

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)

*'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

EDITORIAL

Dear Maria Valtorta Readers,

Bulletin: In addition to our regular columns, there is a report on our 2018 Maria Valtorta Gathering along with useful information.

Supplement: The theme is the Suffering Souls & Purgatory and I deliberately chose passages from the three **Notebooks** because so many readers who have read the **Poem/Gospel** have been enquiring about them. However, the first passage is where Lazarus tells Jesus he loves reading books which reminds me of the people who attended the recent get-together and all Valtorta Readers worldwide.

Many Christmas blessings to you and to all yours.
Growing in faith

Catherine Loft (catherine@valtorta.org.au)

PRAYING WITH MARIA VALTORTA

O Jesus, why don't You show the whole world how handsome You are, divinely handsome and divinely good? If men saw You the way I see You, they would not be able to misunderstand Your infinite Goodness, they wouldn't refuse to love You with a love that would make them become good... I ask that You show Your loving Face in order to conquer the entire world as You have conquered me.

(Maria Valtorta Prayers, p. 34)

DAVID'S JOURNEY - CONTINUES

It never ceases to surprise me, how I discover passages from Maria's writings which I don't remember reading before. Here is another...

An Earlier Meeting with Veronica

(Travelling through the countryside with His apostles, Jesus comes upon a house on a large estate, owned by a widow called Nike - a name shortened from Veronica - who is destined to become the woman who wipes the Face of Jesus on His Way of the Cross. After receiving hospitality, Jesus speaks quietly to Nike outside the house, disclosing His true

identity, and foreshadowing the suffering He is destined to endure. Nike says:)

'...I always read the prophets with my husband. And we shuddered with horror at the words of David (Ps. 22, 31) and Isaiah (Is. 52:13 - 53:12). But will it really be like that for You?'

'That and more...'

'Oh!...Who will comfort You? Who will let You die still hopeful?'

'The love of My disciples and particularly of My women disciples.'

'Also mine, then ...Only... Oh Lord! Exact any kind of penance from me, any sacrifice, but give me manly courage for that hour when you will be like 'a dry potsherd', 'with Your tongue stuck to Your jaw' (Ps.22:15) out of thirst. When You will look 'like a leper who covers his face' (Lev.13:45), grant that I may recognise You as the King of kings, and I may assist You as a devoted servant. Do not conceal Your tortured face from me, Oh my God! But as You now allow me to delight in Your brightness, O Morning Star, let me look at You then, and may Your face be impressed in my heart, because, Oh! Also my heart, like Yours, will melt like wax on that day, through grief...'

Nike is now on her knees, almost prostrated and, now and again, she raises her weeping face to look at her Lord, Whose body is white in the white moonlight against the dark wall.

'You will have all that. And I shall have your pity. And it will come with Me to the scaffold and, from there, it will rise to Heaven. Your crown for ever. Angels and men will utter the most beautiful praise of you: 'In the hour of calamity, of sin, of doubt, she was faithful, she did not sin and she assisted her Lord.' Stand up, woman. And may you be blessed as from now and forever.' He lays His hands on her head while she is getting up, and they then go into the silent house...

(Poem, Vol. 3, pp. 651-2; Gospel, Vol. 6, p. 178)

God bless,

David Murray david@valtorta.org.au

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CATHERINE'S CLASSROOM

Dear Maria Valtorta Readers,

I wanted to end the year with a greater awareness of God's love for us at Christmas by examining more closely the place where Jesus was born in Bethlehem. So we googled the hundreds of images and artwork on the Nativity scene and they were all so 'beautiful' because the focus of the artists was on the real meaning and the real focus of Christmas - the birth of Jesus with Mary and Joseph. We then revisited both Matthew's and Luke's accounts in the bible for a description of the birthplace itself. This was limited to the 'stable' and the 'manger' with the description of the place itself not adequately captured. So I tried to take them back in time to enhance their sense of sight, touch and smell through the writings of Maria Valtorta. First we read about Joseph and Mary finding the stable where they had to endure the cold night. (*Poem, Vol. 1, pp.136-8,141-2; Gospel, Vol. 1 pp.171-3,177-8*). The class found this moving because they could actually sense the climate, the layout and the discomfort of the 'den', as well as the distress Joseph felt in trying to keep baby Jesus and Mary warm. However, I needed to take the class one step further so that they could fully see the love that God had for us through the pity, the disgust and the reverence expressed by the apostles 30 years later when Jesus took them there. And who better to activate all their five senses of His birthplace than Jesus himself.

'Come in' says the Master lifting the lamp. 'Come in. This is the nativity room of the King of Israel.'

'You must be joking, Master! This is a filthy den. Ah! I am not going to stay here! I loathe it: it is damp, cold, stinking, full of scorpions and perhaps also snakes...' says Judas.

'And yet... My friends, here the night of the twenty-fifth of Chislev, Feast of the Lights, Jesus Christ, was born of the Virgin, the Immanuel, the Word of God made flesh for the love of man: I Who am speaking to you. Also then, as now, the world was deaf to the voices of Heaven speaking to the hearts of men... and it rejected the Mother... and here... No, Judas, do not avert your eyes in disgust from those floating noctules, from those green lizards, from those cobwebs. Do not lift with disgust your beautiful embroidered mantle, lest it may trail on the ground covered with animal excrement. Those noctules are the daughters' daughters of the ones that were the first toys to be tossed before the eyes of the Child, for Whom the angels sang the "Gloria" heard by the shepherds, intoxicated only by an ecstatic joy, a true joy. The emerald green of those lizards was the first colour to strike My eyes, the first, after My Mother's white face and dress. Those cobwebs were the canopy of My royal cradle. This ground... Oh! You may tread on it without disdain... It is littered with excrement... but it is sanctified by... the foot of the Most Holy, Pure, Immaculate Mother of God... She,

the Faultless One, trod on it. You can tread on it, too. And may the purity diffused by Her, by the will of God, rise from the soles of your feet to your heart...' Simon is on his knees. John goes straight to the manger and cries, leaning his head against it. Judas is terrified... he is overcome by emotion, and no longer worried about his beautiful mantle, he kneels on the ground, takes the edge of Jesus' tunic and kisses it, and beats his breast...

'Now we will sleep where the Infant and the Virgin slept, over there where John has taken the place of the adoring Mother, here where Simon looks like My putative father. Or, if you prefer so, I will speak to you of that night...' (*Poem, Vol.1, pp.380-1; Gospel, Vol.1 pp.458-9*)

The class realised that it was Jesus, Mary and Joseph who adorned this otherwise humanly uninhabitable place. My hope was that these passages would bring them a new awareness of how much God humbled Himself and how much more we should really **Love God** on Christmas night.

I planted the seed.

Catherine (catherine@valtorta.org.au)

MARIA VALTORTA READERS' GROUP ANNUAL GATHERING

On Sunday 14 October around the anniversary of the death of Maria Valtorta, a small group of Readers gathered for the day. A brief introduction was all we needed because a bond was felt amongst us immediately. Faces were beaming with smiles while meeting other like-minded people.

We began the morning with Holy Mass. On our return, we listened to the Maria Valtorta equivalent of that Sunday's canonised Gospel reading. Soon after, we commenced with a prayer and, with a cup of tea or coffee in hand, we introduced ourselves to others, informing them of how we first came in contact with Maria's Works. It seems that reading these Works impacted us all instantly: so much so, that at some point, we were all trying to share these works with our family and friends but to no avail. This prompted the reading of a letter from a reader which stimulated even more discussion about the connection we have with these Works and the difficulty that it can generate when we attempt to reach out to others (cf. Letters). Suggestions were then made about how to more effectively introduce or invite others to read these works (cf. Suggestions).

Just as Lazarus had a love of reading, we had gathered to share our love of reading too. I had asked that people bring in their favourite Valtorta passages to share on the day but this had been overlooked. However, that was not a problem because just as Maria said, '*...I open a book of the Gospel or the Bible, at random, as is my habit...*' (*Notebooks 1943, p.226*), we did the same thing from Maria's many Works because each and every passage is meaningful to read or to listen to in so many ways. After a break for lunch and an

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opportunity to browse the books, we gathered again and prayed the Scripture Rosary from the Blue Booklet. This prayer time led by David Murray was particularly calming and peaceful.

In no time, it was back to reading more passages and sharing thoughts about them over another cuppa, only this time, a couple of Readers who had travelled to the Holy Land commented on what Maria had written in her writings and what they looked out for while they were there. These Readers had physically experienced first-hand the places where Jesus had once walked and the air He breathed while Maria, who had described it in so much detail, had never physically ventured from her bed. This sharing about the Holy Land and referencing back to Maria's Works was very stimulating indeed. We ended the day with a thankful prayer and the promise to meet again next year where I hope many others will be able to join us.

We may have only met that day physically, but there was no doubt that we were more than that - we were kindred spirits.

CATALOGUE 2019

Attached is the 2019 catalogue (no price increase). Maria's **Autobiography** is still available at half price. We do have a few **Gospel** editions (Volumes 4, 5, 8 & 10) that have a slight cover damage at a reduced price of \$27.00.

STEPHEN'S UPDATE

Dear Valtorta Readers,

There are some new updates to our website.

In the peer-reviewed journal, *Religions*, published by Swiss publisher MDPI, Professor Emilio Matricciani (of the Department of Electronics, Information, and Bioengineering (DEIB) at the Polytechnic of Milan) and Dr. Liberato De Caro (of the Institute of Crystallography, National Research Council (IC-CNR), Bari Polytechnic,) there's a co-authored article entitled "A Mathematical Analysis of Maria Valtorta's Mystical Writings". Read the article on our website here: <http://www.valtorta.org.au/a-mathematical-analysis-of-maria-valtortas-mystical-writings.html>

A French Valtorta fan created a beautiful video, "Maria Valtorta - Life in Pictures - Biographical Video from 60 Archive Photos". I assisted him with creating an English version which we recently published. You can view the video on our website page here: http://www.valtorta.org.au/Valtorta_Person_Works.html

The Maria Valtorta Foundation in Viareggio, Italy (distinct from the Maria Valtorta Foundation CEV Onlus) has been translating their newsletters into English and have provided them to us. These newsletters contain insights into Maria Valtorta's life from works not yet translated into English and so provide new content you have not likely read yet.

You can download these newsletters on our new website page here:

<http://www.valtorta.org.au/maria-valtorta-foundation.php>

Lastly, I uploaded a new audio on our website here: <http://www.valtorta.org.au/holy-family-chaplet.html>

This audio is a chaplet that David Murray created that contains meditations from Maria Valtorta's writings that pertain to the Holy Family.

I hope you enjoy these exciting new contents: a peer-reviewed scientific study, a biographical video of Maria Valtorta showcasing 60 archive photos, English newsletters from a Maria Valtorta Foundation in Italy, and new Valtorta audio!

God bless you all!

Stephen (stephen@valtorta.org.au)

REQUEST

Drew from California would like to make contact with a few Readers from the States to share thoughts and questions about passages from Maria Valtorta's writings. His email address is: Unidrew@aol.com

SUGGESTION

The most effective and the most inexpensive way to share these works with others.

1. Photocopy any of the 4-page Supplements on a particular theme from my emails to you or from our Maria Valtorta Readers' Group website.
2. Buy one of the many affordable thematic booklets on our catalogue (Joe Mifsud from Queensland has been handing out hundreds of the *Passion* booklets for years which has resulted in people buying their own set of volumes).
3. As a Christmas gift, combine three booklets from our Catalogue.

Any of these ideas are affordable, they will not overwhelm a new reader, and you will not lose a volume from your precious set.

LETTERS

Regarding the gathering, I really and truly enjoyed the whole spiritual experience. It was very uplifting to my soul to share that time with like-minded people. And the [scriptural] Rosary we prayed was truly special - the best two decades I have ever said. The next day I really experienced a beautiful sense of peace, and four days later, I still feel very calm and peaceful. PTL. So thank-you for organising the beautiful day. **Len Moore, Victoria, Australia**

A few weeks ago I sent the list of Bishops etc. who approved of *The Poem of the Man-God* to Cardinal Thomas Williams, who is Archbishop Emeritus of Wellington, NZ. Knowing that he had read this work, and approved it, I asked if he would be happy for his name to be added to the list of Approvals. Here is his very humble reply: 'I have no objection to my name being added to the list you sent me. It belongs

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to the list of bishops and not at all to the list of "Highly Learned Clerics" much less to the list of Saints, Venerables, etc.'

So that is really good news, especially for us New Zealanders. Would you please add his name to the list. **(From our New Zealand agent, Gwen Story)**

(Ed: I have added him to our 2-page list while Stephen Austin has added him to the 7-page Approval list in his Summa. too. Great news indeed!)

God bless you for the great work that you are doing. I pray for all the people who are promoting this incredible work because in my eyes, it is an appendix updating the Bible to meet the needs of a world visually oriented in this time of history. The intimacy of walking with Jesus and his apostles, disciples, and followers is the greatest experience that bonds me to them; overriding the time distance of many centuries. **Marie Fitzgerald, Queensland**

I originally discovered the books of Maria Valtorta at the age of 33 after reading the bible for the first time in my life and trying to make sense of it.

I loved these books as soon as I read just one paragraph from a volume in an Irish Catholic bookshop one day when I happened to be in the city by coincidence. (I now know that God had a hand in this). I was not a particularly religious person, but I immediately felt that this work was supernatural. I purchased the whole 5-volume set of the *Poem of the Man-God* that very day, which was a great expense for me; and I proceeded to read them.

Shortly after this, I went on an overseas trip to Italy to see my sister and that's when I met my wife-to-be. We were married in June 1999. She was Catholic and I was so excited that I could share this great work with her that I purchased the whole ten volumes in Italian for her and gave them to her as a wedding gift.

After we were married, I realised that although Catholic, my wife had never read the bible and, like myself, had no real concept of what it truly meant to live the Catholic faith according to the Word of God. She immediately rejected the books of Valtorta: she couldn't stand them. She had an intense revulsion for them and still has. I was heartbroken. We fought about them and the bible for seven years. Every time I picked them up, she would carry on and say things like 'You and those stupid books!' and I eventually put them to one side and did not open them again for over a decade.

Our son was born in 2001. He was a healthy child but at 15 months, he started to show signs of regressive autism. Although we were not familiar with any of this, we were told by a doctor that he would grow out of it in the next year and a half. But at three years of age, in 2004, he was diagnosed with severe autism. He was given no hope by the Doctors. So I took it upon myself to research and

study the condition for many years in order to help him.

How many times I wanted to be a normal father to my son and speak to him about so much in life, but he was very intellectually challenged. Even in his teenage years, I had given up hope this could ever happen but it did. At around the age of 16, I read him the first chapter of Maria Valtorta's Volume 1 of the *Poem of the Man-God* and he was struck by the theme of purity. He asked me to keep reading it and we have now finished Volume 1 of the 5-volume edition. He asks me every night to read it to him and he never lets me forget. He loves it and it has given him such a fervent love for Jesus and knowledge about Him. My wife has tried many times to stop this in various subtle ways, but without success, as he WANTS this read to him every night. He never lets me forget. I also asked my wife to pray with me many times and she has refused to for 20 years, but now my son asks me to pray the rosary every night while my wife sits with her 'friends' on Facebook from the time we finish the evening meal to almost midnight every night. My son now expresses to me what a waste of time Facebook and TV are compared to heavenly things like prayer, the bible and Maria Valtorta.

I have shown this work to members of my family and to my wife's family, all of whom have shown no interest.

Never in my wildest dreams did I ever imagine that of all the people I have invited to read Valtorta, that the one person who would come to love it as much as I do and see the supernatural in it would be my autistic son. God has truly blessed me and filled a void in my heart. **A MV Reader from Australia.**

SUBSCRIPTIONS - HARDCOPY

Many readers do not have access to a cheque book or online banking while others find it difficult to visit a bank. So for those whose subscriptions are due (see below), you are welcome to pay your \$10.00 annual fee in postage stamps if that is more convenient.

- Subscription for 2019 is due if ticked.)

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 3 months. A subscription of \$10.00 per year is requested (no charge for priests and religious). E-mail 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.]