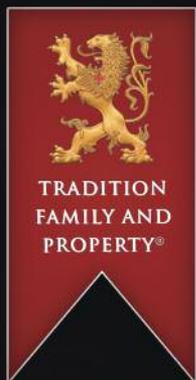


# CRUSADE<sup>®</sup>

May/June 2015  
MAGAZINE



## ELIZABETH: PORTUGAL'S QUEEN, MOTHER AND SAINT

# CALL TO CHIVALRY SUMMER CAMPS

Much more than just a camp, this first-rate program invites boys ages thirteen to eighteen to follow in the footsteps of crusader saints, and discover the treasures of Christian civilization. Activities include informative talks, rosary processions, challenging games, adventurous hikes, treasure hunts, skits and medieval banquets.

## Schedule for Call to Chivalry Camps

Pennsylvania: **June 10-21**

Louisiana: **July 1-9**

California: **July 26-August 1**

Wisconsin: **August 11-15**



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FORGOTTEN  
TRUTHS

## Man Was Made for Heaven and Not for this Earth

BY POPE BENEDICT XV

Today's climate of moral lawlessness projects two dominant passions: and unlimited desire for riches and an insatiable thirst for pleasures, a shameful stigma of our times. While our epoch makes great progress in all of the conveniences of life, in the superior order of honesty and moral rectitude the times seem to suffer from an unfortunate retrogression to the ignominies of ancient paganism. Wherein men lose sight of eternal goods reserved for them in heaven, they are deceived by the mirage of earth's passing goods. And once their souls are earth-bound, an easy descent leads them to relax the practice of virtue, to feel an aversion for spiritual things, and to solely relish the seductions of pleasure.

Hence, some desire the acquisition of riches, or the endless increase of patrimony; others are no longer capable, as before, to bear the trials of want or poverty; and just as the rivalries begin to mount between the rich and the proletariat, many seem intent on further exciting the hatred of the poor by the unbridled luxury of their lives, a sure

companion to revolting corruption.

From this point of view one cannot sufficiently deplore the blindness of so many women of every age and condition. Made foolish by the desire to please, they do not see how the indecency of their clothes shocks every honest man, and offends God. Most of them would formerly have blushed at the things they wear as a serious offense to Christian modesty. Now it is not enough for them to exhibit such attire in the public place but also bring it into church to the Holy Sacrifice of Mass, taking the seducing allurements of shameful passions to the Eucharistic Table where one receives the heavenly Author of purity.

And what of those exotic, barbarous dances recently imported into fashionable circles, one more shocking than the other; one cannot imagine anything more suitable for banishing all the remains of modesty. ■

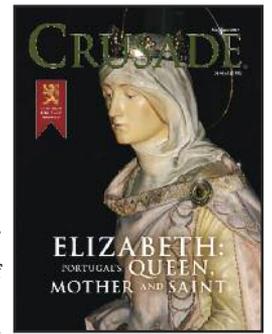
Excerpt taken from: Encyclical *Sacra Propediem*, January 6, 1921. The title is ours.



Pope Benedict XV  
reigned from  
September 3, 1914,  
to his death in 1922.

# CONTENTS

MAY/JUNE 2015

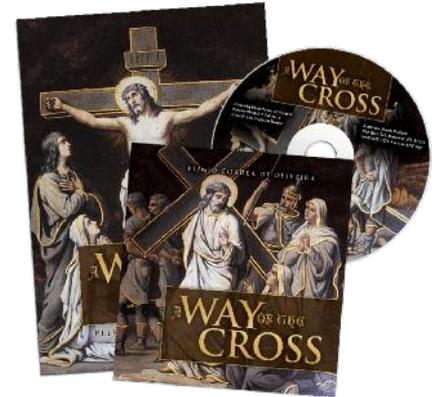


**Cover:**  
Processional statue of  
Saint Elizabeth,  
Coimbra, Portugal

<b>IN BRIEF</b>	4
<b>CHRIST IN THE HOME</b> Courageous Mothers	5
<b>RETURN TO ORDER</b> The ISIS Problem	6
<b>COMMENTARY</b> Facing the Aggression of Islamic Extremism: Why Not a Crusade?	8
<b>COVER STORY</b> Elizabeth: Portugal's Queen, Mother and Saint	10
<b>ANF PROGRESS REPORT</b>	
♦ Reliving Our Lord's Passion and Becoming a Modern-Day Veronica	15
♦ The Rosary in the Heart of Africa	16
♦ Our Readers Write	16
<b>COMMENTARY</b> Every Woman Dies, But Not Every Woman Truly Lives	18
<b>TFP IN ACTION</b>	
♦ Keep the Three-Legged Stool Standing and Strong	20
♦ Petition Drive to Protect the Family	21
<b>FAMILY SERIES</b> Grigio	22
<b>BACK COVER</b> A Gift Best Seen From Above	24



**Page 20** Confronting the  
enemies of order



**Page 15** Consoling Our Lord  
during His Passion



**Page 8** Why not a Crusade?



**Page 21** Petition to defend the  
family meets widespread support

*Crusade Magazine* is a publication of The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP). Direct all requests and inquiries to: *Crusade Magazine*, P.O. Box 341, Hanover, PA 17331 or e-mail to: [crusade@TFP.org](mailto:crusade@TFP.org). Web: [www.TFP.org](http://www.TFP.org). Tel.: 888-317-5571, Fax: (570) 450-6352. © 2015 by The Foundation for a Christian Civilization, Inc. This publication may include images from iStockphoto™ which are protected by copyright laws of the U.S. and elsewhere. ISSN 1096-3782 LCCN 98-641433 M-135

## CRUSADE

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## THE AMERICAN TFP

The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) is an organization of lay Catholic Americans concerned about the moral crisis shaking the remnants of Christian civilization. Its earliest origins date back to January 1971, when the first TFP members started to group around the publication *Crusade for a Christian Civilization*. It is a civic, cultural and nonpartisan organization which, inspired by the traditional teachings of the Supreme Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church, works in a legal and peaceful manner in the realm of ideas to

defend and promote the principles of private ownership, family and perennial Christian values with their twofold function: individual and social. The TFP's words and efforts have always been faithfully at the service of Christian civilization. The first TFP was founded in Brazil by the famous intellectual and Catholic leader Prof. Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira in 1960. His work inspired the formation of other autonomous TFP sister organizations across the globe, thus constituting the world's largest anticommunist and antisocialist network of Catholic inspiration.



IN BRIEF

### **Another Private Business Wins Suit Against Obamacare's Contraception Mandate**

A federal judge in Michigan issued a ruling against the HHS mandate on behalf of Catholic businessman John Kennedy and his company, Autocam. Like the Hobby Lobby case, Mr. Kennedy refused to comply with the mandate to provide contraceptive drugs, including abortifacients, to his women employees because it violates his religious beliefs and his desire to respect the dignity and worth of each of his employees.

### **Alabama Chief Justice Refuses to Enforce Federal Homosexual "Marriage" Ruling**

In a three-page letter to Alabama's governor, Chief Justice Roy Moore wrote: "As Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court, I will continue to recognize the Alabama Constitution and the will of the people overwhelmingly expressed in the Sanctity of Marriage Amendment." He further stated, "As you know, nothing in the United States Constitution grants the federal government the authority to redefine the institution of marriage." Governor Robert Bentley responded positively by affirming that "the federal government must not infringe on the rights of states."

### **Two Supreme Court Justices Urged to Recuse Themselves on Homosexual "Marriage" Case**

Supreme Court Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Elena Kagan, who both performed same-sex weddings in the past, must recuse themselves from the upcoming decision on homosexual "marriage." According to Bryan Fischer of the American Family Association, the reason is simple: "their impartiality has been hopelessly compromised." He said, "Title 28, Part I, Chapter 21, Section 455 of the U.S. Code reads: 'Any justice, judge, or magistrate judge of the United States shall disqualify himself in any proceeding in which his impartiality might be reasonably questioned.'"

### **British Parliament Votes Yes to "Three-Parent Babies"**

In an historic vote, members of the British Parliament voted in favor of the creation of babies with DNA from two women and one man, making Britain the first country to introduce laws to allow the creation of babies from three people. The technique is supposed to stop genetic diseases being passed from mother to child. But opponents of the



measure say that the law will only start a slippery slope to further genetic modification of children, the so-called "designer babies," genetically modified for beauty, intelligence or to be free of disease.

### **"Father of the Pill" Dies at 91**

Carl Djerassi, a chemist noted for creating the key ingredient of the oral contraceptive known as "the pill," died recently. Known as the "father of

the pill," Djerassi's work on the science of birth control resulted in allowing women unprecedented control over their fertility, separating sex from the procreation of children, thereby generating debates over promiscuity and the morality of birth control. Use of the pill for artificial birth control is banned by the Catholic Church.

### **Growth in Christian Alternatives to Boy and Girl Scouts**

American Heritage Girls and Trail Life USA have seen explosive growth of their organizations and are becoming leading replacements for Girl and Boy Scouts in America. Both organizations are pro-life and pro-traditional marriage and reject openly homosexual members in their programs.

### **NJ High School Student Wins Case to Keep "Under God" in Pledge of Allegiance**

Samantha Jones, a high school student from a New Jersey school district, fought and won a legal battle that was brought on by a New Jersey family seeking to take out the phrase "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance claiming that it was discriminatory. A state superior court judge dismissed the case filed by the American Humanist Association on behalf of the New Jersey family.

### **Iraqi Christians Form Militia to Fight ISIS**

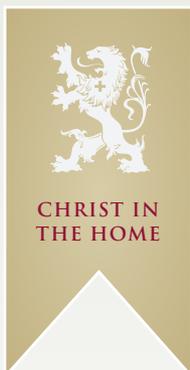
A 4,000-strong Christian militia has been formed and is undergoing training in the Nineveh Plains of Northern Iraq. According to the *UK Catholic Herald*, the militia known as the Nineveh Plains Protection Units (NPU) aims to "protect the remaining Assyrian lands from further attacks by ISIS and liberate the Assyrian homeland of the Nineveh Plain from the grasp of the radical Islamists."



# COURAGEOUS

# Mothers

BY FATHER RAOUL PLUS, S.J.



Every woman, by the fact that she becomes a mother, is courageous, at least in regard to all that concerns her children. She does not consider the trouble it is for her to watch at their bedside, to take care of them, to feed them, to help them; and if danger ever threatens them she will brave any peril to save them. Our Lord's example of the mother hen gathering her chicks under her wing is touching and at the same time far below the realities of maternal psychology.

Sometimes this courage grows to unbelievable force. It is enough to recall many instances of this during the war. Times of peace are not without their examples. Here are two that are profoundly beautiful:

At a certain high school located by the seashore, several students who had gone out for an afternoon of swimming were drowned, despite the vigilance of the instructors. With which family should the faculty begin to break the bad news? One mother whose son had been killed in the war of 1914-1918, lost two boys in this tragedy. She had a profound faith, a valor without equal. The Father Superior knew her. He would begin with her. She was admirable. Standing before the two beds, she uttered no complaint, no reproach. The priest wanted to thank her for her delicacy in the face of such grief.

But how was he to inform the other mothers? "I will go," she said immediately. "They will not be able to say anything to me, for I have lost two."

When misfortune strikes someone belonging to me, do I manifest the same serenity, the same su-



A mother's courage shines forth especially in times of tragedy.

pernatural spirit? In the course of a pilgrimage from the North of France to Lourdes, a poor child had to be taken off the train at Poitiers. His mother and he were going to petition Our Lady for the cure of his malady which was in its last stages. Mary doubtlessly thought it better not to let this poor child remain on earth any longer. Shortly after

the train left Tours, he died. At the Poitiers station the waiting room was quickly arranged to receive him. The mother remained near the body of her little one while the necessary preparations were made. She was not weeping as she held the child on her knees. She was praying. "You would think it was Our Lady of Seven Dolors," whispered a sympathetic onlooker. It was true. She was not upset by the going and coming; she was absorbed in her suffering or rather she was dominating it; there was no outburst, no sobbing; she was praying. It was as if a halo of holiness surrounded her. In sorrow it is not necessary to parade an impassibility which does not belong to earth. Our Lord wept over Lazarus. But it is essential to rise above the pain, to supernaturalize it; not to let it crush us. It is necessary to understand through our tears that God is always good, and that if He makes us suffer, it is not to break us but to lift us up, to let us share His Calvary, to give us the means of sharing more richly in the Redemption.

O my God, I offer You my poor heart ravaged, bruised and aching. Crucified Jesus, help me in my crucifixion. I unite my tears with the Blood of Your wounds. May all serve for the good of my dear ones, for souls, for all souls. ■

# THE ISIS PROBLEM



BY JOHN HORVAT II



©Medyan Daireh/ZUMA Press/Corbis

The followers of ISIS have displaced countless refugees and left a trail of destruction. How can they be stopped if the West has lost the will to fight?

The late Sen. Eugene McCarthy once said that only two kinds of religion are permitted in America: strong beliefs vaguely expressed or vague beliefs strongly expressed. In a similar way, it could be said that the same formula applies to political beliefs.

Keeping everything vague is the basis of a general consensus which supposedly allows everyone to get along. It appeals to a broad sector of American society that wants to neatly sidestep sticky theological and political issues, and pragmatically get around to the business of the pursuit of happiness and the prosperity of the nation. Such an attitude facilitates a willingness to work with anyone who will make a deal.

With such a mindset, it is no surprise that many Americans are experiencing difficulty understanding the ISIS threat. Having so long followed a “get-along” policy, they find it inconceivable that someone would deliberately break all the rules and not seek to get along. Indeed, such Americans are prepared to be very flexible by considering all sorts of bizarre alternatives, as long as they are vaguely expressed, but they are mystified when strong beliefs are strongly expressed.

As a result, most people do not have an explanation for ISIS. They simply attribute the problem to “extremism” that results in irrational behavior. Extremism happens when confused young people undergo a mysterious process of radicalization that turns them into terrorists. The solution offered is to eradicate extremism (using extreme means if necessary) and support any form of mod-

erate alternatives (even to the point of using immoderate means).

There are two problems in dealing with the extremist threat in this manner.

The first is that it fails to delve deeply into the reasons why extremists believe in what they do. It does not consider what is believed, but rather how it is believed. The issue is the intensity of belief, not its radical message.

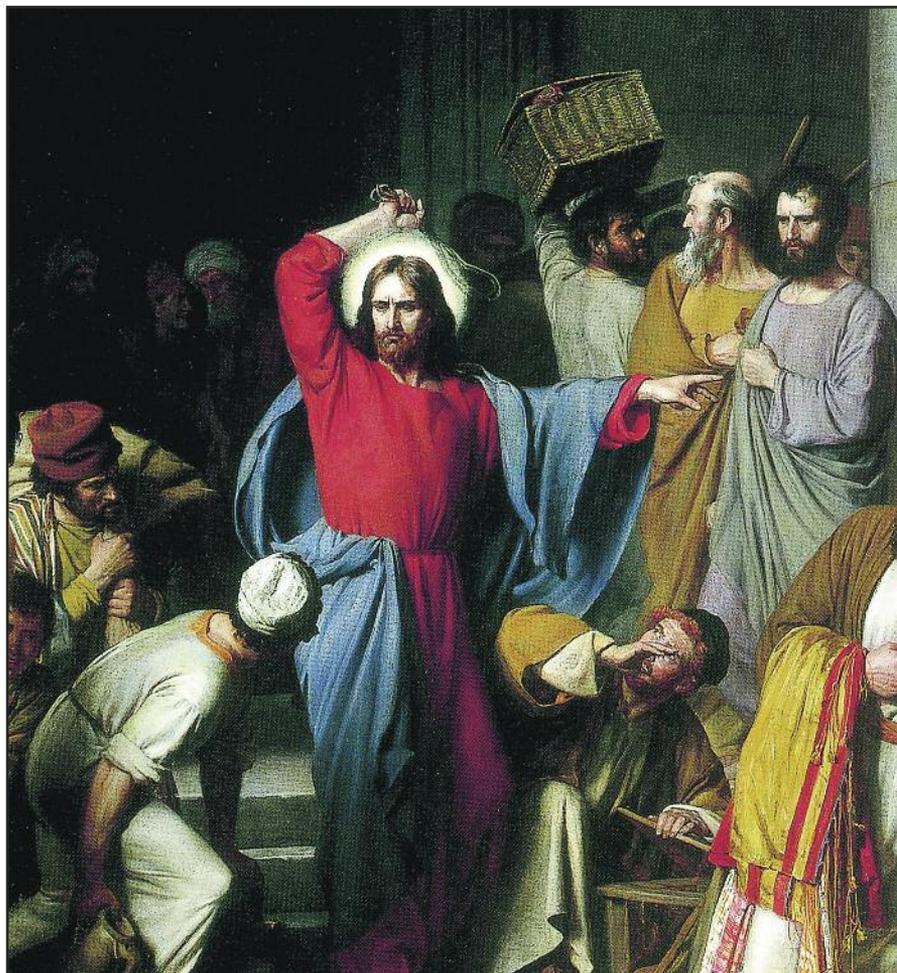
The danger in holding such a position is that its advocates tend to assume that any belief strongly held is irrational and must be eradicated. Thus, for example, they will attach the extremist ISIS label to Christians and any others who believe in something strongly. In so doing, it makes any proportional reaction very difficult since it is hard to fight if one believes in nothing.

The second problem is that advocates of this position go to the extreme of assuming that the only way to fight strong beliefs expressed strongly is to hold vague beliefs expressed vaguely. Thus, they will do anything to return to the blessed ambiguity in which they find safety. They will, for example, insist that the Islamic State is not really Islamic or hold that more inter-religious dialogue is needed. In any conflict, they will frantically look for “moderates” to support with the wishful thinking that they will prevail over the radicals and the whole thing will go away.

But alas, in this new world of extremists who behead journalists, the rules have changed. The politics of vagueness is a losing strategy that leads to concession, naiveté and defeat. There is no getting along with those who do not wish to get along, no matter how hard one tries to wish it away.

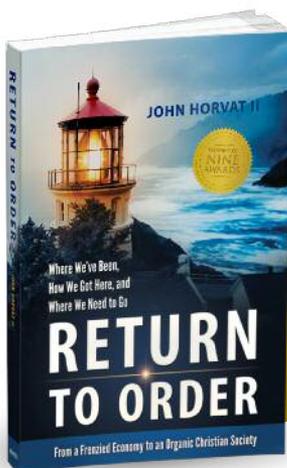
Extremism exists because today’s postmodern world fails to provide meaning to life. Young people desire something to live for, and thus look for strong ideals expressed strongly. Extreme Islam provides them with not only strong ideals but wrong ideals to fill the void. Its tech-savvy militants express these ideals not strongly but savagely by breaking the civilized rules that still govern the world and using the very technology of progress to broadcast their barbarism across the hated West.

What is missing are right beliefs expressed strongly that are worth fighting for. And the West has those right ideas that now more than ever need to be expressed rationally, strongly and unapologetically. These ideas include the rule of law, a strong moral code based on natural law, representative government, Christian charity and a passion for justice—all the fruits of Christian civilization.



Today’s world is desperate for examples of strong reaffirmations of Christian principles, just as Our Lord Himself showed us in driving the money-lenders from the Temple.

But the West has lost the will to fight for these ideas, which are the very foundation of the present order. And that is the greater threat. Much more dangerous than the paltry army of ISIS terrorists is the West’s fear of affirming Christian principles strongly. ■



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COMMENTARY

# Facing the Aggression of Islamic Extremism: Why Not a Crusade?

BY ALEJANDRO EZCURRA

Outrage is growing in western public opinion as news keeps coming in about the horrendous massacres perpetrated against Christians in the Middle East and Africa by terrorists of the self-proclaimed “Islamic State” and their ilk. Many are beginning to wonder if one should call a new Crusade in defense of those peoples, victimized by an unprecedented war of extermination in the name of Allah.

Granted, the word “Crusade” brings a

chill down the spines not only of liberals but also of Catholics bitten by the fly of progressivist relativism. Both have sought to stigmatize the notion of a crusade by associating it with abuse, greed, a desire for political domination, and so on. Fortunately, however, they have failed.

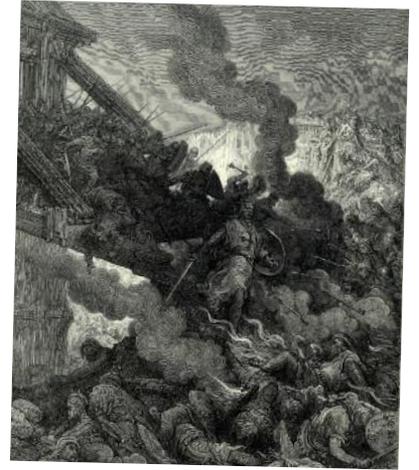
While there were crusaders unworthy of the name, the image of the archetypical crusader stands unscathed: the Christian knight whose idealism and virtues, proven over a thousand times, made him a paradigm, unmatched in history, of a perfectly accomplished model of a man of honor.

The saga of the Crusades was associated with the values of chivalry to such a degree that it endures to this day in the imagination of the West in a halo of well-deserved prestige. This is so much so that the greatest compliment a man can receive on his moral qualities is, “so-and-so is a gentleman.”

## Origin of the Crusades: Defending Oppressed Christians

Contrary to what we are led to believe, the Crusades were born to defend Christian populations in situations of weakness facing assault, abuse and harassment by Muslims, similar to those perpetrated by the Islamic State today.

In 1095, news of these abuses led Pope Urban II to convene the Council of Clermont, attended by 300 bishops and thousands of nobles. There, reports about the terrible plight of Christian pilgrims and inhabitants of the Holy Land,



Against overwhelming odds, Godfrey of Bouillon led the crusaders to victory to conquer Jerusalem in 1099.

attacked and oppressed by Muslim powers, and the desecration of the holy places, led participants to cry “*Deus vult!*” (God wills it). A surge of courage and determination ran through the ranks of the knights present and quickly spread across France and Europe.

Thousands decided to take a vow of crusade and leave for the Holy Land. Thus was born the First Crusade, which triumphantly culminated in 1099 with the conquest of Jerusalem, seized from Egypt by the legendary Godfrey of Bouillon and knights from the top French nobility.

## An Epic Saga Driven and Led by Saints of the Church

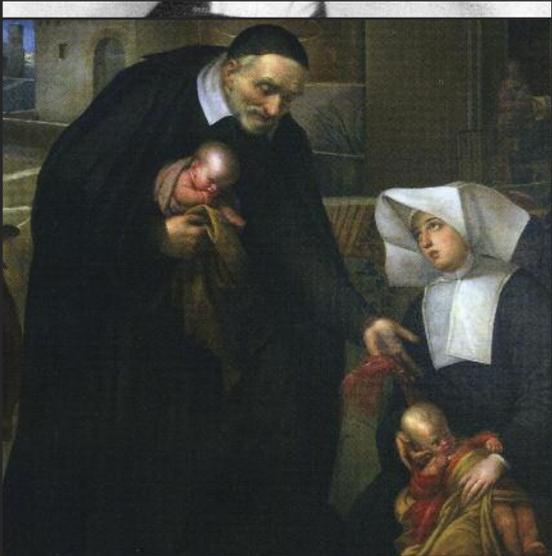
Critics of the Crusades, eager to find defects, forget that the objective of that epic struggle was fully in accordance with justice and that it was advocated and carried out by saints. The promoter of the First Crusade, Blessed Urban II, was a saint; so was the mellifluous Doctor, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, to whom we owe the beautiful prayer, the *Memo-rare*. He provided the Knights Templar with their rule, including the famous



Saint Louis IX, King of France, led two Crusades against the Muslims, laying down his life on the field of battle.



Saint Theres of Lisieux wrote in her autobiography, "I feel in my soul the courage of a crusader, of a soldier for the Church, and I wish to die on the field of battle in defense of the Church."



Saint Vincent de Paul, enslaved by the Muslims when young, planned a crusade to North Africa to stop their attacks.



Saint Francis of Assisi followed the crusaders to Egypt and preached to convert the Sultan.

vow to never retreat from the battlefield. Also saints were the Crusader Kings, Saint Louis IX of France (who commanded not just one, but two Crusades) and his Spanish cousin, Saint Ferdinand III of Castile. In just a few years, with unstoppable momentum, Saint Ferdinand recovered half of Spain, including Cordoba and Seville, from the Moors.

Also canonized was the heroic Franciscan monk Saint John Capistrano, called "the pious father," who at the risk of his life encouraged the Crusaders on the battlefield and was decisively instrumental in the victory against the Turks at Belgrade (1456). Pope Saint Pius V, who organized the great naval crusade which definitively broke the naval power of the Turks in the Gulf of Lepanto in 1571, is a canonized saint. Also a saint was Blessed Innocent XI, who called the Crusade against the Turks besieging Vienna (1683). He was helped in that undertaking by another Franciscan, Blessed Mark of Aviano, who helped organize the victorious Christian army which, outnumbered three to one (60,000 v. 180,000), defeated the Turks and ended once and for all the Ottoman ground threat over central Europe.

We could still cite many other saints with the crusading spirit, such as the charitable Saint Vincent of Paul, who was planning a crusade to North Africa in order to stop pirates and kidnappers from the Maghreb, when death overtook him.

### Saint Francis of Assisi Defends the Crusades and Urges the Sultan to Convert

Someone may object: "I do not understand John Capistrano and Mark of Aviano. How could such peaceful Franciscans become involved in a Crusade? Is this not in contradiction with their vocation as men of peace?"

The answer is: not at all! When Christendom is in danger, what could be more logical than to defend and support those who defend it? So much so that Saint Francis of Assisi set the example for his brethren: he followed after King Saint Louis in the Seventh Crusade and courageously proclaimed its legitimacy before the sultan of Egypt himself!

This bold and holy move took place

in 1219, when Sultan Malik al-Kamil received Saint Francis in Damietta. His fellow traveler, Fray Illuminato, narrates that episode:

The Sultan posed to him [Saint Francis] another question: "Your Lord teaches in the Gospels that you should not return evil for evil nor refuse your mantle to someone who wants to take your tunic. Therefore, you Christians should not invade our lands."

To which the Blessed Francis replied:

"I think you have not read the whole Gospel. Elsewhere, indeed, it is said: 'If your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you.' With that Jesus wanted to teach us that when a man has a relative, however beloved he must be, even if he was as dear as the apple of our eyes, if he tempted us to turn away from the faith and love of our God we should be resolved to separate, alienate and eradicate him from us. For all this, Christians act according to justice when they invade your lands and fight you, for you blaspheme the name of Christ and fight to take away from His religion as many as you can. However, if you want to know, confess and worship the Creator and Redeemer of the world, I will love you as myself."

All those present were taken with admiration by his response.\*

\* \* \*

The Saints are proposed by the Church as role models. When even Saint Francis of Assisi fully justifies, in the name of the Gospel, a Crusade against those who use violence to wrench souls from the faith of Jesus Christ, there is no reason in principle why Catholics should not imitate him. This is what we are taught by the doctrine of the Church and by the example of her saints.

This being so, could God be asking Western Christian nations at this time to tackle Islamic extremism and prevent even greater evils for the world? ■

\*"Fonti Francescane," Third Section, *Altre Testimonianze Francescane*, N° 2691, available at <http://www ofs-monza it/files/altretestimonianze francescane pdf>

# ELIZABETH: PORTUGAL'S QUEEN, MOTHER AND SAINT

BY ANDREA F. PHILLIPS

*Every mother is a queen. And every queen should be a mother. In honor of mothers, we publish the marvelous story of a woman and a queen who excelled in her motherhood, which embraced not only her family, but a kingdom. In this era in which femininity is given a "complex," this is the story of a woman so secure in her feminine gifts that she won the heart of her nation and beyond; and from her husband the ultimate praise: "Had God so wished, you could have been king."*



All was ready. Robed religious, armored warriors, ladies-in-waiting, pages and peons stood by the royal coach waiting to escort their princess to her new kingdom. The crowd, gathered before the palace, whispered in sad expectation.

And then she was there, framed in the castle's gate, tall, stately, fair beside the king her father. She was Elizabeth, Princess of Aragon, one of the kingdoms of today's Spain.

Elizabeth was born in 1271 to Peter III of Aragon and Constanza of Hohenstaufen, granddaughter of the famous Frederick Barbarossa. The young princess was also a grand-niece of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary after whom she was named.

On this summer day in 1282, Elizabeth was twelve, and already a queen. Married by proxy to Don Dinis, young king of Portugal, she was now about to set off with a large entourage for her new kingdom.

As she stood there, gracious and kind, she felt her people's pain echoing her own. She was loved here, in this rugged land, and though young, had the maturity of her class, born and reared to serve. Her goodness and famed beauty had attracted many a royal proposal. And now that Portugal had accepted, she knew she would probably never see her country again.

Earlier, her father had tearfully blessed her, "Daughter, may God who calls you to this marriage...protect you on the way. And may God Who loved you in the land of your birth, and Who made you beloved of all, direct your life and your actions in your new land toward His holy service."<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, Elizabeth was beloved of all. Charming and vivacious from infancy, she had so won the af-

fections of her grandfather, James I, that he and Peter, formerly estranged, reconciled over the dotting of her. James I once said, "Elizabeth will be the best woman born of the House of Aragon."<sup>2</sup>

It was this grandfather, educated by Saint Peter Nolasco, who initiated Elizabeth in her Catholic Faith. And after the example of her holy aunt,<sup>3</sup> she found fulfillment for her affectionate heart and gifted mind in God and the truths of His Church.

The earliest chronicles attest, with continuous prayers she served God "doing so from when a young maiden in her father's house..." using a "breviary... daily she prayed the Hours" and read "other spiritual, devotional books, so that many times she was seen weeping alone with tears of devotion."<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth also distributed alms, and practiced mortifications, seeking to conquer her passions, and the narcissistic tendencies that are every human's lot.

So as the coach veered towards Portugal, the princess within had already chosen the road of solid virtue. She was going to need it. The man who had won her hand over several crowned heads was to try that virtue sorely.

## Don Dinis

Dinis was born in 1261, the son of Afonso III and his second wife Beatriz, natural daughter of Afonso X of Castille, son of Ferdinand III of Castille, warrior and canonized saint.

Dinis succeeded his father before turning eighteen. The re-conquest of Portugal from Muslim rule being complete, he was able to focus on the juridical organization of his kingdom, as well as its cultural and agricultural advancement. Known as the "Farmer King,"

and the “Poet King,” Dinis was considered a good ruler despite his faults—for faults he had.

Of a testy temperament, at times even cruel, he failed to follow the sterling moral example of his great-grandfather, Saint Ferdinand. According to an early description, “he was a good-looking youth, of a sharp and sensual imagination...”<sup>5</sup> By age twenty when he met his bride at Trancoso, Portugal, Dinis already had three illegitimate children.

Still, as the princess descended from her coach, the better side of the young king’s nature, that of the cultured man and poet, did not fail to appreciate Elizabeth’s golden-haired, green-eyed beauty, wrapped in an aura of purity and virtue. But, alas, he had already become incapable of honoring such grace, and though he showered his bride with lands and gifts, his serial infidelities and many bastards were to be a dark cloud in her life, a cloud which her sanctity ultimately conquered.

### Young Queen

Dinis and Elizabeth became man and wife when the maiden turned fourteen. They first lived in the massive palace of Alcáçova (Alkaassova), wrested from the Muslims, today the University of Coimbra, which Dinis founded. Throughout their reign, the royal couple mostly lived between Coimbra, Lisbon and Santarém.

From the onset Elizabeth established a daily schedule for herself. She began by rising early and engaging in religious exercises which included the Divine Office. To his credit, the king respected his wife’s devotions.

She spent her time sewing and embroidering with her ladies (several of whom were from Portugal), organizing her household, and helping the less fortunate. She found special strength and solace for her new position in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to which she had a life-long devotion. Eventually, she even had a portable altar built so that when traveling, she could attend Mass. Elizabeth also had a great devotion to Mary Most Holy, and was to be a great promoter of devotion to her Immaculate Conception.

As time went on, to win her husband, she employed a heroic stratagem for which only holiness of life could muster the strength. To a lady, infidelity—not to speak of serial adultery—is the ultimate humiliation. But Elizabeth’s shame was also public. The young queen not only chose a dignified stance, showing a seemingly unruffled countenance to the world, but looked to the welfare of Dinis’ bastards, of which history records eight. Notwithstanding the fact that each was a daily reminder of her husband’s betrayal, she looked to their needs, their education, their marriages and



A candlelight procession winds through the streets of Coimbra, Portugal for Saint Elizabeth’s feast day on July 4th.

their placement in life.

Portugal watched in awe as one so young showed so much courage and maturity. The nation felt for their queen’s silent sorrow, and honored her pain in prose and song. In time, Dinis could not help but come to respect, admire, and even love Elizabeth. He so trusted her, that he later made her official guardian of his bastards in case anything happened to him.

Yet, as charity-filled as she was, Elizabeth had an impeccable sense of justice. When later in life Dinis gave one of his natural daughters a stately wedding, she did not attend. She maintained that love, attention and a measure of honor was to be given to these children, indeed the king’s own; but full public honors belonged to legitimacy.

Finally, in 1291 the queen gave birth to a son. Dinis’ joy was immense, and he named him Afonso. He would eventually reign as Afonso IV, “the Brave.” Only one other child, a little girl, was born to the Portuguese monarchs, a special joy to Elizabeth’s heart, whom she named Constanza after her mother.

After the birth of the heir, the king’s escapades seem to have diminished, as he made an effort to amend his sinful ways. History records no bastards after the mid 90’s.

### Fidelity Avenged

A drastic occurrence that undoubtedly contributed to the king’s reform shows how God did not tolerate so faithful a woman’s reputation to be questioned.

Around the time when Dinis vacillated between



When questioned by the king, the loaves Saint Elizabeth carried to the poor miraculously turned to roses.

his sins and good resolutions, he grew jealous of a page of Elizabeth, whom the queen esteemed and trusted in view of his deep piety. Another envious page insinuated to the king that there was more to the relationship between Elizabeth and the young man.

Fuming, Dinis personally contacted the owner of a lyme oven and ordered that when a page came inquiring after the king's errand, he be cast into the roaring flames. Later, another page would be sent to ascertain that the order was carried out.

The next morning, at the crack of dawn, the king ordered Elizabeth's page to the oven to ask if his command had been fulfilled.

Off went the good page, but on hearing the church bells, he couldn't resist attending Mass. After the first, he heard two consecutive Masses, thinking a couple of hours couldn't hurt his errand.

Meanwhile, the anxious king sent out the envious page to ask if his orders were fulfilled. At which the poor wretch was seized and thrown into the fiery furnace.

When Elizabeth's page arrived at the oven and asked if the royal orders were carried out, all he received was an affirmative answer. And he returned to the palace.

At the sight of the pious youth, the king grew pale. And as the young man, blustering, explained his delay, finally delivering his message that "the king's errand had been fulfilled," Dinis understood what had happened. He discerned the hand and judgment of God protecting the innocent youth, chastising the calumniator, and vindicating the queen's virtue.

### Roses in January

Another occurrence from a popular legend, that

could only have awed Dinis into reverence for his wife, happened in a cold January, presumably when Elizabeth was still young. Much like her saintly great-aunt, she was a dedicated patroness of the less fortunate. One day, as Elizabeth was walking the streets of Coimbra in the company of a lady-in-waiting, the king came upon her as she clutched bread and gifts for her proteges. Irritably, the king inquired what she carried.

"Roses, my lord," was the quiet response.

"Roses in January?! Ha!"

And he pulled at her mantle only to watch as his boots became covered with profuse blooms.

### A Queen Who "Could Have Been King"

As the young queen matured, both in spirit and body, she cut an inspiring figure. At an impressive 5' 10," her beautiful face was now framed by tresses that had deepened into a rich, golden chestnut, which age never whitened. Also remarkably talented, Elizabeth spoke several languages, sang beautifully and had a great penchant for architecture, directing many a building project. She personally designed and oversaw the construction of churches, monasteries and hospitals, developing her own "Elizabethan Style."

She also manifested a marked diplomatic intelligence. Never competing with the king, but rather using feminine tact, affection and wisdom, she became invaluable to Dinis in negotiations not only of a familial nature, but of a political reach as well.

At the death of her father in 1285, her brother, James, had ascended the throne of Aragon. Many letters survive, to "Brother King," treating of personal and political affairs. Yet she never placed family fondness above the interests of her husband and the good of Portugal.

The oldest known chronicle about Elizabeth's life stresses that "she took great pleasure when ill will was dissipated, and where there had been enmity and evil, love was reestablished."<sup>6</sup>

She reconciled her brother-in-law to his brother, the king; she helped reconcile disputes among the neighboring nations, several of who were family. For instance, Ferdinand IV of Castille married her daughter Constanza. But her most famous reconciliation was between her own son Afonso and his father whom the prince deeply resented over the king's open favoritism of one of his bastards.

Fearing for his throne, Afonso rallied a following and took several Portuguese cities. Elizabeth suffered deeply and tried her heroic utmost to reconcile them. But Dinis listened to intriguers who rumored that the mother favored the son. Consequently, he exiled her to the town of Alenquer where she suffered much and prayed more.

Finally, after reconciling them once, and hoping things were settled, she was horrified to hear that father and son were facing off in battle. She promptly mounted and, riding like the wind, arrived in time to interpose herself between the contenders, and call them to their senses as father and son, and to their duties as rulers. Then turning to the warriors, she reminded them of their allegiance to the king and rallied them back to obedience. Through the intercession of the holy queen, once more peace was restored. This time it held.

Sobered once more, Dinis was again sorry he had put his peerless queen through humiliation and exile. In one of his poems he extols her virtues:

*God made you without peer  
In goodness of heart and speech  
...Had God so wished,  
You could have been king.<sup>7</sup>*

### **Mother in the Full Sense of Her Calling**

Elizabeth was not only a matchless mother to her own, but also took a deep interest in her husband's subjects as extended children, rather than vassals, helping the less fortunate from her own purse. She also had a special place in her heart for those who, though born to families of nobility and means, had fallen on hard times.

She established monasteries, hostels for the poor, a hospital, a house for repentant wayward women, a free school for girls, a house for ladies who had come upon financial grief, and a hospice for orphaned and abandoned children, of whom she wished to lose not one. She built bridges in dangerous places, visited and procured doctors for the ill, and endowed poor girls for the convent or marriage. She kept a beautiful

tiara and gown to lend to poor brides so they could "shine" on their special day.

A popular legend has it that one day while inspecting a construction site, a girl offered her a bouquet of flowers. The queen distributed the flowers, one to each of the workers, saying: "Let's see if today you will work hard and well for this pay." The men reverently placed their flower each in his satchel, only to find, at the end of the day, a gold coin instead.

Another story touches on a great thorn in Elizabeth's maternal heart, which was the early death of her only daughter, Constanza. The princess, married to the young Ferdinand of Castille, passed away in 1313, shortly after her husband who died the year before. They were both in their twenties.

On a trip with her husband from Santarém to Lisbon, a hermit suddenly stepped up to the coach with a message for the queen. "My lady," said the man, "your daughter Constanza appeared to me several times in dreams asking me to let you know that she suffers in Purgatory and to please help her thus: have a chaste priest, for the space of a year, celebrate a daily Mass for her, offering the holy Sacrifice of the altar according to the norms of Holy Mother Church."<sup>8</sup> And he was gone.

Elizabeth decided to have the Masses said. Exactly one year later, she saw her daughter in dreams, dressed in white, who said, "My lady mother, I'm freed from the pains I suffered, and may God be praised. I now go to that place where I will suffer no more."<sup>9</sup>

### **Evening of Life**

King Dinis died in January of 1325 at age sixty-five.

Saint Elizabeth marched onto the field of battle and forced her husband to reconcile with their son, just as both of the armies were about to clash.



Through his illness the queen cared for him “as if she were a simple nurse, a common woman, and as if she had no one else to tend to her husband.”<sup>10</sup>

Dinis’ last words were directed to his children recommending them to Elizabeth “...whose love for all of you is well known. As to my love for her, if at a certain point it was not so strong, it is now as I recommend her to you; for I trust that because of her, my name will be known and the kingdom honored.”<sup>11</sup>

After receiving the last Sacraments, the king turned to Afonso, “Dear son, I’m about to die. My last thought is for the queen, your mother, to whom, when young, I caused some grief. I ask you to make up for a portion of that grief, by standing by her and serving her. For this, you will have my blessing and hers.”<sup>12</sup>

Then, with tired breath, he said goodbye to Elizabeth, and with a last prayer directed at the crucifix in her hands, he gave up his soul to God.

The day after Dinis died, Elizabeth donned the Franciscan habit of the monastery of Santa Clara. In her new garb, she spent many hours in prayer by her husband’s body. Still, she made it plain that she was not becoming a religious, but was remaining a lay person.

Now, as “queen mother,” Elizabeth looked to retire to her beloved monastery of Santa Clara which she founded in 1314. With the exception of sums applied to Masses for the dead, some crowns, silver and gold vessels, and jewels bequeathed to her son, the rest of her will was in favor of works of charity.

At Santa Clara she continued to care and provide for the poor and the needy of all classes. She specially kept close to her several young girls whom she either helped to discern a vocation, or marry well.

### Holy Death

The holy queen finished her life as she had begun it, working for peace. At age sixty-five she undertook a trip to settle a dispute between her son Afonso and the Castillian Afonso XI. By the time she reached Estremoz where Afonso and his wife, Beatriz, received her with deep affection, she was a very sick woman.

A tumor had appeared on her arm, and physicians were summoned. All hoped for recovery, but

Elizabeth knew differently. On July 1, 1336, her temperature was so high that she was unable to attend her beloved daily Mass. On July 4th she made her Confession from bed, then, with enormous effort, stood up and attended the Holy Sacrifice receiving Holy Viaticum on her knees.

Back in bed, she conversed with Afonso and Beatriz when, suddenly, she said to her daughter-in-law, “Daughter, make room for the Lady standing there...”

“Which lady?” asked Beatriz.

“The Lady dressed in white, right there...”

Thus, we know that the Immaculate Queen came for this queen who had loved her all her life, especially devoted to her Immaculate Conception.

“Mary, Mother of Grace, Mother of Mercy, protect me from the enemy and receive me at the hour of death,” she now prayed. Then, reciting the Apostles’ Creed, the Our Father and other prayers, she gently breathed her last.

### Miracles and Incorruptibility

As Elizabeth was translated to Coimbra, a trip of seven days in the scorching summer’s heat, her son and family feared that her body would quickly decompose. Instead, such a sweet, unknown perfume began to emanate from the coffin that all realized that they carried relics and no mere mortal remains. Many were the miracles and healings that also occurred before and immediately after the queen’s body was solemnly interred.

In March of 1612 Elizabeth’s grave was opened for the first time in over 270 years before judges, procurators, doctors, several nuns and many devotees. Her body was found to be perfectly incorrupt. One of her eyelids, a little ajar, revealed green eyes. A few small golden locks escaped from her headdress.

It was only fitting that she who had resisted the corruption of the best this life can offer, remained untouched by the worst that death can muster.

In May of 1625 the holy queen was solemnly raised to the altars by Pope Urban VIII.

Thus, the green-eyed, golden-haired maiden of Aragon, and peerless queen of Portugal, continues to reign from many an altar in her beloved adopted land. To her come all with their pains and petitions as if she still lived—for she whose virtue transcended the ills of this earth, also transcended the confines of time, and from heaven is still Portugal’s queen, mother and saint. ■



After a life spent tirelessly working for the good of her kingdom, Saint Elizabeth of Portugal continues to generously grant favors from heaven to those who ask for her intercession.

#### Notes:

1. Jose Miguel Pero-Sanz, *Santa Isabel, Rainha de Portugal*, p. 29.
2. Ibid. p. 16.
3. Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, Isabel’s great aunt, born in 1207 and deceased in 1231, was canonized by Pope Gregory IX in 1235, only four years after her death.
4. Jose Miguel Pero-Sanz, *Santa Isabel, Rainha de Portugal*, p. 38.
5. Ibid. pp. 20, 21.

6. Ibid. p. 83.

7. <http://cantigas.fcsh.unl.pt/cantigasautor.asp?cdaut=25>.

8. Jose Miguel Pero-Sanz, *Santa Isabel, Rainha de Portugal*, p. 110.

9. Ibid. p. 110.

10. Ibid. p. 152.

11. Ibid. p. 154.

12. Ibid. p. 155.



# AMERICA NEEDS FATIMA<sup>®</sup>

MAY/JUNE 2015 PROGRESS REPORT

## Reliving Our Lord's Passion and Becoming a Modern-Day Veronica

VINCENT GORRE

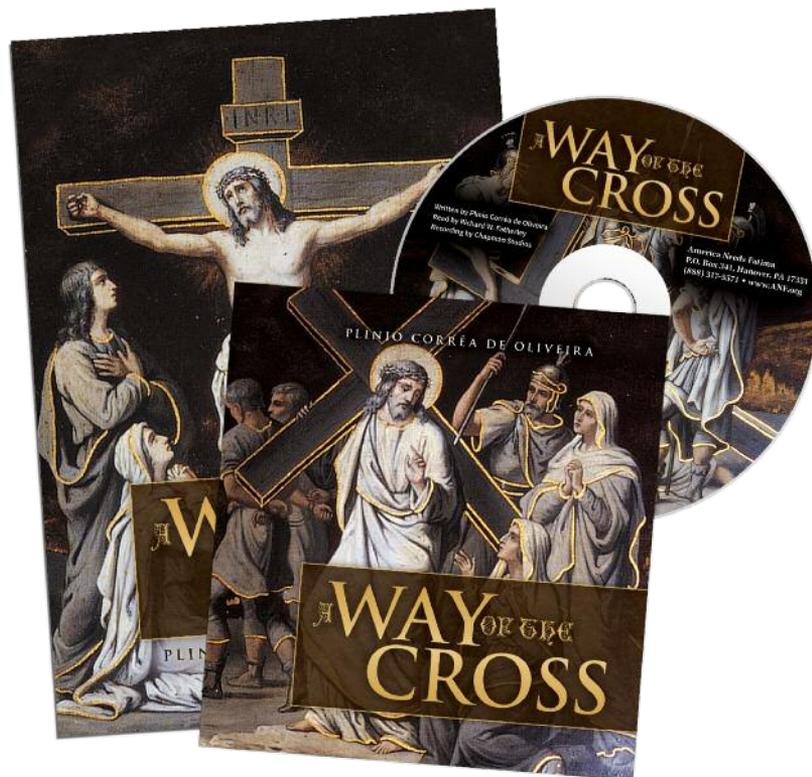
During every Lent, Catholics pay particular attention to the memory of Our Lord Jesus Christ's Passion and Death on the Cross. As we imagine the torments, the torture, the insults and the blasphemies against the Sacred Person of Our Lord Jesus Christ, we can also imagine a woman named Veronica, who wiped His Face when He fell under the weight of the cross on the way to Calvary.

What drove Veronica to do what she did? Whatever it was, Our Lord gave her a miracle as a sign of approval—His very Face stamped on her veil! None of Our Lord's friends were around to help Him, but Veronica, with an act of courage, consoled Him with her tender gesture.

Sadly, in these modern times, Our Lord, His Most Blessed Mother and His Holy Church are ever more attacked, insulted and blasphemed. Our Lady of Fatima's call for conversion has thus far been largely ignored. How can we console Jesus and Mary during these decadent times?

Praying the Way of the Cross and spreading this devotion to others is one way. America Needs Fatima makes this possible by providing its members and supporters with a special recording and booklet of the Way of the Cross. By their help in its distribution to thousands more, they, too, become modern-day "Veronicas."

In his meditations for Lent, Saint Thomas Aquinas wrote, "To think diligently upon Our Lord's Passion is a very profitable employment, which is why Saint Paul adds that you be not wearied, fainting in your minds. The Passion of Christ keeps us from fainting." Saint Thomas further wrote that in thinking of the Passion, "You will not then fail, worn out in spirit, in loyalty to the true faith, nor in the prosecution of good works." ■



To order your copy of *A Way of the Cross* CD and booklet, please call **(888) 317-5571** or go to [www.AmericaNeedsFatima.org/WOC](http://www.AmericaNeedsFatima.org/WOC)



# CUSTODIAN'S

# CORNER

## The Rosary in the Heart of Africa

BY BEN BROUSSARD

Though America Needs Fatima custodians visit more than 2,000 homes in the United States with the statues of Our Lady of Fatima every year, we often have the opportunity to meet people from other lands. One such occasion occurred when I visited several Ugandans gathered in their Maryland home on a chilly Friday evening in December.

After greeting everyone and crowning Our Lady, the presentation proceeded as normal as we came to the time to pray the rosary. One of the gentlemen there, Mr. Remigius Kintu, began to tell of an apostolate he began some years ago called the Rosary Project for Africa.

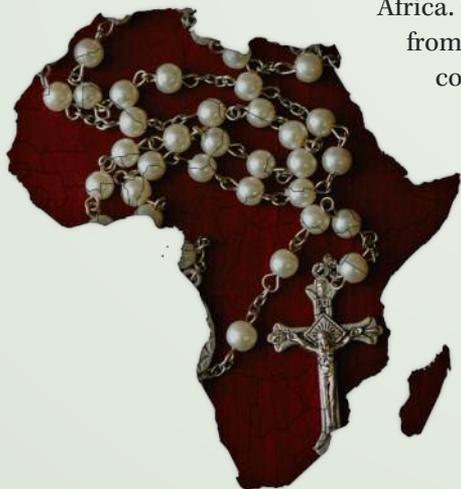
The project involves people from the United States and other countries donating rosaries for the Catholic missions in countries throughout the African continent.

Mr. Kintu recounted the story of a contact he made with a woman from Cameroon. She had requested several thousand rosaries, and upon distributing them to the parishes the Catholics there began

passing them out on the street to anyone walking by. The pastors of the parishes reported to her shortly after that they have been inundated with requests for baptisms, instruction in the faith, and for entry into the Church from vast numbers of non-Catholics never previously evangelized.

Since the Rosary Project for Africa began, more than 100,000 rosaries have been distributed, and success stories like the one above continue as more Africans commit to praying the rosary. Much work is still to be done with the project, as requests for more rosaries continue to come in from across the continent.

As the visit came to an end, we knelt together begging the Queen of Heaven to grant a greater devotion to the rosary in Africa and throughout the world, in order to bring about the triumph of Our Lady's Immaculate Heart. ■



**To participate in the Rosary Project for Africa, please mail rosaries to:**

Rosary Project for Africa  
Remigius Kintu  
11223 Columbia Pike  
Silver Spring, MD 20901

### Our Readers Write...



#### **A Conversion on Death Row**

(Article published in the March/April issue of *Crusade*. It is the story of a man on death row who picked up a Miraculous Medal, saw the Blessed Mother and converted before his death.)

Thank you so much Mr. Ritchie! I have been at the point of almost despair. For years I have been wearing my Miraculous Medal with my brown scapular. God bless you and America NEEDS Fatima!

*E.C., via email*

I saw a few of those on death row in a prison while I was chaplain. . . it was a very good experience for me that they convert and become real Christians.

*D.C., via email*

Thank you, Robert, for the very moving story of Claude Newman. May he in Heaven help those obstinate inmates, drug addicts or drug dealers, etc. I'll certainly pass your email to my circle of friends.

*M.S., Via email*



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# FUTURE OF AMERICA

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**Call Louisa today at (888) 317-5571 to find out more!**

Thank you, sir, for sending me this message. It seems that my beloved country, my "Terra de Santa Cruz" is on the death row of Communism. But, our Mother is there on the corner. Lots of Brazilians are praying. Please, pray for us too. May God bless you.

*M.J., via email*

Praise God for giving us Mary of the Miraculous Medal. Note how important Confession must be.

*G.T., via email*

Robert, that was one of the most beautiful stories I have ever read. I too have a devotion to Our Lady. I wear her Miraculous Medal, scapular, and make sure to say the Holy Rosary every day. Thank you again. You are right; it was very uplifting. We are living in the worst of times. God Bless,

*M.P., via email*



### March for Life

It was so wonderful seeing you so elegant and majestic in keeping with Catholic tradition as you viewed God's Army passing by on this year's anniversary of that dreadful day of the passing of *Roe v. Wade*. There is so much work still to be done!

*B.W., via email*

Thank you, Mr. Ritchie! My husband and I were at the Pro-Life March on January 24, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and we joined in the Rosary with Amer-

ica Needs Fatima, led by Celso Costa, who works with you.

As Celso began the Rosary, the protesters turned away and got into their own group. The power of the Rosary!

We also signed your petition. God bless your wonderful work!

*C.C., via email*

Dear Robert, I congratulate you and assure you my prayers for the success of the event you are planning to uphold life! I am in India and unable to do any other help than prayer. I will be with you in prayer. May God bless you.

*M.P., via email*

**Send us your feedback by writing to us at [Crusade@TFP.org](mailto:Crusade@TFP.org)**



COMMENTARY

# Every Woman Dies, But Not Every Woman Truly Lives

BY NORMAN FULKERSON

At the time Brittany Maynard<sup>1</sup> was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer, Donielle Wilde of Charlotte, North Carolina, was given an equally somber diagnosis of stage four breast cancer. The similarities between the two stop there. Donielle was pregnant with her tenth child and was given two options that could save her life, abortion, which was unacceptable, or aggressive cancer treatment,<sup>2</sup> which might injure her baby. Whereas Brittany chose to die, “on my own terms,” Donielle and husband Keith rejected both options and chose “God’s terms.” They remained upbeat about what might have been a life-ending, dream-shattering choice, not knowing that God clearly had other plans.

The path chosen by the couple was not an easy one, yet they never wavered. Along the way they were blessed with supernatural help. A friend of the Wildes put them in touch with Laura Wohlstadter, a Catholic mother in St. Louis, Missouri. Mrs. Wohlstadter had gone through a problem pregnancy some years ago and prayed to Saint Anthony Galvão.<sup>3</sup> This recently canonized Brazilian saint is

a veritable miracle worker for expectant mothers. Mrs. Wohlstadter eventually gave birth to a baby boy that doctors were certain would never be born and named him Anthony in honor of the great saint. Perhaps he might help the Wildes also.

Donielle immediately took the “pill” sent to her by the Wohlstadters: a piece of paper with the Latin phrase, *Post partum Virgo, inviolata permansisti, Dei Genitrix, intercede pro nobis* (After birth, the Virgin remained intact. Mother of God, intercede on our behalf). She also began the daily novena prayer to Saint Anthony Galvão.

## Choosing a Name

It had not been the custom for the Wildes to find out the sex of their children while in utero, but they felt the need to find out this time. It seemed necessary, not only because it allowed their other children to pray for the child by name, but because it also personalized the one she carried in her womb.

When it was determined they were to have a girl, Keith instinctively chose the name Sylvia without realizing its significance. Donielle later researched the name and discovered Saint Sylvia is not only the mother of Pope Saint Gregory the Great, but also the patroness of expectant mothers. Her middle name would be Hope: a virtue they would rely upon heavily over the next months.

Doctors needed to deliver the baby as soon as possible so as to begin treatment of the mother and chose to do a C-section on November 6, 2014. The much-anticipated date finally arrived and Donielle went through a flawless delivery. Thanks to her decision, the world will not be left wondering what the namesake of Saint Sylvia—threatened with extermination before seeing the light of day—might have accomplished in life. All we have to do is wait and see.

What was still left uncertain, however, was the health of the mother. She had chosen “God’s



Donielle and Keith Wilde with their daughter Sylvia, the “miracle child.”



*See that you despise  
not one of these little  
ones: for I say to you,  
that their angels in  
heaven always see  
the Face of My Father  
who is in heaven.*

*—Matthew 18:10*

Photo of Sylvia Wilde taken a few days after her birth. Her namesake, Saint Sylvia, is the patroness of expectant mothers.

terms” but would she, after taking such a risk, live to see her daughter grow up? The answer was not long in coming.

### **Stunning News**

While it is true everyone wanted to see a safe delivery, there was an overwhelming desire for an absolute clean bill of health for someone who selflessly chose to put another human life above her own. Days later, both Donielle and her newborn were discharged from the hospital. The doctor was surprised at how well Donielle was healing. It was strange for a lady who months before had been given the diagnosis of stage four cancer.

Then she received the stunning news. The results of her first upper abdominal CT scan came back negative for blood clots or any signs of cancer. While it was reason for hope, it was by no means time to open champagne bottles. A full body scan and further blood work was scheduled for November 21, 2014 to determine if Donielle was entirely cancer free. When that day finally arrived, family and friends rejoiced with the results.

In an email sent out to friends, Donielle said she had been “officially labeled as ‘N.E.D.’” which meant, No Evidence of Disease. The scan was perfect and her blood levels, according to doctors, were “exceptionally good.”

“Prayers have been answered!” she continued. “I remain in complete awe of God’s greatness, God’s personal love and God’s mercy! Can’t help but sing ‘Give Glory to God in the highest and peace to His people on Earth.’ Thank you for your hours of prayers and continual support over these months!”

### **“Desire Life Like Water and Drink Death Like Wine”**

During this entire trial, Donielle insisted on downplaying the heroics of her decision and preferred the emphasis be placed on the pro-life message. When we objectively consider the options, there really was no other choice for a true mother. Therefore, her decision is what one would expect.

Nevertheless, when surrounded by a world where people choose their own “best interest,” like poor Brittany Maynard, a potentially catastrophic decision like the one taken by Donielle and husband Keith is refreshingly courageous.

G. K. Chesterton once defined courage as “a strong desire to live, taking the form of a readiness to die.” Such a person, he continues, “must seek his life in a spirit of furious indifference: he must desire life like water and drink death like wine.” How true! This is what we commonly recognize in fearless American servicemen who face death on foreign battlefields. It is no less admirable in the equally courageous act of an anonymous housewife and caring mother who smiles in the face of a deadly disease, rather than harm a life given to her by God for safekeeping. William Wallace might say of such a person, “every woman dies, but not every woman truly lives.” ■

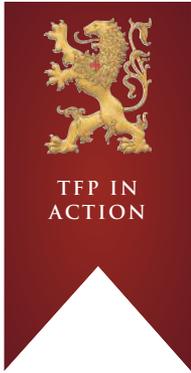
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#### **Notes:**

1. Brittany Maynard was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor, was given a short time to live, chose to commit suicide and became a poster child for the laws against euthanasia.

2. It must be pointed out that no sin is incurred by a mother choosing treatment, as long as the procedure is aimed at healing the mother rather than terminating a pregnancy.

3. <http://www.tfp.org/TFP-home/catholic-perspective/he-always-held-his-soul-in-his-hands-the-story-of-saint-anthony-of-saint-anne-galvao.html>



# Keep the Three-Legged Stool Standing and Strong



**Strong National Defense**  
From George Washington to General Douglas MacArthur, from Col. John W. Ripley, USMC, to Navy SEAL Michael Monsoor, American families have consistently produced men of character, courage, self-sacrifice and, above all, honor. Our country's love of honor made possible the raising of our flag on Iwo Jima, the storming of the beaches on D-Day and the defeat of Islamist terrorists in Fallujah.

*For the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) 2015, the American TFP issued the following message encouraging conservatives to uphold sound principles for a winning strategy.*

President Ronald Reagan crafted the metaphor of the “three-legged stool” to represent the conservative movement’s strength. The three legs—defined as social, defense and fiscal conservatism—are integral parts of the same unified movement. All three are important, make vital contributions and support the common good.

Americans are receptive to all three legs of the stool. We are a God-fearing people who cherish the traditional family, oppose the decline of American military might, and roundly reject socialism. Leftist policies such as abortion, gun control, Obamacare and Common Core are discredited and unpopular. Our movement now has a chance to set the agenda and roll back liberal policies. The truth is on our side. Unity will increase our strength.

Judge Robert Bork put it, continue slouching toward Gomorrah.

The Sexual Revolution is a nightmare of leftist design, resulting in a 50% divorce rate, 40% of children born out of wedlock, the pornography epidemic, and 57 million surgical abortions since 1973.

With the rise of court-imposed homosexual “marriage,” some argue that the conservative movement should avoid discussing morality altogether. The liberal canard that social issues only get in the way of “more important” economic concerns is false. Social conservatives thirst for authenticity and support political leaders who defend moral values.

The conservative movement should continually remind the left that their failed ideology is the cause of so many societal ills which must be reversed.

A strong American military has been the cornerstone of world peace in face of both Communism and Islamist terrorism for almost a century. The conservative movement

knows the importance of a strong military and an assertive, unambiguous foreign policy that reassures our allies and gives pause to our enemies.

The United States is not just another country, but a symbol for many nations—a symbol of order, respect for the rule of law, traditional Christian values and a willingness to sacrifice for others that leads our troops to fight for what is right and good.

However, foreign policy anchored in appeasement of our enemies, abandonment of our allies and retreat from the world stage, has contributed to a most unstable and dangerous geopolitical situation.

## Social Conservatism

Society thrives on virtue. “Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports,” wrote George Washington in his Farewell Address.

Only a nation that respects the Ten Commandments and God’s plan for life, marriage and family can hope to produce men and women of high moral character. If we allow ourselves to swallow the liberal philosophy of the sixties—“If it feels good, do it!”—we will, as



As in years past, TFP Student Action engaged the attendees of CPAC 2015, encouraging one and all to stand firm on conservative principles.

Conservatives must resist the temptation to isolate ourselves or appease our enemies. Rather, we must stand up to and confront the enemies of order.

### Restore Fiscal Sanity

In the United States, national debt has surpassed \$18 trillion. Every day, our debt increases by \$4 billion. Every hour, our government borrows \$168 million.

Our economy is coming apart under crushing burdens of debt. There is personal, corporate and state and local government debt. There is also out-of-control federal spending and runaway trade deficits fueled by a manufacturing base that has largely moved off shore to hostile and threatening communist China.

There is a deeper problem that must

be addressed: economy without a moral foundation is like a ship without a rudder. Therefore, to get back on course and avoid even greater economic instability, the conservative movement must harness lasting solutions based on firm principles.

As John Horvat II writes in his award-winning book *Return to Order*: “The main problem lies with a restless spirit of intemperance that is constantly throwing our economy out of balance. It is made worse by a frenetic drive generated by a strong undercurrent in modern economy that seeks to be rid of restraints and gratify disordered passions. We call the resulting spirit ‘frenetic intemperance,’ which is now pushing the country headlong into the throes of an unprecedented crisis.”

Mr. Horvat offers compelling solutions based on an organic Christian society. “When economy is seen in the context of society, it allows the natural restraining influence of human institutions such as customs, morals, family or community to calm markets and create social trust. Economy then becomes anchored in the true mooring of the cardinal virtues, which creates a climate of honesty that favors commerce and keeps markets free and fair.”

\* \* \*

The American TFP calls on the conservative movement to keep Reagan’s three-legged stool standing and strong to win the Culture War for the heart and soul of America. ■

## Petition Drive to Protect the Family

The American TFP has joined a group of twenty other pro-life and conservative organizations across the globe in the collection of signatures asking Pope Francis to reaffirm categorically the Catholic teaching that divorced and civilly remarried Catholics cannot receive Holy Communion and that homosexual unions are contrary to Divine and natural law. The importance of the upcoming Synod on the family (October 2015) cannot be overstated, considering the sad fact that many bishops are proposing changes to the unchangeable doctrines of the Catholic Church.

On Ash Wednesday, groups of TFP Student Action members campaigned in Baltimore, Harrisburg and Philadelphia, and gathered several hundred signatures. Similar petition drives were also held at the Conservative Political Action Con-



On Ash Wednesday 2015, TFP Student Action volunteers met with widespread support while collecting signatures for the Filial Appeal to Pope Francis.

ference (CPAC), Gettysburg College, and the 42nd annual March for Life. A man in Philadelphia enthusiastically told one volunteer, “Thank you. Keep up what you do!” Another woman from Baltimore remarked, “This is what we need, to stand up for marriage and the family.”

Thousands of signatures were collected from both Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Currently, over 150,000 people have signed the petition, including His Eminence Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke, the Most Rev. Athanasius Schneider, Rick Santorum and many others. ■



Lively conversations broke out about the state of the family, the serious discussions drawing a crowd.

To sign this appeal to Pope Francis, go to [www.AmericaNeedsFatima.org/Appeal](http://www.AmericaNeedsFatima.org/Appeal)

# GRIGIO

BY PAULINE SANDERS



FAMILY  
SERIES

Many are the stories and books that have been written about special dogs. There were dogs who saved their owners' lives, dogs who helped bring criminals to justice, dogs who "fought" in wars, and dogs who were so loyal to their masters and served them so well that their stories became part of oral and written history.

Such was a dog called "Grigio." Grigio was very much like other dogs we have heard or read about, with just this difference: no one ever knew where he came

from, and no one will ever know for sure where he went. Let me tell you his story.

Saint John Bosco, the beloved founder of schools for boys and of an order of priests and brothers called the Salesians, was returning home very late one day. Because he did much good, and was a true and great saint, there were many bad people who hated him and wanted to see him dead. He had already been attacked more than once, and on this particular night, as he walked through the deserted streets of Turin, in northern Italy, he was prudently anxious, even though he was an extraordinarily strong man.

Suddenly, he saw a great big dog approaching him. In size and appearance it looked like a wolf, with a long snout, erect, pointed ears and gray fur. At first, Don Bosco thought the dog would attack him, but as the dog came near it showed every sign of being extremely friendly. It wagged its tail, snuggled its nose into Don Bosco's hand, and pawed gently at his cassock. For the rest of the Saint's homeward journey the great hound walked behind him, right up to the gate of the Oratory of Saint Francis de Sales. And then it vanished!

From then on, every time Don Bosco was out late, Grigio always appeared out of nowhere and followed him to and fro. Don Bosco himself gave the dog its name, which means "gray," because that was the color of its fur. One of the boys at the Oratory, Don Bosco's school, described him: "I saw a large, strong-looking beast that made me think of a wolf. He had gray fur and a big head; his ears were straight and pointed, and he stood a little over three feet high."

One night, Don Bosco was making his way back to the Oratory in the company of a good friend. They walked together for most of the journey, but at a certain point they



had to go their separate ways. Before the two men parted company, Don Bosco prayed to Our Lady for her protection and recommended the rest of the trip to his guardian angel. No sooner had he said this prayer than Grigio trotted up to them. At the sight of the dog, Don Bosco's friend was terrified.

"Don't worry," said Don Bosco, "Grigio is my friend."

Unconvinced, his companion tried to chase the dog away and even hurled a few stones at him. Despite being struck several times, Grigio showed not the slightest reaction. Don Bosco's friend was amazed. "It can't be a real dog, Don Bosco! It's a ghost!" The man was so intrigued that he accompanied Don Bosco to the entrance of the Oratory. There, all of a sudden, Grigio was gone.

"What is this?" the man wanted to know. "Where did he go? Was he a real dog?!"

By this time he was so upset and frightened that he was

trembling. Don Bosco had to ask two of his bigger boys to accompany his friend all the way home!

Now we shall see Grigio in action. Don Bosco himself tells us about it.

“Around the end of November of 1854, one dark and rainy night, I was returning home from the city. Avoiding the desolate and lonely places, I took the road that leads from the Consolata to the Cottolengo. At a certain point I realized that two men were walking a short distance in front of me. When I quickened my steps, they quickened theirs; when I slowed down, they slowed down. When I tried to pass them, they deftly barred my way. I then tried to retrace my steps but it was too late; suddenly, taking two leaps towards me, they quietly threw a dark cloak over my face. I struggled to free myself, but it was useless. One was trying to gag me. I tried to shout, but in vain. At that moment, Grigio appeared, growling like a bear. He sprang with his paws towards the face of one and with his fangs towards the other in such a way that they were entangling the hound instead of me.

“Call off your dog! Call off your dog!” they screamed in terror.

“Yes, I will, but you must leave travelers alone.”

“All right, all right,” said the bandits, “but call him off, call him off now!”

“Grigio continued howling like a furious wolf or bear. I called him and he immediately left them. They went their way and Grigio, walking beside me, kept me company until we reached the Cottolengo.”

Every time Don Bosco went out, he saw Grigio coming to meet him just as soon as he passed all the houses and buildings and began to tread isolated areas. Many times Grigio was seen by the boys at the Oratory, and they even played with him and stroked his gray coat. He was known among them as Don Bosco’s dog and, therefore, much liked. And he liked them. With Don Bosco’s friends he was the gentlest of creatures, but with the enemies of the saint he was like a lion.

Not only did Grigio escort Don Bosco on dangerous trips, he sometimes kept him from setting out on them. One evening Don Bosco had to go into the city for something important. His saintly mother, Mamma Margarita, who lived with him until her death, insisted that it was too late and thus too dangerous for such a trip. Bound by his sense of duty, Don Bosco insisted on going. Calling a couple of his boys, he set out, but at the gate of the Oratory lay Grigio.

“He has been there quite a while,” explained some of the boys. “We tried to make him go away and even took a stick to him, but he kept coming back.”

“You don’t have to worry about Grigio,” said Don Bosco. “I can leave without fear now. Let’s go, Grigio!”

Instead of following Don Bosco as he usually did, Grigio stiffened, his lips curled into a menacing snarl, and he let out a deep growl. Don Bosco, surprised, nudged the dog lightly with the tip of his shoe. Grigio growled a sec-

ond time. Don Bosco tried to climb over him, but the dog retreated and kept on growling. When Don Bosco tried to go around him, the dog rose up and blocked his path. The boys shouted at the mastiff, but dared not say anything further against an angry Grigio.

Hearing the noise, Mamma Margarita came out to see what was happening. “The dog has more sense than you, John!” she scolded. “I wouldn’t go out if I were you!”

Don Bosco was finally persuaded to stay home. A little later he heard a commotion outside. Someone was saying, “Don’t let Don Bosco out tonight! Some men are hiding in the old house at the end of the road and they have sworn to kill him as soon as he leaves the Oratory!”

How did Grigio know? Grigio was certainly a very unusual dog.

Another oddity about Grigio was that he would never take any food that was offered to him. One evening, Don Bosco had arrived at the Oratory much earlier than expected because a friend, the Marquis Fassati, had lent him his coach. Don Bosco was having supper when he overheard someone outside say, “Leave him alone! That’s Don Bosco’s dog!” A little later some of the boys led the mastiff into the dining room. He immediately dashed to Don Bosco, bounding around his chair in delight. The saint offered him something to eat, but the dog paid no attention to it. “You are a very proud dog,” Don Bosco chided. “If you won’t eat this, what will you eat?” Placing his front paws on the table, Grigio looked mutely at Don Bosco for a moment. That done, he trotted to the back of the room and ran out the door. It seems he had expected to find Don Bosco on the road that day. Since our saint had come by coach, Grigio had only wanted to make sure that he was safely home.

Grigio accompanied Don Bosco for many years, so many that a lady once told him that it was impossible for a dog to live that long. Don Bosco only smiled and said, “Maybe he is the son or the grandson of the first one.”

But, as Grigio had come, so Grigio left. One day, Don Bosco went to visit an old friend, Luis Moglia. He had been invited to dinner, but having been detained he started out later than he had wished. As he walked, the sun began to set and he suddenly found himself wishing that Grigio were by his side. At that moment, he spied the dog joyfully running towards him!

Upon reaching his friend’s house, Don Bosco and his host visited and talked, and then the whole family went into the dining room for dinner. Grigio came in with them and lay down in one corner of the room. After a while someone remembered the dog and said, “We should give Grigio something to eat.” The person turned toward the corner where the dog had been lying, but it was vacant. They looked for him around the room and then throughout the house, but he was nowhere to be found. Everyone was amazed, for neither the door nor any window had been opened and the other dogs outside never barked. Grigio was never seen again. ■

# A Gift Best Seen From

# Above

BY EVAN OLWELL

*“Nowhere is the carpet more beautiful and distinguished than in the unique, ancient surroundings of the Grand-Place in Brussels.”*

—Architect E. Stautemans

Best seen from above, the Grande Place of Brussels blooms every two years with its magnificent flower carpet, celebrated on the weekend closest to August 15th, the feast of the Assumption.

Consider how this marvelous and fairytale-like creation is a healthy expression of the nation. About one hundred twenty volunteers work to construct it over a four-hour period. The display remains in the square for about four days. It is a calm and temperate event that is so contrary to today's squares full of agitation, flashing lights and noise. It is a tradition that unifies and elevates innocent hearts to horizons of splendor. Not an “outdated” tradition, but a true tradition; living, growing and social.

One might wonder, what do the organizers profit from this display? There is no entrance fee; anyone may participate in the conviviality surrounding the spectacle. Most importantly, the value of the carpet is beyond mere commercial considerations. The subject that contemplates the flower carpet is drawn to metaphysical truths. One better understands aspects of God, even in a miniscule way, through use of the senses. In this unique case, the shapes and vibrant colors of the flowers touch the innocence inside men and bring to mind the beauty and splendor of heaven. It calls to mind the gospel: “Amen I say to you, unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 18:3)

Beauty is abundantly given to men, the near-million begonias arrayed in this show of color are a masterpiece that is, so to speak, co-authored by God. For, just as the lungs breathe air, so also does the upright soul aspire to beauty. The unreproducible hues of color are well contrasted by the ancient stone edifices of the Grande Place, an ideal frame for a gift best seen from above. ■



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