

1972 - "Our" Jubilee Year!

by John Haffert

1972 is the 400th anniversary of the institution of the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, first called the Feast of Our Lady of Victory.

The great victory saved Western Europe in the 16th century when all the Christian forces combined to stop the westward flood of the "Red Forces" of the Star and Crescent over Europe. It happened on October 7th of last year, four centuries ago. And in March of this year, four centuries ago, Pope St. Pius V instituted the Feast, attributing the victory to the Holy Rosary.

Centenary of Pompeii

By coincidence, it was just 100 years ago that Blessed Bartholomew Longo went to Pompeii, where Our Lady appeared and told him that those who promote Her Rosary will be saved. The blessed layman cried out: "Oh Queen of Heaven, if it is true that those who propagate your Rosary will be saved, I will see that I am saved because I will not leave this earth without having seen the triumph of Your Rosary!"

And as a result of his efforts, the most important Sanctuary of Our Lady of the Rosary in all the world has risen near the ruins of the city which within 24 hours was completely wiped out by the eruption of Vesuvius in the year 79. It is one of only two major sanctuaries of Our Lady which are directly under the Pope, but not in Rome.

Two Signs for Us

These two great signs of the Rosary (the Victory of Lepanto which turned back the Red Menace and the Sanctuary of the Rosary raised by miracles over a city wiped out overnight) are two symbols of special meaning to our modern age.

We are threatened from the East and the West by a new "red menace". And we are constantly under the shadow of the new Vesuvius: the atom bomb, which at any moment might launch forth to destroy entire cities overnight.

March-April 1972

Therefore, this centenary of 1972 (fourth centenary of the Feast instituted after the Victory of Lepanto, and the first centenary of the trip of Blessed Bartholomew to Pompeii) make 1972 one of the most significant anniversaries of our generation.

It seems a happy coincidence that 1972 is also the Silver Jubilee of the Blue Army of Our Lady, that movement which is doing more than perhaps any other in history to establish the devotion of the Rosary throughout the entire world. In only 25 years it has caused some 20 million persons, in 57 nations, to promise to say the Rosary daily while meditating on the mysteries, and while being in the "state" of consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by the wearing of Her Scapular.

Year to Rejoice

Centenaries are called "jubilees" because they are times to rejoice. They are special times of happiness in the commemoration of events which have shaped our history happily.

But we are filled not so much with the sense of happiness in this year of 1972 as with a sense of responsibility.

We are celebrating more than the victories of the Rosary and of the Blue Army of Our Lady. We are celebrating a great lesson of history as revealed to three children at Fatima:

"God has entrusted the peace of the world to Her."

And She brings about this peace when Her children reach out to Her with the simple devotions of consecration to Her Immaculate Heart and the devout recitation of Her Rosary.

Independently of the fact that 1972 is the fourth centenary of the Feast of the Rosary and first centenary of Pompeii and the Silver Jubilee of the Blue Army, we have heard many rumors about 1972 being a year in which, through the intercession of Our Lady, the pagans of the world will be forced to face the reality of God.

On December 11th, at the Camaldolese Monastery at Big Sur, California, a letter written by the founder of that monastery was found on his desk. It was addressed to me and spoke of a project on which he had asked my advice for the use of a fortune of ten million dollars a year to bring the message of the Church to the world. Apparently, he had typed the letter himself. The entire first page spoke mostly of this project, of two trips he had made to Rome in which he had conferred with the Holy Father about it, and that the project was going ahead. However, the second page of the letter began with this paragraph:

"Somehow I strongly feel that in 1972 the world shall have to meet the challenge of God."

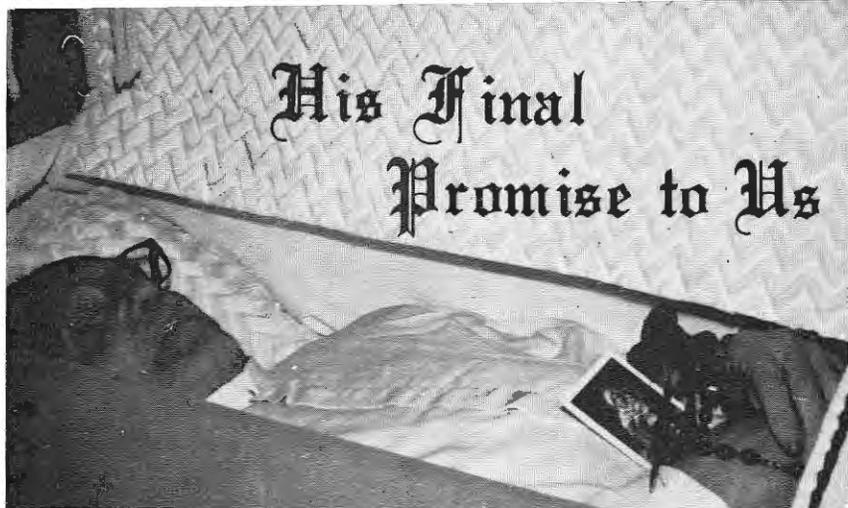
The very last line of the letter said:

"It was a great joy for me to have known you, dear John, and to have you as a dear friend." — He died that night, December 11, at two o'clock in the morning.

Prophecy of Saintly Priest

A few weeks later I called upon his cousin, Cardinal Antoniutti, Prefect of the Congregation For Religious in Rome. His Eminence said that this priest, whose name was Rev. Hugh Modotti, was outstanding and saintly. His Eminence spoke of some of the highlights of his life which included having been Rector of a Pontifical Seminary, of having represented the bishops of a country at the Synod in Rome, of special missions for the Holy See in different parts of the world, of having founded the Camaldolese Monastery in California, and how finally, even though he was 72 years old, he completely spent himself upon this last great project of which he was writing to me in the letter found on his desk the day he died.

And this great man of the Church, seeming to sense that he was at the end of his life, penned that message: he thought the world would have to face the reality of God this year, 1972.



His Final Promise to Us

* Father Modotti delivered this sermon at the Schoenstatt House in Milwaukee exactly one week before he died. Sr. Winifred, the superior of Schoenstatt House says: "It was just one week later on a Saturday morning while he was greeting her with the beautiful salutation "Ave, Gratia Plena" that he died, as a hermit, alone with God. How we treasure those last words he spoke to us: "Then I will co-operate in a different way for you who are still waiting for the day of the Lord."

After Christ went into heaven, Mary remained in this world as Co-Redemptrix, active much more than the Apostles themselves. She lived 20 years after Christ's death. It was a cross for Her to live so many more years on earth. She knew what heaven was!

She was carrying out the message of Christ. She not only invited the people to listen to the words of Christ. She imitated his example and taught them how to take up their cross and follow Jesus.

Do you remember what Her cousin Elizabeth said: "Blessed art Thou because Thou hast believed."? (Lk.1, 39). It was a tremendous sacrifice for Our Lady to remain for so many years in the world.

Longed for Heaven

Look into the life of the saints. After St. Francis of Assisi had received the stigmata and had seen the humanity of Christ, he was crying for three years to go to heaven: "I can not live anymore, I can not live anymore", he said. "Lord, let me die!" St. Paul said this in his own way. "Lord, take me." St. Teresa was saying the same thing.

Yes, we have to go through a martyrdom of love in our life! That is what Our Lady communicated to us as Co-Redemptrix during those twenty years: that we may carry that cross, *waiting for the great day when God calls us*. The more we love God the more we understand this. There will be that anxiety in us to save souls and to sanctify ourselves, to bring the Kingdom of God into the world, making many sacrifices and offering up prayers.

Mary is the Prototype. She is the highest example Jesus left to us to imitate. The Apostles already looked

at Her and followed Her example. We must do the same. Imitate Her because She is such a great Mother. She shows us what we have to do to conquer the heavenly Kingdom.

This is the message of the First Saturdays of the month. There is a passage in Holy Scripture that says that God saved the world by blood. And He has His "spouses of blood." We know that the world was saved by the blood of Jesus and His sacrifice.

Nowadays they preach a Christianity which is very easy, a Christianity without a cross. They don't want suffering anymore. They avoid everything that is suffering. That was not the way of Jesus. His was the way of fortitude. And why? We can be saved only by blood and sacrifice, by suffering which is the symbol of the blood.

Many Sainly Souls Now

Christ has many "spouses of blood" in the world in spite of all the sinfulness and evil around us. God has many saintly souls. He has suffering souls everywhere in the world. We don't see them but they are the joy of Christ. They surround Him and are His consolation in a time when evil prevails in the world.

Offer up your own sufferings. They may be little or big things, that does not matter. It is the cross that counts. We suffer in union with Christ, in union with Mary to renew the world and sanctify ourselves. In that way we can co-operate with Mary, the Co-Redemptrix of Jesus Christ.

This was all the message of Pope Pius XII when he explained what Co-Redemptrix meant. A priesthood because Mary brought the Eternal Highpriest into the world. Through

Her own direct co-operation through Her life, obeying the Will of the Father. Mary's life was a life of expectation. She knew from Scripture that Her Son would have to suffer and to die. When you are looking at things to happen — and when you love — and it is still far away — and you know it will come — THAT is suffering! This was the suffering of Mary. Even after His resurrection and ascension into heaven She still suffered.

Offer Them Daily!

Try to save souls in order that the Kingdom of the Father will come. For this we have to suffer and make sacrifices and offer them up daily. The Blessed Mother expects this from us. Let us follow Her footsteps. We here this morning are Schoenstatt children* who are particularly dedicated to Her. That is the message which Father Kentenich left to his children. That is what all of us have to remember. Not only *pray* to Her but *living* that Co-Redemption: Co-operation that gives every day something to God and to Our Lady.

Last night one of you had an image of Our Lady, Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt, made up of numerous blossoms. They represented many sacrifices. That is what we mean with "Co-Redemptrix": Big or small contributions we make every day for Jesus and Mary. By these sacrifices we say: "I am here. I am with you. I co-operate with you. I want to be sanctified. *I am anxiously waiting for the day when everything will be consummated, when I will be with you because redemption is complete in me. And in a different way I will co-operate then for those who are still waiting for the day of the Lord!*"