

Missionary of the **HOLY FACE** BLESSED MARIA PIERINA DE MICHELI

January-March 2016

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HOLY FACE
 BLESSED MARIA PIERINA DEMICHELI

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The Feast of the Holy Face, on the Tuesday preceding Ash Wednesday, is an important moment for all devotees of Blessed Maria Pierina De Micheli. She was the missionary and the great zealot whom Jesus asked to have this Feast celebrated. She requested that Pope Pius II institute the Feast for the whole of the universal Church, but the time was not yet ripe. However, she did not give up and she continued to ask the Pontiff to extend the celebration to all of Christianity.

After all, Jesus had given her the task of announcing the graces and favours that would accompany those who worship the Holy Face. For this reason, she was the first disciple to worship and emulate the virtues of the Face of Christ. She also gave her best effort to spread the medal which the Virgin Mary sought, announcing its benefits for those who should wear it.

The Feast of the Holy Face, therefore, has been celebrated in the various houses of the Congregation of the Daughters of the Immaculate Conception of Buenos Aires. Moreover, also in places where the memory of Blessed Maria Pierina is present and where the Holy Face is worshiped, such as in the Shrine of Bassano Romano supported by the Sylvestrine Benedictines.

Thus, this issue of the magazine presents reports of communities in Italy that celebrated the Feast of the Holy Face.

An important innovation in 2016 is that the magazine has expanded its foreign language editions. To those al-

ready available in Spanish, Portuguese and French, the magazine has added an English edition. Copies are available upon request.

Editorial Staff



TO SEE JESUS

The following is a translation of the homily of Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, Major Penitentiary, given on the occasion of the Feast of the Holy Face on Tuesday, 9 February, in the Chapel of the Istituto Spirito Santo [Institute of the Holy Spirit] in Rome.

To see Jesus! This is our shared longing in the contemplation of the Holy Face of our Redeemer.

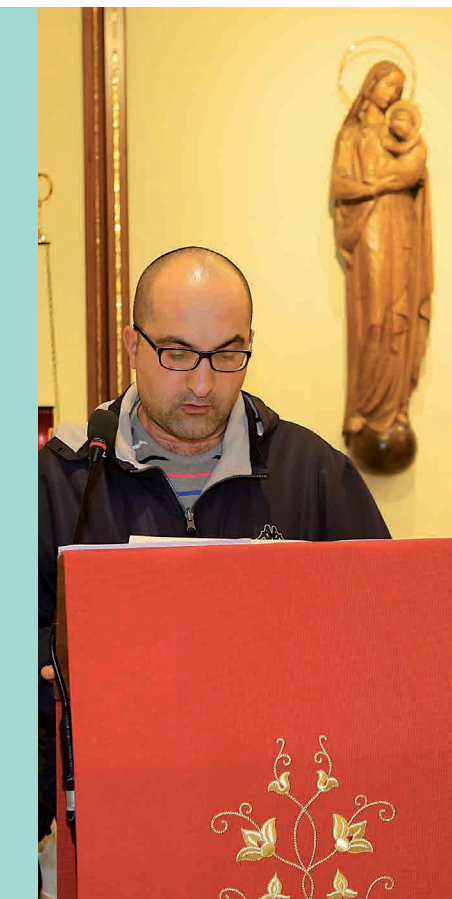
To see Jesus! In saying this we think of the eager desire to see him that arose from Jesus' presence in the Gospel; it is more than curiosity, but **attraction**. Thus, as Luke the Evangelist reminds us, *Zacchaeus kept trying to see Jesus* (Lk 19:3); thus the Greeks arrived in

Jerusalem at the very moment of the manifestation of the so-called Messiah of the Palms. They approached the Apostle Philip and said: *we would like to see Jesus* (Jn 12:21).

To see Jesus! We think of the torn and disfigured face of the patient Christ, whom the Prophet Isaiah describes for us: *He had no beauty nor splendour: nothing in his appearance that we should desire him... the least of men, a man of suffering, ... and we considered him as a leper....* (cf. Is 53); *he, the most fairest among men* (cf. Ps 45:2).

Yes, we think again of that blessed face, which in the night of the Transfiguration on the Mount, dazzled the astonished eyes of the three Apostles in an unforgettable apparition (Mt 17:2-6; 2 Pt 1:16-18) which Jesus





opened before them. But later, at the Last Supper, when Philip in his naive enthusiasm, asked him to show them the invisible and indescribable Father, Jesus stated, *Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father* (Jn 14:9).

What grace, what mystery to see Jesus (cf. Mt 13:16), Him, truly Him! However, far removed in time and space, can we never enjoy this beatitude? How could we too fix our gaze on that human Visage, in which He shines as Son of God and son of man? Do perhaps we too have clouded eyes like the wayfarers on the way to Emmaus who did not recognize the risen Jesus in the pilgrim who accompanied them? (Lk 24:16). Must we too resign ourselves, with the tradition attested by St Irenaeus and St Augustine, to confess all of Jesus' features unknown to us?

Thus it is our great

fortune that Blessed Cardinal Ildefonso Schuster, with providential foresight, wanted to give Mother Maria Pierina a painting of the Holy Face based on the Shroud, by way of the work of the pontifical photographer Giuseppe Bruner of Trent. The Blessed Cardinal Archbishop of Milan was also deeply devoted to the Holy Face and, through the supernatural affinity that exists between the Saints, both of them, from among the many Faces, preferred this one as the one most similar to Jesus.

Looking in silent meditation at this Face, his mysterious allure grows within us, and the Gospel admonition of his voice resounds in our hearts, inviting us to seek him wherever He remains hidden and He lets himself be discovered, to love and serve in human form: *Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me* (cf. Mt 25:40).

So let us ask ourselves: how does his presence continue over time, how does it manifest, how is it modernized, how does it become our life and history?

His continuation is the Church which originates from Him like a river that flows through all times. This human river is that lives off of Him presents analogous phenomena, similar to those of Jesus. The Church seems human and then, if



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we take a close and profound look at her, we realize that she is divine, **just like the person of Jesus, Man and God.** Usually we see only the human face of the Church. In our time this aspect is criticized in harsh and even violent ways.

The human and historical aspect of the Church is an almost insurmountable difficulty, especially to people who are fragile and easily influenced, to those who are unable to understand the satanic plans that exist in history. Thus, "purisms" are asserted, which certainly do not come from a passion for holiness, but from visions poisoned by arrogance and worldliness.

The Saints show us what attitude we need to have before the wounds of the Church. Blessed Maria Pierina shows us with the whole of her life interwoven with reparation, intense prayer, immolation and fervent love for the Church and for the backbone of the Church,

which is the priesthood! We must lift our gaze, we must look more to Heaven, we must always keep in mind eternity and measure everything according to that yardstick.

The reality of the Church is different from what is presented to us firstly through the imprudent expression of opinions by certain men of the Church and through media obedient to certain conductors who are certainly not friends of the Truth. If we look closely, through wise eyes, at her whom the Lord gives to his people Baptized in the Faith, we know that behind the human face there is a divine reality, which urges us to penetrate beyond her earthly limits.

The Church is Christ present and living in history. More than curing us of her real or presumed visible flaws, we must try to penetrate her reality, to see her transfigured, to see her light which is as bright as the sun and white as snow.

Before this tragic, sweet, solemn and





calming image of the Holy Face, let us propose that we love the Church, even for her flaws, which are the needs that the Church has. But above all let us love her because truly she hides the Face of Christ and she gives Christ; she is endowed with miraculous, sacramental powers; she communicates her life; **it is her secret that she puts us in direct**

and live communication with Christ. This is why, with our Blessed Maria Pierina, lovingly contemplating the situation of the universal Church, looking to the Holy Face, we say: "**Illumina, Domine, vultum tuum super nos; Mane nobiscum Domine!**"



A GOD WHO KNOWS HOW TO SUFFER

The following is a translation of the homily of Cardinal Beniamino Stella, Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy, given on the occasion of the Feast of the Holy Face, Tuesday, 9 February, in the Church of Santo Spirito in Sassia, Rome, Italy.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On this Tuesday before the Celebration of Ashes, we return to the Altar for the **Feast of the Holy Face of Jesus**. It is an occasion for contemplating He whom we will follow along the austere lenten journey, in the joyful and apprehensive anticipation of Easter.

Contemplating the Face of Jesus, fixing our eyes on his, means listening carefully to the Teacher, in order to open our lives to him and remember, in heart and in mind, that we live every moment of our lives with him and in his presence. The Face of Jesus sees with the **loving gaze** of God for each of us; it is the gaze of the Father, who, by incarnating himself in Jesus and by giving us his Spirit, wanted to be close to mankind and participate in our life, taking on our humanity in order to redeem and save it.

Indeed, it is "*contemplating the face of Jesus died and risen that recomposes our humanity and also that which has been fragmented through the toils of life or marked by sin*", as Pope Francis reminded the Italian Church (Meeting with Participants



in the Fifth Convention of the Italian Church, 10 November 2015). The Face of Jesus that we contemplate is a **living Face**, which scrutinizes us in the depths of the spirit and asks us to follow him in every moment of his itinerary of life; it may be **suffering** or **glorious**, but it always reveals to us the **merciful** Face of God.

In the suffering Jesus we see first of all the Face of a **God who knows how to suffer** out of love, who does not remain impassive with regard to man whom He created and to man's earthly surroundings. Christ's suffering is born of the love that God has for mankind and by God's desire to make mankind a partner in His very life. Love – as we know – often becomes suffering; a love that fears embracing and sharing pain too, would be a love that is incomplete and not credible.

In this sense, the suffering of the Face of Christ, “disfigured in appearance”, is the sign of God's immeasurable love for men and women; his suffering is the **“price” that God has paid for each one of us**, not for an indistinct mankind, but for each man and each woman, in their tangible existence. When a moment of discouragement or dejection occurs, the contemplation of this Face reminds us of

how precious we are in the eyes of God, how our small and poor existence is cherished in his eyes. A God who took on so much suffering for us, will always continue to safeguard us in his love.

Thus, even suffering must not separate us from God. It is paradoxically appropriate and capable, especially through prayer and adoration of his Eucharistic presence, to draw near to the Lord and to discover the provident goodness and, no less, to make ourselves sensitive to the pain of so many brothers and sisters.

In their suffering we recognize that of Christ, in their faces disfigured by misery and pain, we find a trace of his gaze, which calls us to love and forgive: “God took on their face”, Pope Francis said, and *“that face looks at us. God ... becomes ever greater than himself by lowering himself. If we do not lower ourselves we cannot see his face”* (Meeting with Participants in the Fifth Convention of the Italian Church, 10 November 2015).

Lent culminates in Easter, in which all suffering is transfigured and assumed in the **joy of the Resurrection**; therefore it is important to avoid the risk of being “Christians whose lives seem like Lent without Easter”, according to the happy expression of the Holy Father (*Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 6), so as to be in the world bearers and witnesses of the “Joy of the Gospel”. The disfigured Face of the Crucified One is only the anticipation of a painful and agonizing milestone of that definitively glorious Resurrection, which was first experienced by a few disciples on Mount Tabor.

In that circumstance, in a moment in which the time of his arrest and his death is approaching, Jesus offers a special occasion to a few of his disciples; he opens for them a **“window” on the ultimate events**, he rends the veil of the definitive reality of his own story and places before them the splendour of his glory. The anticipation of that glory in a certain sense constitutes a support and an inner certitude on a dark and trying leg of the journey that lies ahead of them.

Likewise, the thought of the glorious Face of Christ is for us the occasion to



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avoid giving in to the **temptation of pessimism**; the joy of the Gospel does not ignore the burden and the sadness of evil and of suffering, but is born from the awareness that in the Risen One good is shown to be stronger, and has won!

How often does it happen that we recognize the good things there are in our life, yet take them “for granted”, without attributing them the correct importance ... and how often, vice versa, are we ready to always keep before our eyes and in our minds what is wrong or what we are missing, letting our moods and our attitudes form themselves. As a “remedy”, contemplating the Face of the Risen One keeps alive in our hearts gratitude for what God has done for us, and helps us to lay, in this gratitude, the foundations of our existence and our every day.

As human suffering is the “memory” of what Christ suffered, and it leads us back to Him, thus the good that there is in the world, every act of love, offers us a reflection and is a gift of the provident goodness of God. This Goodness comes to us in a particular way in the **merciful Face of Christ**, because “Jesus is the face of the Father’s mercy”, as recalled in the incipit of the Bull with which Pope Francis announced the Jubilee, which we are living out in this Holy Year. This time is a special gift offered to the Church and to the world, in order to make a personal and communitary experience of the merciful Face of Christ, and to rediscover the depth of the heart of God – of the merciful Father – not always adequately experienced and offered to the faith of the Holy People of God.

How beautiful the Face of Christ is! It is what we find before us even at the root of our failures or in the shadow of our weaknesses; it is the loving gaze that we discover upon us when we feel worthless and unworthy, but in need of more tender closeness. In this way, our mistakes and our wounds – although never desirable – become the occasion to make room in our life for Divine Mercy. Thus, a sinner who feels loved and forgiven, can become a convert who forgives and loves his brothers and sisters, meeting them

and bending down to their misery; this applies to us priests first of all, but also for all disciples of the Lord, equally recipients and bearers of the Love of God.

I would like, therefore, to conclude by sharing with you **the appeal of Pope Francis**, that “*the season of Lent during this Jubilee Year should also be lived more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God’s mercy. How many pages of Sacred Scripture are appropriate for meditation during the weeks of Lent to help us rediscover the merciful face of the Father!*” (*Misericordiae vultus*, n. 17).

At this time and in this Solemnity, in loving meditation of the signs of the mercy imprinted on the Face of Jesus, may the Lord grant us the joy of feeling gazed upon by Him, in joy and in suffering, so as to be in the world “mirrors” that reflect upon our brothers and sisters the immeasurable love received from the Father..

Amen



BASSANO ROMANO

On Tuesday, 9 February, in Bassano Romano, while outside the Carnevale festivities were in full swing, inside, in the stillness of the Shrine of the Holy Face, an enormous crowd of devoted faithful gathered in the hills of San Vincenzo to take part in the annual Mardi Gras Vigil which precedes Ash Wednesday. Everyone felt the strong call of the “Holy Door”, which had been opened in the Shrine for the Jubilee Year of Mercy. Great numbers arrived from the parishes of the diocese's two vicariates,



particularly from Anguillara Sabazia and from Sutri. The sacred temple was literally overflowing during both liturgies of reparation of the Holy Face of Jesus, the Mass in the afternoon and the prayer vigil in the evening, which ended at midnight with the imposition of Ashes on the head. Fr Cleto Tuderti, Prior of the Silvestrine community, expressed deep satisfaction and emphasized the bountiful gifts of grace bestowed by the Jubilee of Mercy. Faced with the need to address the grave challenges of our time and the necessity of overcoming senseless divisions and futile antagonism, the Prior stressed that “the faith in our people remains steadfast and firmly rooted. Even if not always on display, they preserve, intact and in depth, Christian values and sentiments. The ‘Thousand’ will depart. They are not the commemoration of a page of national history, but the messengers sent by Pope Francis, a Thousand preachers and confessors of mercy to be among the people. May their work vivify in everyone a more fraternal Christian maturity”.

Angelo Bianchini

BRINDISI

The celebration of the Feast of the Holy Face was truly special: adding to the image that the Sisters had given us as a wedding gift in 2005, which has been displayed at every celebration during these 10 years, were the image and relics of Bl. Mother Maria Pierina. Naturally, this was all made possible by the generous and loving heart of the parish priest who had taken such care in making all the preparations.

For the first time many young people sang throughout the celebration, which ended with the distribution of medals, and the kissing of the Holy Face and the relics of Mother Maria Pierina. The young parish priest, Fr Mimmo Muscogiuri, temporarily used the reliquary of St Francis of Assisi to hold the relics of Mother Maria

Pierina. Fr Francesco De Bedittis, the elderly priest who had married us, celebrated. After the Mass there was a conference on the defence of the family according to God's plan, and the parish priest intentionally left the images of the Holy Face and Mother Pierina beside the speakers.

Mino and Antonella



MILAN

Tuesday, 9 February, was a truly special day for the community of the Daughters of the Immaculate Conception of Buenos Aires and for the school of Milan. Indeed, we celebrated the day dedicated to the Holy Face.

The Feast Day was made tangible and visible in the school of Milan, where a large reproduction of the Holy Face was arranged in the atrium, adorned with flowers and plants.

Throughout the day, in the school's chapel, the Holy Sacrament was exposed, allowing everyone the opportunity for moments of personal adoration and prayer. All the children, from the youngest of the Nursery School to the oldest of the Primary School, in turns with their classes and teachers were led in a moment of prayer and reflection in order to become more closely acquainted with the story of Mother Maria Pierina and her Love for the Suffering Jesus.

The most spiritually powerful moment of the day of devotion to the Holy Face was the Holy Mass at 5:30 pm celebrated by Fr Mario Granata, a Salesian priest who offers reflections on Radio Mater, and Fr Lorenzo Martini, a parish priest for a community in the province of Pavia.

The celebration was carried out with many peo-

ple actively participating: children, teachers, parents, lay collaborators of the Daughters of the Immaculate Conception. People came from diverse experiences of life and of faith, for the most part unknown to one another, but all united in the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

During the homily, Fr Lorenzo Martini offered a reflection on the gaze of Jesus, recalling various Gospel episodes in which Christ, through his loving, compassionate and merciful gaze, converted the people he met, inspiring faith in their hearts.

Everyone felt the echo of the invitation to let themselves be looked upon by Jesus, to allow themselves to be loved and to convert, to correspond to this Love through the life of



faith and through everyday witness.

The celebration concluded with the rite of kissing the Holy Face, “a loving kiss to redress the kiss of Judas”.

Personally it has not been long since I first began learning about the life of Mother Maria Pierina and her devotion to the Holy Face, the existence of which I was unaware before beginning my experience as coordinator in this school. I was struck by the simplicity and reservation of this witness of Christ, who had initially wanted to keep her relationship with God hidden. I am also struck by the fervor with which the origins of devotion to the Holy Face are recounted; the faith of the nuns and the lay people close to them, the capacity to witness, to spread and pass on the beauty of this great spiritual legacy.

Let us praise the Lord for the witness that has sprung from the faith of Mother Maria Pierina, fervent spirit of love for Jesus; for the rich spiritual legacy that she left to her community of sisters and to all those who, from then up to today, have attended and attend the environments of the Institute and the school: environments which “speak” of a great life, that of Mother Maria Pierina, spent for love for Jesus, and which invite everyone to do likewise with joy, each according to his or her own vocation!!

Cristina Racchi



GROTTAFERRATA



The Feast of the Holy Face was celebrated by the community of the Daughters of the Immaculate Conception in the Maria Angelica villa in Grottaferrata, near Rome, on Tuesday, 9 February. The Novena culminated in the solemn celebration of the Holy Mass at 4:30 pm, presided by Fr Ennio of the Oblates of St Francis de Sales. As always, with his incisive simplicity, Fr Ennio managed to actively involve the entire assembly.

Among those present were centenarian Sr Geltrude, along with Sr Elena and Sr Leopolda who were privileged to have known Blessed Mother Maria Pierina.

Maria Paola Di Paolo



LIVING EVERYDAY LIFE IN GRACE

The following is a translation of the homily given by Father Luca Maria Di Girolamo of the Order of the Servants of Mary for the Mass celebrated on the Feast of the Holy Family of Nazareth, 26 December 2015, in the Chapel of the Istituto Spirito Santo [Institute of the Holy Spirit] in Rome, Italy.

After welcoming the Child of Bethlehem in this Christmas atmosphere, our gaze rests on the Holy Family, on that small nucleus of three persons whom the Church considers the model for every family.

But also within this group – in which God participates directly – not everything seems easy: the forced exodus to Egypt, the disappearance in the Temple, are all difficult situations and thus are to be addressed with responsibility.

We can certainly consider the richness and uniqueness of the Holy Family of Nazareth, but it reflects only the most crucial human emergencies.

In celebrating this Holy Mass we ask the Lord's for-

giveness for the moments in which responsibility was lacking

With a superficial reading of the Gospel of this beautiful Christmas celebration, we can think of some ordinary mischief that Jesus gets involved in despite the care taken by his parents.

However, as mentioned before, this is based on a superficial level which is always the worst habit, but especially when approaching Scripture. It is not only a book with a series of narratives and depictions, but an event which derives from the action of the Holy Spirit and which, as such, leads us to confront a particular world, even if this world, in order to facilitate our understanding makes use of images within our reach. In this event we encounter the manifestation of God and mankind's reaction, which at times is even cruel and contrary to what God says. But this too is part of his plan of salvation. Through a mechanism of loss and rediscovery, we are offered truths that are necessary to meditate on and to make real their substance. The truth which touches upon God's identity, but which – as always in Scripture – provokes man



who reacts more or less brazenly.

Jesus is thus still a child entrusted to the care of his parents and apparently lives a linear story like the other events of other children, and thus even the disappearance seems to be somewhat normal: many children disappear and then are found.

However, in this event there are three novel elements: first of all the journey home: from Jerusalem to Nazareth, a journey which, in the time of Jesus, was organized down to the smallest of details, for which it was difficult to

evade the control of an entire group of relatives and friends who were travelling. Yet, despite that fact, Jesus disappeared. In this circumstance we already see a design greater than the horizon: yesterday in the Gospel of John we were told that He, the Word dwelt among us and with all his glory had entered everyday life and this clearly provokes particular effects.

His behaviour is not conformed and flattened on that of mankind, even the best of this Holy Family, but this Family is holy precisely because it is the soil where God acts.

This is where the second aspect is situated: Mary reacts upon finding him. Her words have a strong human impact and are highly expressive: "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you", typical of a reprimand combined with a disappearance. There is an entire humanity that calls for a response to the actual situation: confronting the unexpected event, ordinary and everyday life suffers a laceration and receives a not wholly understandable response.

Precisely this response from Jesus is the third ele-



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ment not to be overlooked: “Didn’t you know I had to be about my Father’s business?” It is a response in line with the message of hope that is proper to this season of Christmas: an invitation to lift our gaze, to go beyond the limitations of mankind. Man must not move only in a horizontal dimension limited by family affections, but must remember the entire link that joins Jesus to the Father. The Child rediscovered must be concerned with the business of the Father because this entails the salvation of the entire human family.

It is here then that the concept of family expands: not certainly according to today’s human logic, often dictated far from Christian motives, as much as instead according to a divine plan. The business of the Father with which Jesus must concern himself is that of the human family which He has come to save.

From here we are able to see the greatness and the limitations of this Family of Nazareth where Jesus is historically and sociologically situated: greatness because it is the site of a particular holiness, but also limitations because it is meant to encompass everything within four walls. It is what Jesus presents and what Mary keeps and reflects in her heart so as to have a more complete idea of what awaits her in a completely special life of sharing with her Son.

An attitude, therefore, of great wisdom and great

humanity under the sign – at least for now – of obedience to parental mandates. Later on, however, Jesus will return to the business of the Father, inviting us to do likewise. Indeed, it will be He who reminds us that the true mother, true brothers and sisters, true family – will be that of those who hear and practice the Word of God.

This obedience and this action modelled by the Word constitute the faithfulness that in her *Diario* in December 1940, Mother Maria Pierina introduces us: “in the Holy Night – our sister writes this – “Jesus took possession of all of me. I do not know how to describe what took place ... it was the celebration of Love!” (and further on) Nothing for me, all for the glory of God. Faithfulness to grace, the esteem of grace”.

A lesson for us today: let us ask to be filled with this faithfulness that led God to become incarnate in order to separate us from all that is contrary to our being Christians.



ALL THE CHURCH LIVES ON THE GOSPEL

Published below is a translation of the homily for the Mass celebrated by Fr Luca Maria Di Girolamo of the Order of the Servants of Mary on Tuesday, 26 February, in the Chapel of the Istituto Spirito Santo [Institute of the Holy Spirit], Rome.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has ended with the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul, and today we come together to celebrate the monthly Holy Mass in honour of Maria Pierina – as if to prolong the profile of the great doctor of people – in honour of the holy bishops Timothy and Titus, who were the first two and the closest collaborators of St Paul.

They are very important figures not only for their testimonial value, but also because Paul entrusted the internal organization of the community to them: teaching, directing prayer, monitoring moral conduct,

ordaining the first priests and deacons, and conserving all that they had learned about Jesus.

This task gives rise to what we call the Magisterium of the Church: that is the element that, subject to the Word of God, keeps alive the great truths of the faith.



At the beginning of this Eucharist let us prepare ourselves with a serene spirit and, asking the Lord to forgive our sins, let us thank him for the direct contact that he allows us to have with Him.

Being an “emissary” means witnessing: a verb well known, on a different level, in our Christian vocabulary. However, perhaps we rarely reflect on the fact that the first “Emissary” is Jesus himself, who finds himself in the same situation as the disciples, sent “as lambs among the wolves”. From his first appearance in history – we see it even in the Christmas narratives – Jesus is hindered, especially by his people, who should be the first to welcome him as the One chosen and given by God.

Yet Jesus, despite this attitude he goes ahead with a stiff upper lip to face the events that await him in Jerusalem.

All this now passes from Him to those who want to follow Him with the awareness of man’s pettiness and fragility. Despite this, God turns to trust in man, to entrust him with a task of certain difficulty and great responsibility. Not everyone in the course of the history of Christianity has been open and has allowed himself to be questioned by the Word of God, because this undermines the plans and projects of man. One can

be persecuted for this.

But those who are willing to welcome receive the gift of reconciliation and peace which are direct emanations of Easter, by which Jesus opened the doors of the Kingdom.

This entire task, however, points to – aside from the difficulty – great responsibility: those who offer themselves for the cause of the Gospel must think about the things of the Lord, listen to the salvific character of his message and also allow others to do the same. St Paul, in the First Reading, addresses Titus, giving him precise directives: upon which, as well as upon the Gospel, all the Church stands and lives.

In the Gospel too, we find a similar intention on the part of Jesus toward his followers: take nothing extra, greet no one along the road: a prohibition in the context of Jesus’ time, where a greeting was quite different from what we know today and entailed a time-consuming ceremonial.

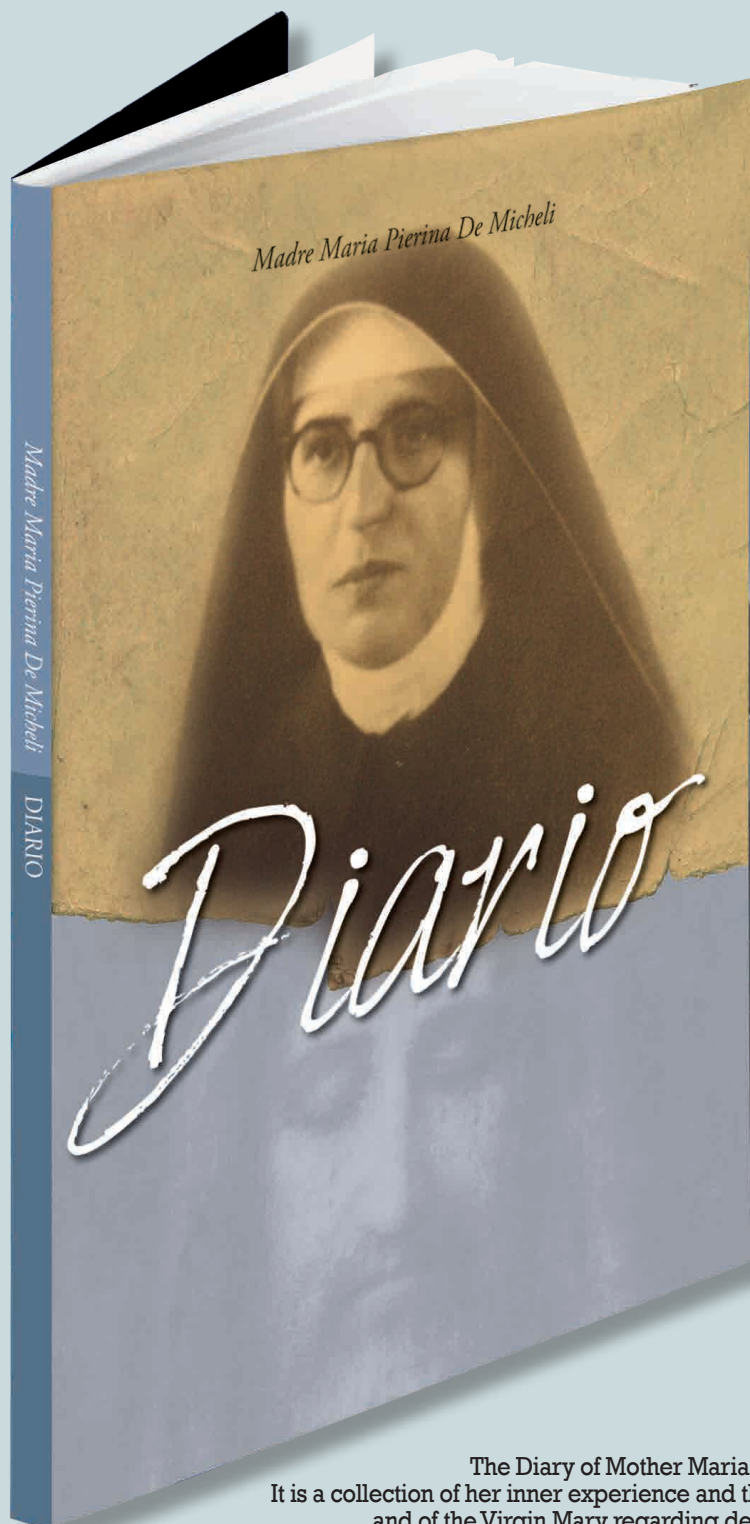
Such an obvious exposure to danger may seem curious to us, but it is an element of distraction that could pervade the work of evangelizing. It is a pressing appeal to go to the tangible, to the essential, through which the message is more powerful and is not mixed with personal opinions, earthly affections or trends.

Over time Jesus continues to attract disciples and sends them: Maria Pierina’s experience also has a lot to teach us and her discipleship is expressed precisely in obedience. Despite the fact that her mother was very sick, she went to Buenos Aires in 1919. At only 29 years of age she began a new page of life in which suffering exceeded joy over a period of two difficult years, until 1921. Her return to Italy was not the easiest and here, several years later, still moving in a difficult context, other misfortunes would follow. First among them was the death of her mother. This relates to a particular event: a mother to whom Sr Pierina – moved by a spirit of offering and sacrifice – refused to show herself and, in doing so, embodied almost to the letter what Jesus says in today’s Gospel: “greet no one”.

All of this intense and active life was spent under the gaze and under the face of Jesus who continued to invite her on many paths of service and care: of children, young people, and the sick.

All of this is apostolate, service which does not stay confined in a privileged person, but in which we can discover the true instruments of the Lord and vehicles of salvation for all.

This is our vocation and our being Christians.



Madre Maria Pierina De Micheli

Madre Maria Pierina De Micheli

DIARIO

Diario

NOTICE:

The Diary of Mother Maria Pierina was published.
It is a collection of her inner experience and the confidences of Jesus
and of the Virgin Mary regarding devotion to the Holy Face.
The new edition has undergone ample revision and is accompanied by an introduction.

Anyone interested can ask the volume to:
Istituto Spirito Santo - Via Asinio Pollione, 5 - 00153 Roma - Tel./fax: 06 57302430 - email: crfic@libero.it