

MARIA VALTORTA READERS GROUP

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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

PRAYING WITH MARIA VALTORTA

Protect us, O Queen, against dangers of all kinds, and protect the mission of your Son, who came to bring peace to the world at the cost of his suffering. One day, you said: 'Let it be done according to the word of God,' and these words determined the beginning of Salvation for the human race.

(Maria Valtorta Prayers, p. 28)

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

Dear Maria Valtorta Readers,

Bulletin: As from this 100th edition of the Bulletin, I am introducing a new column which will visit Stephen Austin's, *The Summa and Encyclopaedia of Maria Valtorta's Extraordinary Work* which is on our website. This 1400-page document is extraordinary in itself and I marvel at the factual detail and research. So I hope you enjoy this edition's excerpt in the **Browsing the Summa** column. Every so often, I randomly peruse *The Summa* and find factual material of great interest. However, the more I read this impressive and persuasive document, the more it pains me that Maria Valtorta has not been considered for canonisation. Such an injustice. Yet, I would be giving you the wrong idea if it were Maria's recognition I hoped for because I know that Maria, herself, never wanted this. She always wanted to remain obedient to the Church and remain unknown. In my mind, it is more the case that if acknowledgement were given to Maria, then the whole world would more readily embrace this incomparable work. These writings would support the Magisterium's teachings and its preservation of the faith with clarity and conviction, and without a

skerrick of ambiguity. A large number of our readers introduce Valtorta's work to others in the hope that it will enhance their love and understanding of the Gospel and the faith, and that it will be embraced by everyone. But we must remember that we have been blessed with so many apparitions, mystics and writings that to choose one devotion over another is difficult too. So let us content ourselves with the gift we have received through Valtorta's work and leave the rest to God.

Supplement: In the December issues, there is usually something Christmas-related. However, due to the severe lockdown in Melbourne, Australia, throughout 2020, which closed our churches and denied us the sacraments, I found there was little hope in looking forward as there is still no guarantee of Christmas Masses for everyone. And yet, it would be remiss of me not to look forward with hope for the love, joy and peace of Christmas. So thanks to the Readers who have contributed Christmas passages and to my RE class, who reminded me of God's beautiful creation of Angels and Archangels on which this supplement is focused.

I wish you and all yours a holy and blessed Christmas even if restrictions mean it can only be celebrated with those living at home. Don't be too disheartened, after all, the first Christmas was just like that – three people: Mary, Joseph and JESUS!

Growing in faith,
Catherine Loft (catherine@valtorta.org.au)

DAVID'S JOURNEY - CONTINUES

The very first bulletin was sent out in April 1996, four years after I discovered the writings of Maria Valtorta when I re-joined the Catholic Church after some years of wandering. Here are some opening words of this first bulletin:

'In my enthusiasm for reading and telling about the writings of Maria Valtorta, I had thought of certain ways of passing on information and knowledge about what has been one of the most wonderful

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discoveries of my life. A trip to Canada (and meetings with two significant figures in the Maria Valtorta Research Society), and Italy (where while visiting Maria Valtorta's tomb in Florence I had an encounter with the publisher of The Poem of the Man-God) provided access to much new material, and gave this 'mission' some initial direction.

If this territory is new to you, I hope and pray that this and future bulletins will stimulate your interest in the writings of Maria Valtorta, a 20th century mystic and victim-soul, and the accounts of what she witnessed and what she heard. If you have read The Poem... and/or some of the other publications of her writings, I believe that, like me, you will never want to stop reading more and more of these wonderful revelations.'

Over the following 24 years, subsequent bulletins have offered two main features:

Firstly, a multitude of readers' wonderful letters describing their particular experiences with Maria's writings; and secondly, extracts from the Valtorta books on particular themes, and details of booklets and audio recordings produced by the Readers' Group on such themes.

These bulletins, coupled with get-togethers around Australia and in a number of countries in various parts of the world, have provided opportunities to readers for the sharing with others how they discovered Maria Valtorta, and how her readings have changed their lives. These occasions might be the first and/or only opportunity they have for such sharing.

A particular blessing has occurred with the passing on of the Readers' Group's management to Catherine Loft six years ago, and her regular contributions to – and her sending out of hard and email copies of – the quarterly bulletins, to Readers Group members in Australia and in many other parts of the world.

Two other blessings have been (a) the emergence of Stephen Austin in the United States, with his wonderful "summa" – like listings of questions and answers concerning Maria Valtorta's writings, his taking over of the management and updating of the Readers' Group website; and (b) the ready help of Queenslander Johnny Cantarella, an expert in all matters concerning computers and the internet.

And what now?

As people grow older, I'm told that the last thing to go is their listening. For many of them, to this I would couple their memories of music. In recent years, I've been visiting a number of nursing homes, singing songs they know, assisted by backing tracks downloaded from the internet. This activity has ceased for the past eight months because of a second-wave of corona virus here in Victoria. However, during the past week, I've been able to resurrect a group with whom I can sing via the Zoom facility. As Christmas is soon coming, I'm looking forward to resuming

nursing home visits and sharing some Christmas songs with the residents - including: 'Silent Night', 'Mary, Did You Know?', 'What Child is This?', and a favourite of mine, 'When a Child is Born'.

Finally, for many years, I've prayed every day that the Good Lord may bless and keep all of you who read the writings of Maria Valtorta, and all those with whom you come in contact.

I wish you all a happy and holy Christmas,
David Murray (david@valtorta.org.au)

CATHERINE'S CLASSROOM

In our Junior RE class, we were studying a unit on creation. From the bible, we listed what was created on Days 1-6 but the class questioned the difference between Days 1 and 4 where on the former, God created Light while on the latter, God created the sun, moon and stars which were also forms of Light. I was impressed with this observation so I informed them that St. Augustine (after whom one of our school Houses was named) proposed that on Day 1, the Light that God created were the Angels. After all, they were already present when Adam and Eve committed the first sin, and the Cherubims were there with their flaming swords to keep them out of the Garden of Eden. I told the class about the nine choirs and how each level had far more knowledge and authority than the level below them. (They were fascinated.) Furthermore, the various choirs all had different roles. The first three were in Management with God. The second three choirs were in charge of keeping the Universe running smoothly while the job of the last three was to look after the earth and all God's creatures. Regarding the universe, I wanted them to see the wonder of God the Creator so we looked at a few Hubble images and then I showed them Francis Chan's, *The Pancake Illustration* on YouTube, which they found very impressive and mind boggling. In fact, while they were watching it, I couldn't help but recall what Maria Valtorta said about Our Lady - how before she was born into human life, Mary played in the universe. What a beautiful image... but I kept that one to myself.

They asked me what it meant when it says that after creating Light on Day 1, 'God separated the light from the darkness' so continuing on the thread of St. Augustine, I informed them of the battle that took place in Heaven between Lucifer who was in the first choir and St. Michael who was in the eighth and yet the Archangel defeated him! I also mentioned how one third of heaven chose to leave God because of pride. After St Michael's victory, they wondered what this Archangel looked like so I read them excerpts (in the Supplement) which clearly allowed them to visualise St. Michael in human terms and highlighted so many references to Light that Maria Valtorta points out in each of the descriptions of the Archangels. The class could now understand why St. Augustine made that connection. I continued to add that the Book of Revelation tells us that Our Mother

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Mary will combat the demons of Hell in the final battle, that St. Michael will be with her leading the Army, with the promise that they will be victorious. (Hence the image of Our Lady, Jesus and St. Michael in this bulletin.) However, I pointed out that in between this initial battle in Genesis and the final battle in Revelation, the negative impact of evil has been very rampant and purposeful for hundreds of years, including in the present time. So I showed them the powerful St. Michael prayer given to the world by Pope Leo XIII, which he wanted everyone to pray.

I planted the seed.

Catherine (catherine@valtorta.org.au)

BROWSING THE SUMMA

At the top of every Bulletin edition, the words of Pope Pius XII are quoted but in *The Summa & Encyclopedia to Maria Valtorta's Extraordinary Work*, the author and our webmaster, Stephen Austin, presents this quotation in context which is factual, reassuring and uplifting at the same time.

'A high-ranking prelate personally handed Pope Pius XII a 12-volume typewritten copy of the Poem of the Man-God in 1947. In the following months, the priest who was in charge of postal delivery directly to Pope Pius XII's desk, saw the bookmark in Valtorta's writings on his desk moving forward day by day. After these volumes were evaluated by the Pope, he granted a special audience with the three Servites of Mary in charge of this work: Fr. Corrado M. Berti, O.S.M. (professor of dogmatic and sacramental theology at the Pontifical Marianum Theological Faculty in Rome from 1939 onward, and Secretary of that Faculty from 1950 to 1959), Fr. Romualdo M. Migliorini (Prefect Apostolic in Africa), and Fr. Andrew M. Cecchin (Prior of the International College of the Servites of Mary in Rome). At this audience, as Bishop of Rome and the Vicar of Christ, Pope Pius XII commanded them to publish it, saying: "Publish it just as it is. There is no need to give an opinion as to whether it is of supernatural origin. Those who read it will understand." Father Berti testifies: "I asked the Pope if we should remove the inscriptions: 'Visions' and 'Dictations' from *The Poem* before publishing it. And he answered that nothing should be removed." Frs. Berti, Migliorini, and Cecchin documented the Pope's words immediately afterwards. Fr. Berti's signed testimony is located in Isola del Liri, Italy (and is also viewable online). Pope Pius XII's audience with these three priests was also historically documented the next day, February 27, 1948, in the Vatican's newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano*. These three ecclesiastical eyewitnesses were of distinguished repute, and it may be worth mentioning that in a court of law in the United States, only two eyewitnesses are necessary to convict someone with the death penalty. [Therefore], this command of Pope Pius XII in front of three witnesses made it just as binding as a command in writing,

according to the 1918 Code of Canon Law, which was in force in 1948. Cardinal Edouard Gagnon (who had a Doctorate in Theology and taught canon law for ten years at the Grand Seminary) writing to the Maria Valtorta Research Center from the Vatican on October 31, 1987, referred to Pope Pius XII's action as: "The type of official Imprimatur granted before witnesses by the Holy Father in 1948." It is also of significance that Cardinal Gagnon was known as a specialist of censorship, a theme for which he had written a reference book in 1945: *The Censorship of Books* (Éditions Fides, Montreal, 222 pages). The word imprimatur merely means "it may be printed" (in Latin: "let it be printed"). Here the Pope went further: he commanded them, "Publish this work just as it is." Furthermore, the contents were deemed acceptable and very good to his judgment, for he said: "Publish this work just as it is." Pope Leo X stated at the Fifth Lateran Council: "When it is a question of prophetic revelations, the Pope is the sole judge!"

(Austin, Stephen: *The Summa & Encyclopaedia to Maria Valtorta's Extraordinary Work*, pp.5-6)

READERS' CHOICE

The story of Christmas from Valtorta's work is often read in the lead up to Jesus' birth, and this year will be no exception. But I selected this passage of the Visit of the Magi because not only was it documented that the poor and simple shepherds were led to the stable in Bethlehem, but the rich and the learned Magi were drawn there too. Everyone is invited to discover, love and adore Jesus but it is up to us to accept the call.

(L. Carbone, Perth, Australia)

The oldest of the Magi speaks on behalf of them all. He explains to Mary that one night the previous December, they saw a new star of an unusual brightness appear in the sky. The maps of the sky had never shown or mentioned such a star. Its name was unknown because it had no name. Born out of the bosom of God, it had flourished to tell men a blessed truth, a secret of God. But men had not paid any attention to it because their souls were steeped in mud. They did not lift their eyes to God, neither could they read the words that He writes with stars of fire in the vault of Heaven. May He be blessed forever. They had seen it and had striven to understand its meaning. They were happy to give up the little sleep they usually granted themselves and forgetting even their food, they devoted themselves entirely to studying the zodiac. [They studied] the conjunctions of the stars, the time, the season, the calculation of the hours passed, and the astronomic combinations had told them the name and the secret of the star. Its name: Messiah. Its secret: 'The Messiah had come to our world'. And they had set out to worship Him. Each of them unknown to the others. Over mountains, across deserts, along valleys and rivers, travelling by night they had come

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towards Palestine, because the star was moving in that direction. For each of them, from three different points on the earth, it was going in that direction. And then they met beyond the Dead Sea. God's will had gathered them there, and they then proceeded together, understanding one another, notwithstanding that each spoke his own language: by a miracle of the Eternal Father, they were able to understand and speak the language of each country.

(Poem, Vol.1, pp.171-2; Gospel, Vol.1, p.211)

[Ed. How interesting that St. Gaspar del Bufalo was born on 6 January, the feast of the Epiphany, and at his Baptism on that very same day, he was given the name Gaspar Melchior Balthazar, the names of all three Magi!]

READERS' CHOICE

When we read about the birth of Jesus, we always see it from the perspective of an audience looking at the physical journey of a pregnant Mary in human terms but in this passage, Jesus fills us with the spiritual fire of love burning within Mary.

(E. Dwyer, Queensland, Australia)

Jesus says: 'If all women, who are not depraved, experience the ecstasy of female bliss when thinking of the joy of approaching motherhood, what ecstasy must my holy Mother have reached when She was now close to her sublime motherhood? She gazed at her inviolate womb and saw it as the ciborium of the living God. She felt another heart beating and knew it was the Heart of a God made flesh. [...] This Creature, already perfect in prayer, enclosed Herself in mystical veils to isolate Herself in a spiritual retreat which, the closer the event came to taking place, grew more and more. The journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem was made by Mary as if She were surrounded by a mystical enclosure, open only towards Heaven, which came closer and closer to Her so as to be over Her with all its splendours, its angelic processions, its celestial harmonies, like the veil of a royal canopy embroidered with jewels. She was already in ecstasy. And the crowd that saw a silent man passing, leading by the bridle a donkey that a woman hardly more than a girl, totally absorbed in her inner thought, was mounted upon, [...] Pale and meek, She was going to meet Love, no longer only an embrace of spiritual fire, but the warmth of real flesh that was a woman's but that was God. [...]

Like sparks dancing in a fire, the creatures chosen by God for ecstasy live in a feast of splendours, in a roar of divine flames, of a fusing of the spark with the flame to live, be inflamed, and inflame more and more. [...] Mary had the most holy Fire in Herself and was fire. And the laws of life were almost annulled by this living with burning passion. And the more the fire approached to turn into the newborn Flesh, the more they were annulled, so that in the blessed moment of my appearing in the world, She sank into ecstasy,

into the splendour of the Centre of Fire, from which She emerged bearing in her arms the Flower of Love, passing from the voices of the divine Flame to the angelic melodies, from the blazing of the Trinity, contemplated to the point of fusion, to the vision of the angelic choirs descending to make the announcement to the Earth and the promise of Peace. And to form a ring around the Queen Mother, the Mother of the King of kings. And after having embraced God with her enraptured spirit, She embraced the Son of God, her Son, with her arms.'

(Notebooks 1943, pp.511-3)

LETTERS

I just want to thank you for sending the bulletin. There are so many distractions and the Covid virus doesn't help. I had a series of visions in the 80's, which I did not deserve nor expect, that led me to Maria Valtorta. I think Jesus said, 'The sheep know the shepherd's voice' and I heard it in the work of Maria Valtorta and I never didn't hear it. I spent decades involved with the work and it was like a telephone to God. Sadly, except possibly for one person (to whom I gave a copy of volume 2 and they created an altar in their home) I was alone in this belief. I had lots of mini miracles happen while I was reading the books and I tried to share it when I thought it would help. In a memoir class, I wrote an 11-page paper called "Why?" in which I summed up my major religious events and, at the end, I asked 'Why?' Why did God present me with all this information and miracles and yet leave me alone? So, I opened one of the Valtorta's books at random, as was my custom, and began reading 'Alone? You? You are never alone, I am always with you.' Since then, I've gotten off track and involved with a time-consuming project, so it's nice to get your bulletins and be reminded that I need to re-connect with God. Thanks again and all the best to you and yours.

Gary Hurley, USA.

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- **Subscription for 2021 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 three months. A subscription of \$10.00 per year is requested (no charge for priests and religious). Email 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.]