

When she was nine she asked her parents to enter a monastery; they opposed this wish, not certain of the will of God. But after she had prayed fervently that opinions might be changed, she was allowed to join the Sisters of Monte Pulciano who were living under the Rule of Saint Augustine. They soon venerated her as resembling an angel of paradise. When she reached the age of fourteen, to test her they assigned to her the prosaic duties of stewardess of her monastery, an office in which she would have to provide for the material needs of the Sisters and keep accounts; they wanted to see whether these occupations would detach her from her spirit of uninterrupted prayer. They were edified to see her carry out her duties cheerfully, in perfect obedience, without murmuring in any way and without her piety being in any way altered. Whenever a Sister needed any service, the response of Saint Agnes was always characterized by grace and charity.

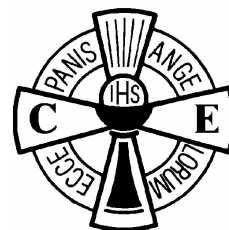


Saint Agnes already had the reputation of sanctity; a number of persons had seen her raised in the air nearly two feet above ground. And when the residents of Procena, a neighboring town, decided to build a monastery for their daughters, they came to ask for her as its first Superior. She was at that time fifteen years old, and her humility was affrighted by this request. But she was commanded by the Sovereign Pontiff to accept the office as proposed. This experience would prepare her for a later important work, that of founding a large monastery in honor of the Mother of God at Monte Pulciano; the Blessed Virgin had already appeared to her and told her that it would be founded on faith in the *Most High and undivided Trinity*.

As the years passed, it occurred sometimes that where she knelt in prayer, flowers sprang up — violets, lilies and roses. One year, during the night of the Assumption, the Mother of the Saviour appeared to her again and placed the Infant Jesus in her arms. Saint Agnes succeeded in founding the foretold monastery, in which she presided over twenty cloistered Dominican Sisters; an Angel had told her to establish it under the Rule of Saint Dominic.

During her last illness, she was sent to bathe in curative waters; during her journey there she brought back to life a child who had drowned. Her health did not improve, but a spring welled up nearby which cured others and was named the *water of Saint Agnes*. Saint Agnes returned to her monastery and prepared for death. She died at the age of 43 on April 20, 1317. Miracles occurred at her tomb, as they had during her lifetime, and she was beatified in 1534, canonized in 1726. Her first biographer was Raymond of Capua, the confessor of Saint Catherine of Siena.

If you wish to contribute or share with others in this bulletin, please contact Fr. Biérier in Dun Laoghaire. Email : bierer@sspx.net Eucharistic Crusade, 12 Tivoli Terrace South, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin



Handmaids of Christ and Children of Mary

Supplement to the Bulletin of the Eucharistic Crusade in Ireland

April 2008
Month of the Resurrection

This leaflet is intended for high-school girls. Being part of the Eucharistic Crusade, you receive the bulletin of the Crusade and pray for the intentions of the Crusade. As girls, Our Lady is your special model. Therefore as well as being Crusaders and Handmaids of Christ, you are also Children of Mary. The purpose of these few pages is to help you in your spiritual life.

AN EASY WAY TO BECOME A SAINT By Fr Paul O'Sullivan, OP

Chapter 4 - GOD'S GREATEST PROOF OF LOVE (1)

THE INCARNATION

God, as St. Paul tells us, has poured out all the treasures of His infinite love for us in the mystery of the Incarnation. "What could I do for My vineyard that I have not done." Even God could do no more, could give no greater, no clearer, no proof of love more manifest than by becoming man for us.

He, the Omnipotent Creator, the God Whom the Angels adore in Heaven, became a little babe, passed nine months in His Mother's womb, was born in a stable between two animals, lived for 30 years a hidden life----poor, humble and despised. This was followed by three years of public life in which He did all that God could do to win our love. Finally, He suffered a most ignominious and cruel death. Yet all these Divine efforts to make us love Him are nullified by our incredible lack of appreciation.

Let us try to repair this hateful ingratitude by carefully pondering on the touching events in Our Lord's life. Let us try to rouse ourselves from this fatal lethargy, this insane want of appreciation of God's mercies and love.

We cannot say in truth that we have not seen God, for He became man expressly to show Himself to us. He remained on Earth 33 years that we might know Him as He

is, that we might see for ourselves His infinite goodness, sweetness and love and thus be drawn and compelled to love Him in return. We are in one way more privileged than the Angels themselves, for God never became an Angel; He never took the Angelic Nature; He never raised it up to the dignity of the Godhead, as He did our human nature. He remained on Earth 33 years, and His life can be summarized in these few words: "He went about doing good to all." He consoled the sorrowful and cured the sick, the lame, the blind, the deaf and the dumb. He cleansed the poor lepers and brought them back to their homes, from which they had been driven. He raised the dead to life. What a story of love!

The multitudes thronged around Him, gazing on His Divine Face in raptures of joy, listening spell-bound to His words. One poor woman, speaking for all, cried out: "Blessed is the womb that bore Thee and the breasts that gave Thee suck!" What an outburst of admiration! With good reason God's priests repeat every day in their Divine Office these beautiful words. The crowds followed Him for long hours, even for entire days at a time, listening to Him, loving Him, charmed by His unceasing proofs of love and pity. Seeing a poor widow weeping bitterly over her dead son, He was filled with pity and raised the boy to life and gave him back to his sorrowing mother.

He assisted at a wedding feast, and when the wine went short, He worked His first miracle and turned water into wine, lest the young couple might suffer shame! How tenderly He showed His love for Peter, asking him three times, "Lovest thou me more than these? . . . Lovest thou me?" (Jn. 21:15, 16, 17).

At the Last Supper He allowed John to recline his head on His Divine Bosom. What ineffable love! John never did anything that pleased Jesus so much. What, indeed, could be more affectionate, more tender! He loved to visit Martha and Mary in their home at Bethania, and when their brother Lazarus died, He, the Son of God, wept over His dear friend. Seeing the sorrow of Martha and Magdalen, He raised their brother to life, though he had been dead for four days.

All His life was one long series of these wonderful proofs of affection and love. The more we read the wonderful story of Jesus, the more we must love Him. We read stories of great men, of heroes, of heroines of charity and feel thrilled at what they have done, wishing only that we could do likewise. What romance, what human story recounts the touching incidents that we meet with in every page of the Gospels.

Why do we not read every day these divinely inspired pages. Why not meditate on the countless proofs of love our sweet Lord has given us? Though we do not live in the time of Christ, though we do not look on His Divine countenance, we have the fullest, clearest chronicle of all He said and did. If we only read these pages, we will not complain that we do not see our Dear Lord.

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(Continues next month)

Instruction upon meditation

Meditation, or mental prayer, is a devout and fruitful consideration of Divine things, and of all that is conducive to the acquirement of virtue and of eternal salvation. Refer to the previous issue of this bulletin to learn how to make meditation properly. Remember that the Handmaids must meditate 15 minutes every day. St Teresa of Avila says that he who spends 15mn a day in mental prayer cannot be lost.

If you do not know how to meditate on heavenly things, direct your thoughts to Jesus Christ's passion and willingly behold His sacred wounds. If you turn devoutly to the wounds and precious stigmata of Jesus Christ, you will find great comfort in suffering, you will mind but little the scorn of men, and you will easily bear their slanderous talk.

Imitation of Christ, Book 2, Chapter 1 "On Meditation"

17th Meditation – On Eternity - 2

We are at the very entrance of eternity; for the longest life is a mere point when compared with it. « The number of man's day is at most a hundred years » and « as a drop of water unto the sea, and as one grain unto the sand on the sea shore, so are a thousand years unto the days of eternity. » In the course of a the few thousand years that have been elapsed since the creation of the world, what myriads of immortal souls have passed into the bosom of eternity! I am still awaiting my turn: it is coming, it may, perhaps, come before I lie down to rest this night; but if it is delayed, it must inevitably come within a few years.

Spiritual Bouquet: The Son of man is to come with His Angels in the glory of His Father, and then He will render to everyone according to his works. St. Matthew 16:27

SAINT AGNES of MONTE PULCIANO

Virgin (1274-1317)

Saint Agnes was born in Italy in 1274, a gentle future glory of the Order of Saint Dominic. Her father was an eminent Christian who dwelt in the village of Gracciano Vecchio, near the Lake of Perugia in central Italy. On the very day of her birth a first miracle announced to those present that this was a predestined child: mysterious burning torches appeared, shining brilliantly near her crib. Already at the age of four the little girl used to retire in solitude to pray to Jesus, her love.