



*Militia Immaculata Okanagan*

## NEWSLETTER

December 2013

### From Father Sebastian

Dear members of the Militia of the Immaculate,

As I write these few lines on the First day of December, we are at the beginning of the Season of Advent and only days away from the celebration of Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A few weeks later we celebrate Christmas; and after that the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. All these are important days for us.

But for some reason my mind is still focused on St. Andrew, the Apostle whose feast we celebrated yesterday. Of course, there are many things we can learn from St. Andrew. I would like to highlight just two of them. One is that Andrew was a great instrument in the hands of the Lord. According to the Gospel of John it was Andrew who encountered Jesus first and then brings Simon Peter to Jesus. Also Andrew seems to have a special relationship with Jesus. Later in that same Gospel we hear about some Greeks coming to Philip wanting to see Jesus. What does Philip do? He goes to Andrew; and then together they go to Jesus.

The reason I mention these points is that we as members of the Militia of the Immaculate are called first and foremost to have a special relationship with Jesus. Only then we can be effective instruments in the hands of the Lord, bringing others to Him. May Saint Andrew pray for us in this Season of Advent as we prepare ourselves to celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord.

Happy Christmas and God's blessings for the New Year of 2014!

## THE HAIL MARY OF A PROTESTANT

(a True Story)

A little six year old Protestant boy had often heard his Catholic companions reciting the prayer "Hail Mary." He liked it so much that he copied it, memorized it, and would recite it every day.

"Look, Mommy, what a beautiful prayer," he said to his mother one day.

"Never again say it," answered the mother. "It is a superstitious prayer of Catholics who adore idols and think Mary is a goddess. After all, she is a woman like any other. Come on, take this Bible and read it. It contains everything that we are bound to do and have to do."

From that day on the little boy discontinued his daily "Hail Mary" and gave himself more time to reading the Bible instead.

One day, while reading the Gospel, he came across the passage about the Annunciation of the Angel to Our Lady. Full of joy, the little boy ran to his mother and said: "Mommy, I have found the 'Hail Mary' in the Bible which says: 'Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women.' Why do you call it a superstitious prayer?"

On another occasion he found that beautiful salutation of St. Elizabeth to the Virgin Mary and the wonderful canticle MAGNIFICAT in which Mary foretold that "the generations would call her blessed."

He said no more about it to his mother but started to recite the "Hail Mary" every day as before. He felt pleasure in addressing those charming words to the Mother of Jesus, our Savior.

One day, when he was fourteen, he heard a discussion on Our Lady among the members of his family. Every one said that Mary was a common woman like any other woman.

The boy, after listening to their erroneous reasoning could not bear it any longer, and full of indignation, he interrupted them, saying:

"Mary is not like any other children of Adam, stained with sin. No! The Angel called her FULL OF GRACE AND BLESSED AMONGST WOMEN. Mary is the Mother of Jesus Christ and consequently Mother of God. There is no higher dignity to which a creature can be raised. The Gospel says that the generations will proclaim her blessed and you are trying to despise her and look down on her. Your spirit is not the spirit of the Gospel or of the Bible which you proclaim to be the foundation of the Christian religion."

So deep was the impression which the boy's talk had made that his mother many times cried out sorrowfully: "Oh, my God! I fear that this son of mine will one day join the Catholic religion, the religion of Popes!"

And indeed, not very long afterwards, having made a serious study of both Protestantism and Catholicism, the boy found the latter to be the only true religion and embraced it and became one of its most ardent apostles.

Sometime after his conversion, he met his married sister who rebuked him and said indignantly: "You little know how much I love my children. Should any one of them desire to become a Catholic, I would sooner pierce his heart with a dagger than allow him to embrace the religion of the Popes!"

Her anger and temper were as furious as those of St. Paul before his conversion.

However, she would change her ways, just as St. Paul did on his way to Damascus. It so happened that one of her sons fell dangerously ill and the doctors gave up hope of recovery.

Her brother then approached her and spoke to her affectionately, saying:

"My dear sister, you naturally wish to have your child cured. Very well, then, do what I ask you to do. Follow me, let us pray one 'Hail Mary' and promise God that, if your son recovers his health, you would seriously study the Catholic doctrine, and should you come to the conclusion that Catholicism is the only true religion, you would embrace it no matter what the sacrifices may be."

His sister was somewhat reluctant at the beginning, but as she wished for her son's recovery, she accepted her brother's proposal and recited the "Hail Mary" together with him.

The next day her son was completely cured. The mother fulfilled her promise and she studied the Catholic doctrine. After long preparation she received Baptism together with her whole family, thanking her brother for being an apostle to her.

This story was related during a sermon given by the Rev. Fr. Tuckwell.

"Brethren," he went on and said, "the boy who became a Catholic and converted his sister to Catholicism dedicated his whole life to the service of God. He is the priest who is speaking to you now! What I am I owe to Our Lady. You, too, my dear brethren, be entirely dedicated also to Our Lady and never let a day pass without saying the beautiful prayer, 'Hail Mary', and your Rosary. Ask her to enlighten the minds of Protestants who are separated from the true Church of Christ founded on the Rock (Peter) and 'against whom the gates of hell shall never prevail.'"

## THE MI: IN THE ♥ OF THE CHURCH

When the Pontifical Council for the Laity in Rome approved the statutes for the Militia of the Immaculate in 1998, it declared that the mission of the MI was identical with the mission of the Church. Only two other movements has the Church declared their mission the same as the mission of the Church. This statement places the MI and all of its members at the heart of the Church.

The MI is not some new movement, or some Idea concocted by St. Maximilian. Rather, it is at the heart of the teaching and the mission of the Church, for the MI is conceived in the heart of the Virgin Mary as the Son of God was conceived in her. This means that the MI and every member are brought to birth by Mary to proclaim the Kingdom of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We are protected and loved by her and the Church in a special way, and we are to return that same love to them, for "to those who have received much, much will be expected." As members of the MI, we therefore above all else, are called to love the Virgin Mary and the Church. To be in the heart of the Church means to keep the Church in our heart, as well. We must listen to the Church and be obedient to the Church's teachings as a child listens to and is obedient to its mother.

Know that in all of our journeys through life, every member of the MI is never far from Jesus, for we are conceived and carried in the heart of His mother, The Virgin Mary, and his Bride, the Church.

*Rev. Fr. Patrick Greenough OFM Conv. International MI Vice President, National MI President Immaculata Magazine, May/June 1998*

## 33 DAYS TO MORNING GLORY

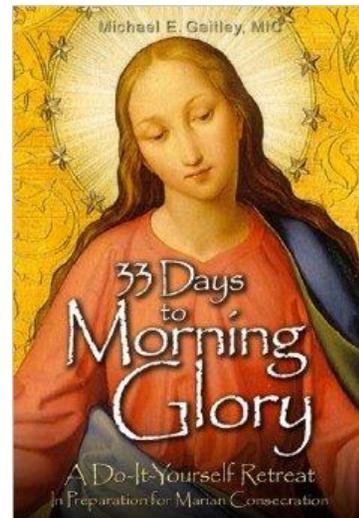
In the past two MI local newsletters much information has been written about a retreat program based on a book called, "33 Days to Morning Glory." In phone conversations with some of you, I found that several people are not familiar with this outstanding book written by Father Michael Gaitley, MIC. So, I am briefly highlighting the gift of this great treasure-trove of Marian wisdom found in this book.

The book "33 Days to Morning Glory" is extraordinary in the sense that it brings four Marian giants (Louis de Montfort, Maximilian Kolbe, Blessed John Paul II, and Blessed Mother Teresa) together, who have consecrated their lives to Jesus, through Mary, in one easy-to-read book. A prayerful reading and pondering will bring one deeper into the mystery of consecration and into the fire of divine love, and mercy of Jesus.

This book, and companion retreat book are designed as a "Do-It-Yourself Retreat" at home, or with a small group, as a parish-based retreat program for the New Evangelism.

For the small group, the book is complemented with the DVD series by Fr. Michael, and a companion (question and answer) book. The basic textbook, "33 Days to Morning Glory" is available at Loaves and Fishes for \$19.95.

*More info about this program is available on the website [www.allheartsafire.org](http://www.allheartsafire.org)*



## MI OKANAGAN EXECUTIVE

Father Sebastian Puthenpura	Spiritual Director
Annette Leib	Co-ordinator
Eileen Collins	Asst. Co-ord.
Jerry Dusik	Treasurer
Paulette Wolfe	Secretary

## MI MASS SCHEDULE

9 AM First Saturday Mass Feast Day Mass		
Jan 4	June 7	The Annunciation
Feb 1	July 5	- March 25
Mar 1	Aug 2	The Nativity of Mary
April 5	Oct 4	- Sep 8
May 3	Nov 1	The Assumption
		- August 15
		The Immaculate
		Conception
		- Dec 8