



SODALITY OF CHARITY NEWSLETTER

In the soul, like sun, reigns Charity alone

4/2022 April ▪ www.sodalityofcharity.net

4900 Rialto Road, West Chester, OH, 45069

Dear members and friends of the Sodality of Charity,

Have a happy and blessed Easter. I wish to give a huge thank you to all our members and friends who worked so hard during Holy Week, so that our little church could once again successfully celebrate the Traditional rites of the Passiontide. This year Bishop Dolan also consecrated holy oils on Holy Thursday, after many years' break. It is with the Oil of the Catechumens that a new member of the Church is anointed at baptism, and also with which the hands of a new priest are anointed; with Sacred Chrism the indelible mark of the soldier of Christ is imprinted in his soul at Confirmation; and with the Oil of the Sick he is sent on to his final journey to the judgment seat of God through the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

Our Seminarian Sunday was a great success, and we collected about \$17,000 for our four Seminarists. In the parish we are now getting ready for the big event of the priestly ordination. That will take place on Wednesday, May 4, the Solemnity of St. Joseph, at 10 AM.

We are expecting visiting clergy to attend, and of course all available faithful from St. Gertrude's, St. Hugh's, and our missions are cordially invited. The first Masses of our new priests are on the next day, May 5, First Thursday and feast of St. Pius V, at 9 AM. This happy occasion will be followed by breakfast, which is arranged by our Sodality.

Our next monthly meeting will be on Saturday,

May 21, from 8:15 AM to 2:30 PM. We will continue making rosaries, which were a success at the Seminarian Sunday sale, to collect funds for this year's Girls Camp, which will be on July 12-14. All members are invited to attend our monthly meeting, and of course to the Girls Camp as well. Last year's camp was a huge hit, thanks to all of our generous donors, and we are planning to

continue our own traditions of baking competition, scrapbooking, puppet show, square dancing, painting and outdoor and indoor games. And if we'll collect the necessary funds, we will do a little fun outing.

In this newsletter you can read the story of one of our Sodality's patrons, Venerable Mary of Agreda (1602-1665). She became a Sister when she was still living at home, because when she was 16 years old, her mother and sisters converted their family home into the Monastery of the Immaculate Conception and she took the name Mary of Jesus. When she was 25, she was appointed superior of the monastery, and continued to function as such until her death. Less than ten years after her death she was

declared Venerable by Pope Clement X, in honor of her heroic life of virtue. Mary of Agreda was constantly guided and enlightened by her angels – for besides her guardian angels, God gave her five other angels, which she could see. She also had constantly with her St. Agnes and St. Ursula. Of the three theological virtues, Mary exercised especially *charity*, for her will was so captivated



by the love of God. The biography in this newsletter is a shortened text of the abridgement of the full biography by Fr. José Jiménez y Samaniego. You can read the full text, edited by Father J. A. Boullan, from our website.

Thank you of your prayers for Fr. Valerii Kudriavtsev. He is now safely in Ireland, living from the charity of a good Catholic man in Knock, Ireland, the place where Our Lady and St. Joseph in 1879 appeared to a group of faithful. Fr. Valerii is addressed with his first name, because that's the practice in the Byzantine Rite he belongs to. He was born in Luhansk, eastern Ukraine, in 1959. At that time Ukraine was nominally autonomous republic, but in reality it was an integral part of the Communist empire called Soviet Union. He was baptized in the Russian Orthodox Church. He later married, studied in an orthodox parish seminary and was ordained in 1991. On that same year Father Valerii found a Catholic prayer book in the parish sacristy, and started to study the history and Faith of the Catholic Church. Very soon he wanted to become a Catholic, so in 1992 he left the Russian Orthodox Church, and was ordained conditionally by Bishop Julian Voronovsky, who at that time was the rector of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Holy Ghost Seminary in Lviv. In 1992-1995 Fr. Valerii studied at that seminary and worked as a missionary priest in Luhansk. He became a traditional Catholic in 1998, and worked for a while with the Transalpine Redemptorists of Scotland as an associate priest. He also started his own mission as a Byzantine Slavonic Rite priest in Luhansk. When he became a Sedevacantist in 2006 all his parishioners left him.

We hope that now when Fr. Valerii is in exile in Ireland, his home country being destroyed by Russian invasion, he can start an apostolate in the land of St. Patrick – who is patron not only of Ireland, but of Nigeria as well. Anyone in Ireland can contact the mission he serves at his website

<http://www.catholicmessage.org/blog/non-una-cum-mass-in-the-byzantine-rite/2022-04-09-404>

I will visit our St. Hugh of Lincoln chapel in Milwaukee, WI, on Sunday, May 1, feast of the Apostles Sts. Philip and James. Besides Milwaukee, our current and future priests are also serving the area of Chicago, IL. This once great Catholic city has been struggling for years under Communist leadership, but us Traditional Catholics will not concede defeat to the world. There used to be a big Catholic girls' school named *Maria High School* in Chicago. It is closed now, the sad result of Communism and apostasy, which are ravaging that once great Catholic city much worse than any plague ever could. Maria High School graduated about 14,000 young women throughout its years of operation, and its motto was "*Maria Women Make a Difference in the World.*"



What a good slogan for our parish girls as well. There are many people who attend the Mass at our mission right now, but there are much more who might do so, if they knew about it. If you, the members and friends of our Sodality could think a way how to get the word out, that there is a true Mass in the Chicago area, let our St. Hugh

pastor Fr. McGuire know.

I celebrated the Mass for our Sodality members on Easter Wednesday, April 20. One of the benefits of a Sodalist is that she is entitled, not only to attend the monthly meetings, but also that to she is enrolled in the company for whom the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is celebrated once a month. The only obligations of the Sodalists are to attend the monthly meetings, if possible, and a voluntary prayer or devotion to our main patron St. Joseph once a month on First Wednesday, but neither one of these obliges under any pain of punishment. While you pray for our clergy, pray also for our Sodality that we can continue to make a difference.

Yours in Christ and Mary,

Fr. Lehtoranta

Life of the Venerable Mary of Jesus of Agreda

By Fr. José Jiménez y Samaniego, OSF

The venerable Mother, Mary of Jesus, who wrote *The Mystical City of God*, was born at Agreda, a city of old Castile in Spain, on the 2nd of April, 1602. Her parents were Francis Coronel and Catharine d'Arana, both noble, and of great virtue.

She was baptized on the eleventh of the same month, and by a special disposition of Providence, she was named Mary, to which she afterwards added that of Jesus, which was the name given by the early Christians to the Mother of the Saviour, whom they called Mary of Jesus. Her Mother, convinced that her daughter was destined by God for great things, guarded her with watchful care.

Her parents did not neglect to imbue her mind with the principles of Christian doctrine. Her pious mother undertook to instruct her, and was agreeably surprised to find that this child, so useless in worldly matters, was so capable to learn and so inclined to devotion. From this, she inferred that in her little Mary some divine secret lay concealed. She took her to the churches, taught her how to frequent the sacraments, and to practice mental prayer.

The Lord enlightened the youthful Mary more and more, by that interior knowledge of which we have spoken. In relating the effects which she experienced from it, she says: "It consoled me in my afflictions – corrected me in my disorders – checked me in my imperfections, and animated me in my tepidity." She usually received, with this enlightenment, two divine favors: one was an interior voice, which said to her heart: "Come to me, my spouse. Leave terrestrial things. Purify yourself. Direct your actions to please me, for I am that I am. Hasten, my dove, to fulfill the desires that I awaken within you." The other was an interior reprehension of

her defects and vices; for, if she received any satisfaction with complaisance, the Lord shed so much bitterness within her soul that she became dissolved in tears.

By favor of this spiritual intelligence, she desired, passionately, to practice the virtues. She exercised herself chiefly in the theological virtues of faith, hope, and, especially, in charity; for her will was captivated by the love of God. She

neglected no occasion – not even the least – to practice the moral virtues, and she always cherished the highest esteem for virginal purity. Even in her eighth year, the pious child had a strong inspiration that it would be an agreeable offering to the Son of the Virgin to consecrate to Him her virginity, and, taking the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, and some other saints for witnesses, she made a vow of perpetual chastity. From this time the divine spouse increased his favors, although he continued, apparently, absent. In this state she remained until the twelfth year of her age.

After having completed her twelfth year, which is the age required for permission to enter in religion, she declared

anew to her parents, her vocation. They, doubting nothing, resolved to satisfy her desires, and wished her to take the habit of the bare-footed Carmelites, when, oh, impenetrable secrets of Divine Providence! there happened as follows:

The pious Mother of the young Mary employed three or four hours, daily, in oraison. One day, the Lord spoke with her, and said that it was His will she should build in her house a monastery for nuns, where she and her daughters should make their profession. The Lord spoke in the same manner to her confessor, the venerable Father John de Torrecille, and the obedient lady going to



the convent to communicate to him what had passed, the servant of God came to meet her, saying: "My daughter, I know already the object of this visit." On the 16th of August, 1618, the new monastery was commenced, and on the day of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God, the first Mass was solemnly chanted in the new Church. The Monastery was placed under the Order of St. Clara, and the foundresses required that the sisterhood belonging to it, should be barefooted, although the Order of the Conception of this province wore shoes.

On the 13th of January, 1619, the mother and her two daughters, with three sisters, who had come from the Convent of St. Louis of Buigos, to be foundresses, entered the humble monastery in perpetual enclosure, and formed there a community. Our Mary, on taking the habit, assumed the title of Mary of Jesus. She was at that time sixteen years of age.

The foundations upon which the spiritual edifice of this creature were elevated, were love, humility, fear and obedience. She applied herself entirely to the holy exercise of oraison in a manner so admirable, and so useful, that she never made it without striving to discover her faults, in order to correct them at once. She commenced by meditation, considering the truths and mysteries which faith inculcates, purifying and ornamenting her soul by their lights, so that she might become the worthy tabernacle of the Lord.

The rule which she followed was to put herself in the lowest place, and to persevere in it until the Lord should elevate her to a higher degree. The divine spouse, to whom fidelity and true humility are so agreeable, delayed not her entrance into the prayer of recollection, where she annihilated herself, forgot the earth, and, as if in a glowing furnace, was purified. From this He raised her to a higher eminence, in which the fire of divine love began to burn with great spiritual sweetness. All this happened in the first month of her novitiate.

The most frequent subject of her oraison during this time, was the passion of our Lord Jesus. She bore, always, the image of Jesus Christ crucified, vividly engraved on her heart, and she was sensible of its wondrous effect for the preservation of her interior purity. This holy exercise produced the most salutary effect, upon her soul, and brought forth rich fruits.

Mary of Jesus passed, in this manner, the years

of her novitiate, with great spiritual progress. On the 2nd of February, 1620, the day of the Purification of Our Lady, she made her profession with her pious mother. Her sister was still too young. Having entered into her religious vows, she continued her spiritual life with renewed fervor. After many entreaties, she obtained the most retired chamber of the convent, and it became the field of her spiritual combats.

The Lord favored her with sensible caresses. When she received Holy Communion, in partaking of the holy elements, she enjoyed a taste of inconceivable savor. Many times she saw the Blessed Sacrament surrounded by a miraculous splendor. These favors were succeeded by varied divine apparitions. The Queen of Angels appeared to her, the first time, with Her adorable Son in Her arms, invested with splendor and glory. She sank prostrate at His feet, with profound humility; but the merciful Mother raised her up, and the most sweet Jesus received her within His arms. This apparition gave her strength to support every pain. The august Queen of Heaven was the object of her first vision.

The Lord continued to distinguish His servant by these favors. On the festival of Pentecost, a beautiful dove, all radiant, appeared to her, and rapt her, as if in ecstasy. At the beginning of her religious life, she was able to conceal the favors she received, but, having been elevated to a higher contemplation, it was no longer possible either to hide them, or withdraw herself. On discovering them, some of the religieuses pronounced it hypocrisy. Others said she had lost her senses. The servant of God consoled herself by the reflection that this would draw contempt upon her. She would gladly have concealed these favors, but the impetuosities of the spirit continued, and became manifest ecstasies.

The Lord designed to enter into intimate communication with this soul, by the way of intellectual revelations and visions, and for this reason he favored her with the ecstasies which ordinarily introduce these visions. On the Saturday after the Feast of Pentecost, in 1620, she inquired of the Lord, in her oraison: "What shall I do?" And a transport of love for God ensued, in which she found herself in a state of perfect interior recollection. In this state, she saw in a vision the Mother of God, with Her most holy Son in Her arms. The Blessed Virgin gave her an instruction on the vir-

tues, and it seemed to her that the divine Lord drew her heart from her, and changed it. This was her first ecstasy.

One day, after having communicated, while in ecstasy, the Lord showed to her, in a wonderful manner, the whole universe by abstractive images. Among the multitudes of those who neither professed nor confessed the faith, His Divine Majesty declared to her, that they who were the least disposed to be converted, and to whom His mercy was most inclined, were the Gentiles of New Mexico. The communication of these lights continued, and the Lord showed her with greater distinctness those kingdoms and provinces of Indians, commanding her to pray and labor for them. He gave her a distinct knowledge of their manners and customs, their dispositions, and their great need of the ministers of God. The faithful servant was excited always more and more to labor and to prayer. Then the Lord, whose judgments are impenetrable, and whose ways are incomprehensible, operated in her, and by her, one of the greatest wonders, which has commanded the admiration of ages.

While she prayed for these souls, the Lord placed her in ecstasy, and it seemed that she found herself – she knew not by what means – in a totally different region, and in the midst of Indians. It appeared that she saw them – that she found the climate of their country warmer than her own; and the Lord commanded her to preach the faith, and she seemed to preach to the Indians in her Spanish language, and they understood her, and she understood them. She wrought prodigies in confirmation of the faith. The Indians were converted, and she catechized them.

This wonderful state was renewed, and more than five hundred times it seemed to her that she was transported into that country, and that a great nation and its king were converted to the faith of Jesus Christ. She saw the monks of St. Francis, and counselled the Indians to send some of their people to invite these religious to come among them, informing them where they were to be found.

The servant of the Lord besought her Divine Master to conduct her, by secret ways, unknown to the world. The Lord promised it, and, from that time, she felt a great change in her interior. Her elevations of spirit were admirable: the superior portion of her soul soared towards God; its powers

were absorbed in the Divinity, and she received sublime revelations and instructions in a manner purely Intellectual. In her exterior nothing extraordinary was apparent. She continued in this way during her life, the divine light always increasing in her to the last. She now made a new rule of life, and wrote thirty-three counsels, which she practiced. These are the principal:

- 1) To go in everything against my will, and do nothing according to its appetites;
- 2) never to commit any sin, nor imperfection, with deliberate intention;
- 3) to be devoted to the Blessed Virgin;
- 4) to offer to the Eternal Father the merits of His most holy Son – His blood, and the treasures of the holy Church – praying to Him for the salvation of souls, by the love which He bears them;
- 5) to put myself always in the lowest place.

Meanwhile, the Lord dilated the interior powers of her soul, and she received communications, without causing any embarrassment to her exterior occupations. In this eminent state she discovered the profound mysteries hidden in the life of Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother. Although the visions and revelations she now enjoyed were intellectual, she had, sometimes, imaginary, and even corporeal visitations. But as soon as she felt that the visions, or expressions, came by the imagination, or the senses, she placed herself in indifference, called up her faith, and thus left no room for the suggestions of the demon. She received her favors only as a means whereby to serve God more entirely.

The object of all these favors bestowed upon the servant of God, was to prepare her to make known to the world the Divine life of the Most Blessed Virgin. God, who proportions means to their ends, gave her, besides her guardian angel, five other angels, who made themselves visible to her. Their communications served to enlighten, instruct, correct, and advise her. Sometimes they sent forms into her imagination when the Lord spoke with her in this superior part, and at other times they cleared up her difficulties. St. Agnes and St. Ursula also appeared, and she felt that these glorious virgins were as if present with her continually. The two saints gave her instructions upon the fidelity of the spouse – of the Most High of the

employment of the superior part of the soul – of the modest deportment of the inferior part, and the manner of acting towards creatures. She lived as if in glory amid these heavenly occupations.

She had passed three years in the eminent state of which we have spoken, when His Divine Majesty ordained that she should be Superior of the community, for the good of her sisters. The humble servant yielded to the Divine will. The Superiors appointed her president on the festival of St. Joseph, 1627, and, after having obtained a dispensation, on account of her youth, from Rome, she was elected abbess, to the great joy of the community. The Queen of Angels acquitted Her-self of the promise She had made. The Lord confirmed it, saying, that He gave her His Blessed Mother for Superior, that she should obey Her as Her faithful disciple.

It was now ten years since she had begun to know the will of heaven, when renewed orders were positively given to write the Divine History, and the narration of the *Mystical City of God* for the glory of the Most High, the honor of the Mother, and the sanctification of the faithful. Seeing herself obliged to yield, in her perplexity she had recourse to her confessor. He, too, who, during ten years, had understood all, decided that she must obey, and the Superiors whom he consulted were of the same opinion.

Thus confirmed by obedience, the venerable Mother began, in 1637, to write the history of the Queen of Angels. In only twenty days she had completed the first part. The Divine light, and the intelligence of the mysteries of which she wrote, were so vivid, that her pen could not keep pace with their impetuosity. The Lord concealed from the demon the commencement of the work, lest he should hamper it, and in order that it should be evident, from the extreme rapidity with which it was written, that it sprang from Divine power.

His Divine Majesty, in 1637, began to show her the assemblies held by the demons in hell against the holy Church and the faithful, and against Spain in particular, as she wrote, twenty years later, to Pope Alexander VII. She saw that they determined to stir up wars against the Christian princes, the better to sow heresies without difficulty. With this view many legions spread themselves over the world. The servant of God prayed and groaned before God, and the Lord replied to her that this was a chastisement for the sins of

Catholics ungrateful for His benefits. The war soon broke out. She saw the Church like a bark agitated by the impetuous waves of affliction, while the faithful, ecclesiastics and seculars, sought no remedy for it. She was afflicted, but the Mother of God excited her to pray with redoubled ardor. It seemed to her that His Divine Majesty had elevated her to this holy and sublime state for the good of the people of God, that she might labor for them. From this time she made it her chief employment to implore the Divine clemency to turn away these scourges from Christendom.

She prayed with great fervor for Spain, who has preserved the purity of her faith in its integrity. She endeavored to diminish the faults of her children, who, being more enlightened and more favored, ought to commit fewer sins. The loving Lord, inclined to satisfy the desires of His servant, opened a way which could not have been imagined – it was, that a poor nun, shut up in her cloister, should have a close, frequent, and even familiar communication with her Sovereign.

In the year 1643, King Philip IV, pressed by the wars of Catalonia and Portugal, on his way to Saragossa, took the road by Agreda. He wished to see the servant of God, and the first time he spoke with her he felt such virtue in her words that he went away consoled. He prayed her to be his mediatrix with God for his people and himself, and requested her to write to him of whatever she judged best for the service of God. The venerable mother obeyed, and she began to exhort him through her letters to correct and reform the morals of his kingdom. The king experienced from them such good effects that he continued this holy exchange of letters during twenty-two years, while the servant of God still lived. His majesty folded his paper in two, writing on one side with his own hand, and the servant of God replied on the other. The king died four months after Mary of Jesus.

The Lord then reiterated His orders to write the second time the history of the Queen of Angels. Her confessor seconded them, and her Superiors obliged her to obey. In the year 1655 she began it anew, in the form in which the original, written by her hand, exists at this time. The demon made every effort, and practiced every ruse that his malice could suggest, to hinder the work. She wrote at no period when she was not sensible that all the fury of hell opposed it. The infernal dragon hoped she would die before its completion,

and he would not have been mistaken, if the Lord had not miraculously preserved her life, as the angels revealed to the servant of God.

Mary of Jesus had an admirable knowledge of the life, of all the operations, and of all the virtues, of the Mother of God, and she copied and imitated, with that inferior proportion which we must suppose, the virtues and the operations, interior and exterior, of the Queen of Heaven. By the protection of this powerful mediatrix, she was elevated to the imitation of Jesus Christ, and the Most High made her enter, by this door, to the sublime state of the contemplation of the Divine Essence, where she had the happiness to enjoy the intimate embraces of union with His Divine Majesty. Then, at the view of the glory and grandeur of God, she transformed herself into His image, in advancing from one light to another light – from the imitation of Mary to that of Jesus Christ – from the contemplation of the sacred humanity to that of the divinity, and from an affection inflamed, to a flame more ardent, by the movement of the Holy Ghost.

For a long time the venerable Mother, Mary of Jesus, had prepared for death. Her first occupation, after Matins, was to meditate upon the voice of the Most High, who called her to judgment. She wrote this meditation with considerations so full of awe, that they excite terror in reading them. She composed another meditation on the response which her soul would make at this terrible judgment. She expresses her sorrow for her sins – desires the last sacraments, and to have the assistance of priests at that awful hour. To this she adds two other meditations – one on the judgment of the righteous, and the reprobate soul; the other on the universal judgment, which she intersperses with considerations of fearful import.

She preserved, in a coffer, the bones of her father, and, when visiting them, she made sublime reflections, reading, afterwards, the recommendation of the soul. Every Friday she prepared herself for her last hour. From time to time she made retreats, to be better prepared. Finally, the Most High, by the prayers of the humanity of Jesus Christ and the Virgin, sent an angel to dispose her for a holy death.

According to the example of many saints, she saw clearly the approaches of death. Desirous to perform the exercises on a retreat, she said to her sisters, who were disturbed by this absence from

them: “It cannot be dispensed with, because I make it to prepare myself to die well.” After this retreat, she held the chapter on Monday, in place of Friday. “This will be the last that I shall hold,” said she. She asked to have her feet washed. “Wash them well,” she said to the Sister, “for I shall soon receive Extreme Unction.”

The sickness of the servant of God lasted from the first Vespers of Ascension Day to the day of Pentecost, on which she expired. On the third day of her sickness she confessed, with so many marks of perfect contrition for her sins, that the confessor was in admiration of it, and she confessed many times during her sickness, giving testimony of her exalted esteem for this sacrament.

On the Sunday within the Octave of the Ascension, she received the holy Viaticum. The Superior commanded her to ask His Divine Majesty to prolong her life if it were His will, and to grant her the grace to be submissive to His most holy will. In this manner she practiced obedience until her last moments. Every day she received Holy Communion, for she took nothing until after having received this sacrament. She endured without complaint all her sufferings, and refused no remedies, although she knew they were of no avail.

She profited by every spiritual pain, and at last, on the Thursday of the Octave of the Ascension, her doctors judged that she ought to receive Extreme Unction. The Father-General, Zalizanes, announced this to the venerable Mother, who rejoiced on hearing of it. Towards evening she received it with touching devotion. “I begin,” said she, “to console myself, and to take courage.” She spoke with her sisters, and blessed each one in particular, giving them salutary counsels. Then she took leave of them, and returned to her recollection. She persevered in it until the day of Pentecost

On this day, the Father-General gave her the blessing of St. Francis, and, surrounded by the most eminent religious of the order, and the nuns of her monastery, towards the hour of Tierce, when it is thought the Holy Ghost descended upon His Apostles, without having lost her reason, or her senses, she yielded up her spirit to her Creator, to enjoy Him eternally in glory, as we may presume, from her life and her death. Before expiring she said: “Come! Come! Come!” And at this last word, her spirit departed on the 24th of May, in the year of Our Lord 1665.

HOLY SATURDAY 2022 EGG HUNT AND PARISH PARTY

