

Marie-Paule Speaks to Us

WHERE ARE WE AT?

On August 28, we will be celebrating the anniversary of the founding of the Army of Mary which, as we know, was launched in an unforeseeable manner on the feast day of Saint Augustine, a convert from the 5th century whose autobiography, under the title of *Confessions*, is considered to be “the most honest and most impressive of the literature in the world” (V. S. Chamoni, *Le vrai visage des saints*. Desclée de Brouwer, p. 66)

This convert, thanks to the prayers of his mother Saint Monica, whose memorial the Church celebrates on August 27, was honest in writing the truth, all the truth concerning him, that is, all that was edifying as well as everything that was not at all edifying. This is the way it always must be in God’s Works. It is said of Saint Augustine that “he was capable of a knowledge of himself and a mastery of himself that were rather rare.

He was a Pastor of souls filled with love of God and of neighbor, haloed with the brilliance of a boundless kindness; at the same time, he was a Bishop faithful to the teachings of the Church, fighting to preserve the doctrine of the Church concerning faith and morals.” (Id.)

Could Mary have chosen a more fitting day for the founding of her Army which she gave us with a view to our conversion, through the means, first of all, of our personal reform by becoming cognizant of ourselves and by correcting what needs to be corrected, which, in fact, leads us to a great charity towards others in fidelity to God’s laws....

This program of life, so simple to follow, is very much like him who is proposed to us as a model to imitate, Saint Augustine, and corresponds to the description of the perfect man which His Holiness Pope Paul VI had laid out in 1968 and which the Army of Mary had adopted, shortly after it was founded, with a view to recruiting members able to respond to this very promising objective for the Church.

When God and Mary lead a Work, then everything falls into place in a harmony that escapes us. It is only with the passage of time that we see, more and more, the infinite WISDOM of God who governs, attentive to the woes of His people whom He loves and whom He wants to protect from the sorrows that are a consequence of evil.

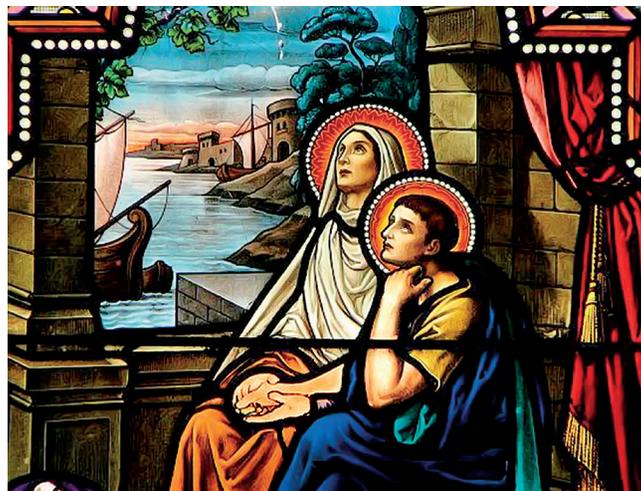
In what way have we responded to His appeal? Where are we at or what point have we reached after all those years of personal interior battle, besides the battle that is waged against us?

PERSONAL BATTLE

All of us know that, to go to heaven, the road is narrow and strewn with roses and thorns, with joys and sorrows, with sweetness and pain, with happy projects and disappointments. There you have the warp and woof of our daily life. The passing joy helps us to better accept

afterwards the sorrows that follow and so forth.

All of us want to go to heaven, but so often, we refuse the means presented to us to get there. They are very simple means, placed at our disposal every day, for it is the little things accepted well which allow us to merit the quickest. Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus recommended that “we accomplish well the little ordinary things in an extraordinary manner.” This is not complicated; for example: fulfilling well the duties of one’s state, sacrificing an interesting evening out because of a sick child; supporting a friend whose morale is low and who asks for help; being patient and kind, understanding, devoted, generous and so forth – this applies to both men and women. Choose to remain silent when we would feel like exploding. A thousand and one boring or tedious details, if they are well accepted, become a source of blessings, joy, humility and love. Life takes on another hue because we have sacrificed ourselves, dominated ourselves, been victorious over ourselves. That



Saint Monica and her son, Saint Augustine

is when it is wonderful because the wall of sensitivity, and more than that, the thicker wall of susceptibility, and even more, the huge wall of pride then eventually disappear so that we become flexible and abandoned to the will of God which we understand ever better and which penetrates in us ever more deeply because we have emptied ourselves of self. Then, it is impossible to look at life as a form of slavery when faced with the duties of our state. On the contrary, our mind is free, disencumbered and it uplifts the being to another level from which our gaze embraces a horizon of fire which is the fire of LOVE. That love burns the fibres of concupiscence, of atavism, and disencumbers us more and more so that LIGHT then surrounds our entire life and fills us with happiness even amid the trials that befall us.

There you have the means of emptying ourselves of self and rapidly overcoming ourselves.

THE ARMY OF MARY

Now, as a movement, what was our reform? I think the Army of Mary received its fair share of joys and ordeals. Let us look upon the Army of Mary as a large garden in which God has deposited all the different varieties of flowers. The flowers? They are each one of us. Have we accepted to die to ourselves? If so, this seed cast into the earth will bear good fruit. Everyone is accepted into the Army of Mary, but not all accept to die to themselves and sometimes they are the cause of great sufferings, not only for themselves but also for those around them. Moreover,

as a Marian Work, we have been generously drenched by the tornadoes that struck us. We must not stop to consider those who provoked them and judge them, but cast an eye on the flowers which are even more beautiful and stronger than before because they are hardy. And those flowers are the valiant Knights of Mary who are still fighting under Mary's banner, described as "sectarian", as Christ and His Apostles were, whereas they are at the very center of the Church, in a constant and complete fidelity to its teaching.

I beg you, let us never stop to consider those who are underhanded and who, hiding behind the wall of their seditiously formulated accusations, are constantly aggressing the reputation of others, becoming real ferocious beasts if they are uncovered. We have seen such dealings; for us, it is enough to defend Mary's Work as Christ did for His Father's Work.

Let us maintain our ideal of sanctification, of fidelity to the Church with a view to going to heaven, but let us not refuse the means we are given to lead us to it rapidly. Let us remember the song: "Everyone wants to go to heaven, but no one wants to die." We could add: "Everyone wants eternal happiness, but no one wants to suffer."

The secret to our success? When we accept the wounds with joy, then God is the one who dresses them in LIGHT and LOVE.

Mother Paul-Marie

(*Le Royaume*, no. 71, November-December 1989, p. 4)



Army of Mary Center, Quebec City - Marie-Paule among the flowers (July 1988).

Men have never spoken so much of peace, and yet an anguished world is in its death throes, buried under scandals, crushed by injustices, prostrate under its sins, suffocating under the infernal empire and crumbling under its destiny which it itself forged. It is the slave of a brilliant intelligence which denied its God, profaning His love to make of the flesh its idol, provoking dissension, ruin and misery, marring the beauty, the grandeur and the harmony given by the Creator, the King of heaven and earth. And never have men spoken so much of love and peace!...

The world is living the hours of the Apocalypse, but it has the promise of a new springtime, for it bears the seal of beauty, and even though it is disfigured, God is going to succeed in producing His Masterpiece of Love, through Mary:

"In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph!"

(*Le Royaume*, no. 130, September-October 1998, p. 1)