

ST. GERTRUDE THE GREAT NEWSLETTER

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FROM BISHOP DOLAN

My dear Friends,

I write this to you in the midst of travels, and of the celebration of Our Lady's glorious Assumption into heaven. This is the final trip we each of us hope to make, and will, if we stay close to the Mother of God.

Our summer weather has been extraordinary this year, but the morning of the 15th of August dawned especially bright. As the bishop and clergy vested in the sacristy, the faithful recited the Rosary at our Lourdes Grotto. It seemed that every kind of garden produce, herb and wild flower was prepared around a statue of Our Lady, waiting to be blessed. The procession arrived to the strains of "Immaculate Mary" and the little outdoor altar was fragrant with fresh mint and basil.

The psalm of the blessing, versicle and collects were recited by the clergy, and heaven invoked to render these natural helps to health supernaturally powerful for the protection of soul and body both, by Our Lady's intercession and the Church's blessing. The procession was formed, and children carried the flowers into church, to lay in the symbolic sepulcher of Mary, which tradition tells us was found by the apostles empty, except for the beautiful flowers left by the angels. After Mass the faithful come to take a spring or two home, and to keep as a treasured sacramental.

The church, always beautiful, was exceptionally so for the feast, "arrayed like a bride for her spouse," all in white and blue, filled with flowers for the stately ceremonial of the pontifical high Mass at the faldstool. The ladies and young ladies of the choir honored Our Lady with their beautiful singing which rang out clear as the bell in the morning air. Thus passed our two hours in church, and it seemed we were already in heaven.

Later in the day the clergy chanted Vespers, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed, the Rosary prayed, Benediction given, and the final Mass of the day was offered. These holydays always pass so quickly, but the memories and the blessings linger. Be sure we prayed for you all, but especially those who sent in their intentions for our nine day Assumption Novena. God bless you. We



The clergy and faithful gathered for the blessing of herbs and first fruits on the Feast of the Assumption in front of our Lourdes Grotto under beautiful azure skies that were accompanied by mild temperatures. The procession into the church and a beautiful pontifical high Mass followed.

are united in prayer.

Our "other work" at St. Gertrude is to attend to those who have no church and no Mass or priest. I have asked Fr. Vili Lehtoranta, our Finnish priest, to tell us a bit about his summer missionary travels in conclusion.

May God bless the ending weeks of your summer, and St. Joseph inspire you to work zealously for God's glory.

Yours in the Immaculate Heart of Mary

– Most Rev. Daniel L. Dolan



The Monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial just outside Madrid.

Fr. Lehtoranta's Travel Journal

In June and July I combined missionary travels and a vacation trip to Europe. I made a quick stop at Spain, where a small but determined group of traditionalists fights to keep the Bergoglio-free Faith and Mass alive. I was able to visit El Escorial, the ancient Augustinian monastery and royal palace of the Spanish Kings. It was there the great Catholic King Philip II stayed. I saw his working chambers, quite intact, with a large selection of spiritual books, Bibles, and Breviaries. Based on what the faithful told me, I doubt, however, that the present monarch of Spain keeps those titles as his bedside reading...

The room where King Philip died has also been preserved. There, during his last hours, Philip clutched a blessed candle in one hand and a crucifix in the other, the same objects his father, Emperor Charles V, grasped on his own deathbed. Disappointed by the lies of the "reformers" in Germany, Charles had made his son swear that he would never tolerate heresy in his domains. And Philip never did. But at the present, under the recently abdicated King Juan Carlos, the Catholic culture in Spain has mostly disappeared, which I found out very concretely. The first thing which I saw in Spain, after leaving the Madrid airport, was not a monastery, a shrine, or a cross, but a huge sign advertising Kentucky Fried Chicken.

Things are not better in the Scandinavian countries, but I managed a couple of good missionary trips there. I visited Hervé and Cecilia Socquet-Juglard in the lovely 1000-year old town of Bergen, Norway. These good friends of ours keep the flame of faith burning in Norway, and for them I celebrated the Masses of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, the great apostles of Europe, as well as the votive Mass of St. Pius X, the undaunted opponent of the modern errors of our time.

Bergen, which is surrounded by mountains, is home to a heart-wrenching monument, and a reminder of the tragedy of Luther's revolt, the leprosy museum. The town's authorities locked up the victims of this horrid disease in this hospital without proper food or medical treatment. But the saddest thing is, that for those people, there was no Father Damien to offer dignity, salvation, and the sacraments. Visiting North Europe is always a vivid reminder, that no matter how much worldliness and immorality prevail there, the lack of the Catholic Faith and the sacraments is the greatest misfortune to ever befall these nations.

I also had the opportunity to visit Gothenburg, Sweden, which Bishop Dolan visited many years ago. There I met a group of Catholics, who have become convinced of the apostasy of Bergoglio. A Society of St. Pius X priest has until now traveled regularly to Gothenburg to say Mass for them, but from now on they will be served by one of our priests. Father Rafael Trytek from Krakow, Poland, has kindly agreed to say Mass for this small group of faithful. Father will make his first visit there in September.

One member of our small flock in Gothenburg is an elderly Croatian gentleman, who escaped the Communists of Yugoslavia by fleeing to Sweden. Our faithful there are truly a living reminder to us of how much God has blessed American Catholics by providing churches, priests and the sacraments. Many of our fellow Catholics in Europe have had to suffer greatly, first the open persecution by the Communists, and then the horrifying spiritual dryness of a secular society, as well as the ecumenism of Vatican II.

So despite the great distances, and small numbers of faithful, the missionary work of St. Gertrude the Great Church has now reached all the way to North Europe. Please keep our brethren there in your prayers, while at the same time thanking God for allowing the work your bishops and priests for His glory here in America to continue.

For inquiries about our Scandinavian mission, please e-mail Father Lehtoranta: at: vili.lehtoranta@wippies.fi.



The idyllic setting of Bergen, Norway hides its dark reminder of the effects of Luther's 16th century revolt.

Triduum of Masses in honor of Our Lady September 8th, 12th, and 15th.

A triduum of Masses will be offered in September on Our Lady's Nativity, on the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary, and on the Feast of the Seven Sorrows of Mary.

Please send us your intentions by filling out the enclosed form which will be placed on the altar or you may visit our website SGGResources.org and submit your intentions online.