
"Let the holiness of God shine forth" (cf. Mt 5, 16)

item 415

Mary – Queen of Apostles

Pallotti came upon this title in the *Litany of Loreto*. But it was his initiative to claim it for his Society. He reasoned as follows:

“The Society strives under the most effective protection of the immaculate Mother of God, Queen of Apostles, toward two goals:

- to obtain all gifts and graces through the merits and intercession of the immaculate Mother of God so that considered in its totality, as well as in its present and future individual members, it may have stability in the church of God with complete fruitfulness, and may spread itself in all parts of the world
- that all lay people, all clerics secular or religious of whatever Order, state or condition, may have in Mary, after Jesus, the most perfect model...since she herself contributed so much ...that she....surpassed the apostles in merit, so the church rightly salutes her as Queen of Apostles...”

This text contains an important theology of the *apostolate of all the baptized*, as Pallotti understands it.... No priestly or hierarchical authority is necessary for being an apostle. The twelve were called apostles *before* they possessed this power. That is why Mary can be an apostle ...and...a symbol for all lay people. An apostle is one who, in one way or another, constantly works for the growth of the Kingdom of God.



Mary did this in an excellent way – through her prayers which hastened the coming of the Redeemer, through her prayer which gave courage to the apostles, through her communion with the disciples who implored the Holy Spirit, and by standing under the Cross in pain and agony.

She accomplished it too through her spiritual motherhood. Thus, one who multiplies the number of God's children ...through baptism, thereby imitates Mary. Mary was more effective than all the apostles – she was the Queen of Apostles, a title which, according to Pallotti, reveals the plain truth about her.

Queen of Apostles in the life of Pallotti

In his prayers, writings and preaching our founder hailed and venerated Mary, mother of the Lord, under many titles - Mother and Mistress, Mother of Love, Mother of Sorrows, Immaculate Conception, Queen of Apostles and others.

His personal love for her urged him to win over all to venerate Mary. He distributed many thousands of holy cards, booklets, scapulars, medals and rosaries. Time and again he commissioned artists to paint Mary. He praised her constantly under new names. Thus he decided, very early, to place his Society under the patronage of Mary, Queen of Apostles....Already before ordination he appealed for the first time to Mary gathered with the apostles to implore the Holy Spirit. In 1835 he formulated for his Society prayers to the Queen of Apostles, and even in this early period...viewed Mary as the model of every apostolate, especially of the lay apostolate.

There is a permanent theme in his writings, from the first mention of Queen of Apostles in 1816 to his *Spiritual Testament* in 1840, in which he writes that, in contemplating Mary and the apostles 'who ...had set out to announce the Gospel to all the world' he had recognized his Society's exact nature and character.

Pallotti himself designed the Society's *Coat of Arms*. It shows the Most Holy Trinity and Mary with sceptre and crown. She points...to the apostles who encircle her and receives their petitions and those of the entire world for apostolic workers, in order to present them to God. The *Coat of Arms* and the *Seal* date from around 1835. Already at that time he declared:

"The Society... is established in honour of and under the protection of the Queen of Apostles, because it must be extremely pleasing to our common Mother. But even more in order thereby to experience the stronger effects of her wonderful protection, and at the same time to remind all that, although not holding a preaching office, one can still obtain the merit of the apostolate...by endeavouring to do what one can, according to one's status and conditions, for the spreading of the holy faith".

Even at the foundation's beginning the patronage of Queen of Apostles was an established fact for him.

meaning of the picture - the pre-pentecostal community

The picture reveals the pre-pentecostal community praying in unity. The disciples, gathered together around Mary the Mother of the Lord, await the descent of the Holy Spirit, a scene that recalls Jesus promise that the Father would send his Spirit to remind the disciples of everything that he said and did. Together, in their company, Mary lives and prays with confidence in the promise of the Lord.



The Queen of Apostles picture also shows the pentecostal event itself and the pentecostal community which receives the Holy Spirit. Mary, with that community of disciples, becomes the church in the mystery of the sending of the Spirit. That community is the bearer within itself of the gift of salvation from Jesus, tasked with announcing the Good News to the whole world. Here Mary receives her very special, indeed unique, relationship to the church as a whole. In his 1816 *Protesta generale* Pallotti refers to this basic message of the picture of the Queen of Apostles: he would like to gather with her and the company of the disciples in prayer and implore the descent of the Holy Spirit.

veneration of Queen of Apostles

Have we not been holding a ‘treasure buried in the ground’ since Pallotti’s time? Where has any earnest attempt been made to make Mary, Queen of Apostles and her picture, popular and thereby prepare the way for a deeper, biblically based Marian veneration? In my opinion, this image must be accorded a place of honour in our own churches. The celebration of the feast of Queen of Apostles must not be limited to a narrow community setting but aim at a wider participation of the faithful. In our parishes the feast ought to be well prepared and celebrated on a Sunday.

We can carry out recommendations of this kind only if, in our own communities, the Queen of Apostles is venerated more intensely. Fr Ansgar Faller pointed out that the community “must organize, deepen and evolve devotion to the Queen of Apostles in concrete ways...The symbolic efficacy of her figure and the idea effects community-building. One can even connect the central idea of our spirituality with that”.

Veneration of Mary in this role signifies much more than praising a model. It leads to that attitude of Mary before God which allows the Holy Spirit to lead us into the fullness of Christ.

Martin Juritsch sac+
11.01.89

item 416

...with compassion and mercy

God calls people to become united with himself in every aspect of life. God sent his only begotten Son to save us, not by judging us but by showing us mercy and compassion. So, if God himself extends to us mercy and compassion, we too must show mercy and compassion to others. As a compassionate God he has a deep, abiding concern for all mankind and especially for those who accept him, believe in him, and follow him.

The global HIV/AIDS pandemic is one of the greatest humanitarian crises of our day. It is not just a health issue but also a development and security crisis that impacts every facet of human survival, especially in the poorest countries.

This disease has tragic consequences for the social, economic and political life of people. Those who find themselves infected keep their positive status hidden in order to avoid the stigma associated with the condition and rejection by their society and family. The causes behind the spread of HIV are linked to poverty, lack of awareness and injustice. Here the role of each one of us is critical. Our role must not be to condemn, but rather to offer comfort and support, thereby proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ with compassion and mercy in the midst of this profound human crisis.

The Sisters here have likewise tried to temper their response with compassion. They strive to be the hand, the face, the heart and the touch of Christ to the lonely and the stigmatized. Recognizing this brokenness they opened a home for HIV/AIDS infected girls in the village of **Dacharam**, in the Karimnagar District of Andhra Pradesh. It endeavours to symbolise what its name suggests – *Krupa Bhavan* or ‘House of Grace’.



The center started with only one child, but gradually the number has increased to twenty eight girls aged between 7 yrs and 16 yrs. It is heartening to see such deprived children growing up healthily and with the hope of a future. The small contributions of many – of time, energy, skills, ability, talents, etc. – have brought about many changes in their lives. And that generosity has only furthered the Sisters resolve to continue to provide the material and spiritual necessities the girls need.

I am reminded of the story of a king who ruled a prosperous country. One day he went on a trip to outlying parts. When he was back in his palace he complained that his feet were hurting for he had walked barefooted as in those days people did not yet wear shoes. So he ordered his people to cover every road of his entire country with leather. Then one of his wise servants dared to suggest to the king, "Why do you have to spend that amount of money unnecessarily? Why don't you just cut a little piece of leather to cover your feet?" The king agreed to his suggestion and ordered a 'shoe' be made for himself! So likewise, to make this world a happier place in which to live and to serve with compassion and mercy, it is better that we change ourselves – our hearts – and not the world. "It does not matter how long we spend on the earth, how much money we have gathered or how much attention we have received. It is the amount of positive vibration we have radiated in life that matters."

A positive attitude can really make dreams come true. St Vincent Pallotti a man full of mercy and love used to pray:

"My God, My Mercy, you in your infinite mercy will grant me in a special way the gift to promote, establish ... a pious institution of a universal apostolate ... so that you may be recognized in all as infinite love."

Let this be the attitude that we want to have around us – nurturing the reflection of God's love, mercy, justice and hope for all.

"If you look the right way, you can see that the whole world is a garden."



Shimila Peter csac – Edakochi – INDIA
24.04.16
shmlpeter@yahoo.co.in

you commented...

on #215 Some weeks ago the E-Bulletin contained a powerful and heart wrenching story of the young women who were killed by ISIS. I ran off a copy of the article and have had the photos of the women where I could see them near my desk. Somehow the hand written article and the photo's bring the reality of their life and sacrifice into more focus.

This lead me to think that this is so true for many aspects of our life, particularly for the Asylum Seekers who are searching for a home in our country Australia, for our First People, so many others, when you put a face to the individual and form a relationship, a friendship with them then our hearts, our compassion for their needs becomes more of a reality.

CS 09.05.16