



THE STAR

ROSARY NEWSLETTER

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EDITORIAL

Every Christmas can become a time to ponder the in-carnation. For us Rosarians the Church's Liturgy and the Joyful Mysteries coincide. In our minds and hearts we turn over and over with Our Lady St John's phrase in his gospel: "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us". **God became a man** in the midst of all the generations of the Chosen People; their climax. But unlike all the others listed as begotten by a father (just a few mothers are mentioned), Jesus is begotten of Mary. Joseph is named as only the husband (Matthew) or the *presumed* father. The All Holy Trinity began to relate to the created universe in an entirely new way. This was way beyond the hopes of God's People Israel. To the human mind it was simply inconceivable. The theory is quite beyond us. Yet once revealed and received through faith, we can find so much that is human and homely. Mary did believe! Mary did conceive!

Let us try to link up the deep teaching of St John with the more homely details of St Luke. Their different words reveal together the one great mystery of the in-carnation. Dante put it so beautifully: "There is the Rose in whom the Divine Word made himself flesh".

As Mary ponders the great FACT that God became a man *in her* after the Annunciation, let us join her in her pondering the shepherds' words in St Luke's gospel.

Fresh from the angel's message and the glorious choral rendering of the heavenly Gloria, these good, caring, outdoors men had things to tell Mary and Joseph (and others).

"And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child."

First, an angel appeared in the dark of night, a being way beyond their normal experience. They were enveloped in the angelic heavenly presence, "and were filled with a great fear". But the angel calmed them so they could attend fully to "good news of a great joy" - from heaven. Heaven and earth were linked. It was news of a birth. And although it was a new birth (as they all are!) this one was a Divine, Eternal, Heavenly birth that had emptied itself, so to speak, and taken the

form of a human, earthly birth. For the earthly side of the news was quite specific: time - "today", beneficiaries - "to you", the place - "the city of David". And what of the *role* and *identity* of the newly born? His role would be earthly; "a Saviour" to save the lost. And his identity is sprung from the history of Israel, the awaited Messiah "Who is Christ the Lord".

St Luke tells us of the wonder this caused in all who heard the shepherds' words. To emphasise Our Lady's response in particular, Luke writes "But"...

"But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart".

We too can wonder and be joyful at the significance of points made in the angel's message to the shepherds linking heaven and earth.
Christmas Blessings upon you all and your families.

Fr Ben Hensley OP

Promoter of the Rosary Confraternity

MOSES AND THE TRANSFIGURATION

+ Mary Gill OPL

Mary dictated this article to me while in her hospital bed at St Vincent's, Melbourne. She died peacefully a few days later in the ambulance carrying her from St George's Rehabilitation hospital back to Emergency at St Vincent's. (Fr Ben)

Who will climb the mountain of the Lord; who will stand in his holy place?

At the holy mountain of the Transfiguration Peter, James and John were taken up by Jesus where he was transfigured before them. With him there Appeared Moses and Elijah, representing the Law and the prophets.

What sort of a man was Moses? He was rescued by being lodged in the bullrushes at a time when Pharaoh had given an order to the midwives not to let the male babies live. But the midwives feared God, and the babies lived. The population multiplied. The Pharaoh made them slaves, and Moses, who had been rescued by Pharaoh's daughter and had grown up in the Pharaoh's household, came to the defence of the Hebrew people. He tried to get Pharaoh to let the people go. Moses kept pleading

with plagues and eventually the death of all the firstborn of Pharaoh's household and all the households. The Hebrew people being let go by the Pharaoh escaped across the Red Sea, and after chasing them Pharaoh and all his chariots and horsemen were drowned as the waters came back over them.

Moses was the Lord's servant and whatever the Lord told him to do, he obeyed. He had a tabernacle made of wood at the tent of meeting furnished with the finest workmanship. The Ark of the Covenant was placed in one end of the Tent of Meeting and covered with a veil. There was the altar of incense, for burnt offerings as stipulated. The high priest was Aaron, Moses' brother. There were special vestments for him. Moses had to climb Mt Sinai. He received the commandments and the glory of the Lord came upon him. After that he led the people through the wilderness to the Promised Land, the "land of milk and honey", Canaan.

Moses would have no worship of idols, and he came down hard on the people who tried it and any other infractions of the divine ordinances. He was the servant of the Lord at all times, and the Lord guided him in everything he had to do.

Jesus had said He had come not to abolish the Law given to Moses, but to fulfill it. Jesus gave the proper teaching, explaining the Law. Moses had rules about lepers and people with things wrong with them, and they were outcasts of society. When lepers were healed by Jesus He told them to show themselves to the priests in fulfillment of the Law. In the Sabbath prohibitions and all sorts of things He gave the true meaning of the love of God and neighbour and he showed mercy, as with the woman caught in adultery. At His death on the Cross the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

The New Way

The good things in the Old Law were put in the proper perspective as a balance with common sense. They celebrated the new feasts such as the Resurrection and Pentecost as the Apostles were sent out to preach the gospel in the wake of the coming of the Holy Spirit. So faith is very rich in all it contains and well worth looking at. In Jesus it goes with reason. He came to unite all things in heaven and on earth, making peace.

There on the mountain of the Transfiguration the Apostles were shown a glimpse of heaven. Moses and Elijah were shown to be witnesses of this glorious event, and the Apostles would be charged to carry it on.

AN INTERVIEW WITH FR MATHEW NEWMAN

How does a young man come to be a priest in the Catholic Church these days? For some years there has been a growing shortage with less and less young men discerning a call to ordained ministry in the priesthood. Consequently the situation is becoming critical with ageing and perhaps unwell clergy caring for larger flocks in combined parishes, and little hope of replacement or extra support. Whereas fifty years ago going off to a seminary or a religious order was not seen as unusual, now it is. So now there is the added challenge of breaking ranks with one's peer group and ending up with oldies.

So it might be of interest for Rosarians to learn something of one young man's path to the priesthood in today's Church, a Church which in many ways seems different from the one of fifty years ago when priestly vocations were more plentiful. As we shall see, Matthew's path to the priesthood was even more unusual than that of other contemporaries. He was ordained in St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, Adelaide, by Archbishop Wilson on July 8th coinciding with preparation for the World Youth Day preparations.

Editor Mathew, you have come to the priesthood in the Catholic Church from a very different background. When you look back on it, does it seem to have been a huge journey?

Mathew Only when people tell me that it must have been.

Ed Tell me a little about that background. Did you come from a religious family? I understand it wasn't a Catholic one.

Mathew No, it wasn't. My Nanna had an influence on me. She was raised in a Lutheran home. Her father was not a church-goer but he kept to Lutheran values and discipline in the family home. But such things were rarely discussed. My nanna simply inherited something of this.

I was baptized in the Uniting Church as a baby. As I grew up I would go to nanna and pop, my grandparents, for weekends. I would go to the Church of Christ at Kersbrook on Sundays. That was in the 1980's.

Ed What about schooling?

Mathew My mother enrolled me in Rosary School at Prospect in Adelaide, probably because it was handy. That's the only way I can explain her sending me to a Catholic school. I owe so much to the Sisters who took me in and were so kind to me. We lived just a few streets away. I was there for five years.

Ed How did you cope with it? It must have seemed very strange at the beginning, after your early experience at the Church of Christ.

Mathew They were defining years for me. I loved it there. The enrolling Sisters were terrific. The defining experience for me was the Mass. It made such an impression on me. It was the Mass of the Assumption in particular, on the 15th August 1982 in Rosary church. From that moment the priesthood meant something special to me.

Ed What about schoolmates? Did you make friends there?

Mathew Yes, there were two in particular at that time, and I have since caught up with them and renewed our friendship. I had just so much fun, experiencing Catholic life. I remember dressing up as a priest and having Rosary beads.

Ed Were you aware of learning about the Church and her teaching?

Mathew In a way I suppose I was. There was always prayer. We would pray a decade of the Rosary in May and October. And there were the regular Masses.

Ed I can see how the environment really captivated you as a young pupil at the school. How did you actually become a Catholic?

Mathew When I was in Year 3 my classmates were preparing to make their first Holy Communion. I would hear them talking about it. I came home one day in tears. Mum rang the school and told them that I had been baptized, so why couldn't I receive Holy Communion like the others? She got her way, and so I made my first Confession with the parish priest and went ahead.

Ed What happened after your years at Rosary?

Mathew In Year 5 I went to Blackfriars in Prospect. It was a school run by the Dominican Friars. Again I loved everything about it. The friars were a presence, there was Mass in the chapel and visits to the Blessed

Sacrament. I was only there for less than two years after which we moved to Murray Bridge and St Joseph's co-ed school.

Ed It's interesting that your schooling continued in the Catholic system.

Mathew Yes, I came to love that school too in my years 6 and 7. There were two Josephite Sisters. The school had a country feel that was different from my earlier ones. It was here that I reached the age for Confirmation. When the parish priest saw my Uniting Church baptismal certificate he made further enquiries. There was no documentation showing my reception into the Church. So it was then that we had the official reception.

Ed What about secondary education?

Mathew I had two years at Murray Bridge High. There were some unhappy experiences. I practised my faith with an openness and used to serve at Mass on Sundays which gave rise to a certain amount of ribbing and teasing from Catholic boys at school. Glossop was different. When we moved there I found that the Principal of the Area School was a practising Catholic. I remember going to Berri for an 8a.m. Mass on Ash Wednesday and consequently being late for school. But there was no trouble because the Principal had also been at the Mass!

Ed Then what?

Mathew Glossop saw me through to the end of my schooling. My results were not great and this would be a problem in my initial request to begin studies for the priesthood in the Dominicans. My heart was set on it and I was keen to start but was told to wait. So I made enquiries regarding the archdiocesan priesthood and managed entry into the seminary in Adelaide. This was at the time the seminary was moving from its traditional site with large buildings to a new site on a much smaller scale. Two of us started off together. I found it very tough and left after 18 months. That was August 1999.

Ed What did you do then? Did you get a job?

Mathew Yes, I had a couple of jobs after that. Not terribly interesting.

Ed Obviously neither you nor the archdiocese had given up on your vocation.

Mathew No, because I returned to a very different situation. They sent me to the seminary of the Good Shepherd in Sydney with the studies being conducted by the Catholic Institute of Sydney.

Ed Presumably that was a much different and bigger arrangement.

Mathew Yes, there were about 40 seminarians from all over Australia. I found my place there and enjoyed the whole process.

Ed Were there obstacles to be overcome? How did your family react to all this?

Mathew Quite simply my mum, nanna and pap took the view, "If you're happy, we're happy".

Ed Was celibacy an issue for you? Having normal masculine desires, wanting to love and care for and respond to a woman's love, yet never being free to do so. Never being allowed to father daughters and sons... Did you have to come to terms with all that?

Mathew There's a big sacrifice. There's a part of me that would love to have a family, but in joyful celibate living as a priest there is an even greater love.

Ed And seminary life, you said that you fitted in there, were there ups and downs, hard times as well as good times?

Mathew I was constantly amazed at the freedom that comes with embracing Catholic thought. It was like an exploration. But there were hard times too. I held strongly to the saying of St John Vianney: "An easy road to the priesthood is the wrong road."

Ed Did Our Lady play a part?

Mathew I love her title, "Seat of Wisdom". I find that comforting together with her humility.

Ed As your ordination date approached, did the momentousness of the sacrament overshadow you, or did the practical side tend to distract you or even take over?

Mathew The practical side was attended to by the Office of Worship. They did the organising.

Ed And the ordination ceremony in the packed cathedral brimming with enthusiasm and encouragement, several bishops, and so many priests...did you find that daunting?

Mathew I took to heart Archbishop Wilson's words about the underground ordination of a Polish friend, done secretly without any of the trappings and public support I was enjoying. The same thing was happening to each of us, the same sacrament. A blessing for my family as well.

Ed And Matthew, do you have a wise guide, someone to guide you along the way during these early days of your priesthood. Mathew that is still to come. I know that something is being planned.

Ed Thankyou Mathew. I wonder how many of us realise the enormous influence for good to be found in childhood experiences, even at the age of five or six.

MARY GILL R.I.P.

The family eulogies at Mary's funeral earlier this month at St Dominic's East Camberwell spoke movingly of her motherhood, grandmotherhood and great grandmotherhood. She loved every one of the eight daughters and one son that God had given her with her husband Bill. And her love reached out to their children's children (23 in all so far) and the five great grandchildren. She treasured every one of them. The same went for all who married into the family. All knew that they were welcome and had a place in Mary's heart. Her training as a child care nurse stayed with her, and her medical acumen often proved helpful in the growing family.

Her husband Bill was an Anglican priest who grew up in Melbourne but did his priestly training in Brisbane, after which he went to the Anglican mission in PNG. Gifted with a formidable and very well-educated mind, most of his life was dedicated to teaching in two of Melbourne's grammar schools. Mission life would prove to be too rugged for the emerging family, though they gave it a good trial before deciding to return to Melbourne. Bill was a wonderful provider, astute and balanced in dealing with the challenge of limited resources.

He maintained a calmness, and independence of mind, and a subtle sense of fun.

Mary's work with the Rosary was unique. She was the originator of what became our joint work over some thirty years. It goes back to her conversion in 1978. She had not been at all well and asked to be received into the Church just before major surgery. In the lead up she had contacted an L.C.M. Sister who had been a teaching nurse and whom she had known years earlier during her own training. She wanted a set of Rosary beads. The Sister obliged, and Mary took them with her to the hospital in the wake of having been received into the Church on the morning of the Visitation, the last day of May. That evening I visited her prior to the operation and explained simply how we pray the Rosary; the mysteries and the vocal prayers. Our work was to grow from that beginning, once it became clear that she would survive the operation.

Her Anglican background meant that she was very much at home with Scripture and this played a major part in her appreciation of the huge vistas of Catholic doctrine as these opened out before her. She felt a special bond with Thomas Aquinas, a bond begun when she was studying Reformation history at the university. Thomas may have been an influence too as her conviction deepened about the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the key to her conversion. As soon as she had settled in to Catholic life she became a member of the Rosary Confraternity. Soon after she became a member of the Dominican Laity, a step that meant a great deal to her for the rest of her life.

She read widely in English and French history and historical biography. She had a love of drama and classical music, especially that of J.S.Bach. And she had a feel for philosophy, having been introduced to it at the university. What she was able to do was weave the doctrine she was discovering into the pattern of the Rosary mysteries and prayers. Her immersion in the Scriptures and the biblical theology of St Thomas facilitated this.

The idea of the star as our emblem was hers. And she guided her daughter Teresa in the painting of the Mystical Rose. The rose and the star became a teaching aid for us as we went about promoting the Rosary in parishes and schools. We used it for the cover of the book we wrote together in 1993, *The Rosary: Our Lady's School*. She discerned a pattern in the mysteries that enabled us to simplify the prayer through the relationship between each of the three (traditional) first mysteries, the second ones...and so on. She wrote *A Rosary Mime for Children* for a parish mission we gave in West Essendon. The school staff and children did a wonderful job.

It was done in a fan shaped church which suited the mime perfectly as the children silently acted out first the Annunciation (juniors), then the Agony (seniors) and then the Resurrection (middle students), keeping the pattern through the second trio of mysteries, and so on through all five trio's.

And what about the five new mysteries of light? While we haven't managed to integrate them into the pattern of the traditional ones, we were already "on course" for something like them to happen. Fr Adalbert, our wise guide, had taken us through St Matthew's gospel with the help of St Thomas' divisions some years ago. He recommended that we complete the necessary translations and print sections in serial form in The Star under the title, The Rosary with the Evangelist, which we did. Mary had long been convinced that the Rosary should encompass the whole Bible, so Pope John Paul II's initiative was both a confirmation and a delight for her.

What can I say in summary? Thank you Lord for her sense of Your presence. Thank you for the light of her intellect and instinct for sound doctrine. Thank you for her mothering gifts and for showing me something of the Rosary's womanly way in Biblical Theology.

Fr Ben Hensley OP

St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians - St Thomas' Divisions

[*In our August issue we reached chapter 7. Unfortunately no reporting of his commentary for the next three chapters has come down to us, so we take up his divisions again at chapter 11. Again, you need your bible with you as Thomas helps you through a meditative reading of Paul's inspired writing. – Ed*]

Chapter 11

Having removed from the faithful what was contrary to the sacrament of the Eucharist –sharing in food offered to idols- ***he now instructs them about the sacrament itself.***

First he begins with some general advice 1-

He states the advice: the proper order 1 - commends them 2

He takes up the matter in hand, Eucharistic instruction 3-

Errors in their celebration of the sacrament 3-22 /-Dignity../-Reverence...

In their dress: head covering for women 3-16

Teaches the reasoning behind his advice 3

Directs them

- the men 4
- the women 5a
 - Proves by argument 6-10
 - Proof: cf nature 6--cf God 7-9 – cf angels 10
 - Excludes an objection 11-12
 - re male/female: origin - grace 11
 - Reason: reversal of roles 12
 - Invites listeners to assess his proof 13-16
 - the amenable 13
 - The contentious 14-16
- In their squabbling and division as they assemble together 17-19
 - Their fault in general 17
 - Detail: How they become worse instead of better 18-19
 - He judges their sin
 - He gives some credence to what he has heard 18b
 - Reason for such belief: factions, even heresies occur 19a
 - Explains: truth clarified – stronger faith clarified 19b
- In the manner and order of receiving Christ's Body 20-22
 - They are losing out: physically but not spiritually gathered 20
 - Their sin: against God – against neighbour 21
 - He looks for its cause: no excuse 22a – their disregard 22b
 - Concludes his censure: question – response 22c
- The sacrament itself 23-26**
 - Dignity of the sacrament 23-26
 - Urges the authority of the teaching he will give 23a
 - On the part of Christ as the Author 23
 - On the part of Paul himself as minister
 - Stresses the dignity of this sacrament from its institution 23b-
 - Recounts the manner of its institution
 - What Christ did and said
 - Institution re Body of Christ
 - What he did: voluntary-example-shared 23c-24a
 - What he said: use – reality--Passion 24b-c
 - Institution re consecration of Christ's Blood 25
 - Order of institution 25a
 - Words of institution: reality – enjoins use 25b-c
 - Exposition of Christ's words 26
- He urges believers to receive the sacrament reverently 27-34**
 - Danger in unworthy participation 27
 - A remedy is offered to prevent this 28

Gives the remedy of careful discernment 28
Assigns the reason for its validity 29
 Reinforces this through a sign 30-32
 Points it out 30
 Twofold reason: from human side – divine correction 31-32
Leads them to appropriate observance 33-34
 Eucharistic harmony: directive – excuse pre-empted – motive 33-34a
 Promise given re other matters to be dealt with 34b



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