illumination, union*.

Thanks to ascesis, we get away from all sins, through a purifying stage.

We get to know God more and more throughout illumination as a free gift received from Heaven. A even more perfect fusion always takes place, through a union among a soul and God and among God and the same soul. It's not a Buddhist fusion, nor the complete annulling of the nirvana personality; instead we have a perfect fusion of the two (God and his creature) maintaining each, an unconditional never misplaced close identity.

A mystical life or a life in God's union was once considered belonging to a third level.

From 1930s on, receiving Baptism we started a mystical life, and it has been certified even earlier by the Baptism of desire through Vatican Council II. From Baptism on, the Door is wide open.

Christ, the Door, comes into us with His transforming presence and to the extent we let Him do it. It's only the beginning and then, gradually He keeps on growing and bringing us to an upper stage till we reach the spiritual top term: our union with God. But this union is not with a philosopher God, it is indeed with the One God who revealed himself in Christ.

By all means, Christ reveals the true God, the only One who exists and lives, and He discloses Himself as a Trinity of love. There are some well sorted out words that we must carefully chose, even if sometimes they run out in a rough and inaccurate way baring the threshold. Mystical life, divine inhabitation, participation to the Divine nature, these are three terms that open to a not so obvious screen.

Christian life is not just respect for the Commandments, nor for Beatitudes and not even only for carrying out the commandment of love as we have been prescribed by Jesus. It goes over behind it. If we interpret religious life as a Promethean effort to attain the Heavenly beatitude, we are on the wrong path.

There are religious institutions that, in order to achieve their goals, make out of their personal will power and their resultant voluntary effort, a mean to achieve their goal. But Christianity does not inhabit there.

"I am the Way and the Truth and the Life", Jesus Christ's self statement who had been disclosed also by our two models (St Francis and St. Ignatius), as ultimate exertion.

As they did, we are able to find the greatest of all things, the most complete joy, love, all theoretical and practical solutions. There is nothing He is unaware of.

We've been invited by our two authors to reach that level. St. Francis called himself «*Friar Minors*», in other words the least and worthless among all brothers and sisters. He didn't make such a statement because he was able to see the lowliness of mankind; but because he saw, and contemplated, how the One of a Kind considered Himself the ultimate of the least, because of the fact that the Creator made himself flesh.

Regardless God's Creation, St. Francis contemplated His humble incarnation.

If Christian revelation upon God is His endless humility (Romano Guardini), St. Francis took knowledge of its complete fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Therefore following Jesus' footsteps, carrying out God's will, step by step, up to the most significant heights of His Passion it could mean everything but imitation of Christ's life itself.

St. Ignatius lead us in the same direction with the method of his Exercises.

Nevertheless there is a definite difference. The humility in Saint Francis is not at the end of a passage, rather at the very beginning. First of all the humility and then our ongoing, the climbing, the path. According to Fr. Divo Barsotti, blessed Charles de Foucauld carries out the same itinerary too. His total love toward the last ones, the Tuareg, in the Saharan Algeria from Tamanrasset, resembles Jesus' image always prompt into taking care of the least.



Asking God for the
Public Legitimacy
of Maria Valtorta's
virtues:

O God,
*endless and eternal Mercy,
who in Maria Valtorta,
your humble creature,
you have manifested
the wonders of your love.
Exalt this daughter of Yours
who accepted to join
your Son's Passion till her
complete consumption
in a bed of pain.*

O Lord,
*of inexhaustible goodness,
may the example
of your handmaid's life,
her heroic testimony,
her perseverance,
even offering her whole life
to convert the hearts
of sinners to light up
the love of the tepid,
surge charity in everyone.*

O Lord,
*who united to Christ,
the Man-God,
that crucified bride,
Maria Valtorta,
may the holy Church
recognize her virtues
and her mission,
and offer it to all the faithful
as a model to imitate,
and to seek intercession
through her within You.
Through Christ our Lord.*

Amen

3rd National Day
of Maria Valtorta's Friends
Paris - Saturday May 19, 2018



The French Association
MARIA VALTORTA
has organized for
Saturday May 19, 2018
the Third National Day
of "Maria Valtorta's Friends"

This event will take place in Paris
at **Notre Dame d'Auteuil**

Program of the day:

- **Holy Mass** at 9:30 am
in the crypt of the church of Auteuil
(1 rue Corot, 75016 Paris)
- **Holy Rosary** at 10:00 am
- from 10:45 am to 1:45 pm
in the Chasseloup room
(64 Avenue Théophile Gautier)
bookshopping, coffee-break, lunch



- from 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm
in **Notre Dame d'Auteuil**
(Place de l'Église d'Auteuil):

Conference

Father Ernesto Zucchini
(president of Maria Valtorta Foundation)

Testimony

Abbot Guy Pagès

Testimony

Mr. Stéphane Nadir Jah
(president of the Association Lecteurs sans frontière)

Anyone interested in participating
can contact directly the association
site and fill out a registration sheet:

www.associationmariavaltorta.fr

In the same manner he considers Jesus as the Door, the keystone of all mankind.
We are not able to thoroughly understand St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Francis and
the Blessed Charles de Foucauld if we separate them from Jesus.

Disclosing God, loving and resembling Him has become the purpose of their
entire life.

Certainly all Saints are alike, but this peculiarity it's particularly pronounced in
them.

St. Francis is the distinct Everest in the Himalayas mountain chain.

Unworldly matters merged into ordinary life. This is the meaning of the Christian
life. Let me state it again: it's not only a matter of a simple and however everlasting
effort in observing the Ten Commandments. All of which is highly elevated and
worthy of a great respect, but we are called to, too much more, and this must be well
understood. It doesn't mean increasing of performances, thus a huge outgrowth of
love. If you spend 24 hours a day praying every day, you are not able to stretch your
prayer time any longer than that. You've reached your utmost capacity. Yet you can
pray, and long for a more intense bond of union with God Himself. This desire has
no limits. Exactly like Love hasn't. Saint Francis "was crazy" of love for Christ Jesus
and nothing about Him and His existence was standing apart from Him.

Father Divo Barsotti adds another daring comparison:

*«Some spiritual men asserted that after Saint John and Saint Paul, no one else
had been a closer friend of Christ, like Francis was.*

*I'm sorry for these authors, because St. John and St. Paul were first of all the-
ologians, therefore their relationship with Jesus was less immediate and not so
personal with Him because of their theological views. St. Paul justified words were:
"In addition to the fact that we have known Christ in His flesh, we now have to admit
that this doesn't bare the truth".*

*Saint Francis wanted to meet Jesus in His flesh, in His holiness and vivid huma-
nity, in His real, concrete person. This is Francis' great originality.*

*St. Paul and St. John, are not even to compare with Francis because of the fact
that they were theologians. [...] And this is what Francis has to teach to the contem-
porary world, to all Christians nowadays: finding Jesus, loving Jesus, living with
and for Him. This is all there is to it and nothing more».*

(DIVO BARSOTTI, *San Francesco preghiera vivente*, Edizioni San Paolo s.r.l., Cinisello Balsamo
(MI), 2014², pp. 246-246).

Father Divo Barsotti writes: "To know Jesus in His flesh" speaking of St. Francis
of Assisi and his proper truthful specific.

Though Saint John was the disciple that Jesus loved most and to whom He
revealed various secrets, Saint Paul saw Jesus and experienced Him in his flesh.
And yet, according to Father Divo, they did not even come closer to Saint Francis'
Jesus. Why? Yes, they eventually covered Jesus up with theology and theological
interpretations. St. Francis didn't; his Jesus was a different one, although He was just
the same.

This passage from Blessed Charles de Foucauld can help us understanding
something more. Our friend is in Tamanrasset, deep down Algeria and while writing

to a dear friend of him (Luis Massignon) gives him some spiritual advices:

«Try to find time to read a few lines of the Holy Gospels, proceeding every day with few of them at the time, so that day by day you actually see the thickness of it before your eyes, and after reading (which does not have to be long: 10, 15, 20 lines, half a chapter at the most) you are able to mentally meditate for a few minutes or even to put down writings about the teaching from your reading. We must try to overflow ourselves with Jesus' Spirit by reading and re-reading, meditating again and again, constantly on His words and His examples. Same results as in our souls, like a drop of water that always falls on a slab of stone in the same place».

Letter to Louis Massignon, 22 July 1914.

(Cited in CHARLES DE FOUCAULD, *Opere Spirituali*, Edizioni San Paolo, Cinisello Balsamo (MI) 1997, p.194).

The text is extremely clear: *«we must try to impregnate ourselves with Jesus' Spirit»*, but at the end the aiming point is even higher.

Those suggestions are just as valid to us nowadays. Salvation is to be *«alter Christus»* even for us. Here is how our author tells us how to bear fruit with the help of this short spiritual exercise.

In these short sentences he also tells us what we should achieve:

«You must cut off everything that is not Me ... Become a desert, together with Me [Jesus]. You'll reach this stage by leaving everything behind you.

Embracing Jesus within His Nativity: humbleness, poverty, renunciation, abjection, loneliness, sufferings; without any care about human greatness, elevation, esteem toward mankind; but praising both the poorest and the richest of mankind. Always look for the least at the ultimate position, when you are searching for Me. I'll be the last, the most despised by men». (Ibj., p.22).

«However quiet our life may be, the life of Nazareth, in the desert, as well as our public life, it should be "shouting the Gospel with his life" as a good example; our whole existence as human-beings must demonstrate how passionately we proclaim the gospel: our entire body should breathe Jesus, all our acts, all our lives must cry out that we belong to Him.

We must present the image of the evangelical life; all of our being must be a living preaching, a reflection of Jesus». (Ibj., p.38).

Now it is a matter of finding out what Maria Valtorta has dispensed us through her Writings.

Father Ernesto Zucchini

Following Events
at MARIA VALTORTA
FOUNDATION:



Tuesday May 15, 2018
Holy Mass 8:30 pm
Conference 9:00 pm



at the Parish of
Sant'Andrea Ap.
#36 Paolina Bonaparte street
Viareggio (Lucca)
Italy

