

# ENCOURAGEMENT ENCOURAGEMENT

December 2011 - Issue 5

The Host Apostolate

[www.thehostapostolate.org](http://www.thehostapostolate.org)

info@thehostapostolate.org

14 Goatbeck Terrace  
Langley Moor  
Co. Durham DH7 8JJ  
UNITED KINGDOM

## ADVENT!

A time of waiting...  
preparation,  
expectancy,  
joy and hope!

### Blessings for Christmas to all



©William Kurelek (1927-77)

As we await the Birth of Jesus we prepare for His coming as any parents and family for a new arrival. We talk about the new arrival. What will they be like, who will they look like, what will they do?

These are questions that Mary and Joseph would have asked too but with a foreknowledge of the spiritual nature of the child. We are led through this journey in Advent. Each week reminds us of His heritage and background and how many things pointed to His coming amongst us. He now dwells amongst us, in Word, in Sacrament, in His Church and in Glory in Heaven. At Christmas we celebrate all these things.

But, we have His promise that He will come again and this we also remember and ponder in Advent. We do not know the time or place, the secrets of the Kingdom are not for us but He most surely will come when we least expect it, so we must prepare and be ready. Will He find us ready and how will He adjudge us? Certainly for the quality of our love and service, our holiness. However, He will also want to know whether we have spread the Good News of the Gospel or not.

This little story taken from the life of Catherine Doherty, Servant of God, reminds us that we must evangelise. To use her words.....

‘Once, I studied Psychiatry. The doctor that taught me was called Armstrong. He was an atheist but a kind of a ‘kind’ atheist. He was very punctilious in telling nurses that the best psychological approach in counselling was in the Confessional. The Catholic church had a secret of counselling. He spoke of it in a secular way.

‘One day I took my courage in both hands and said, “Doctor, why don’t you go to Lourdes? You are a single man. You are middle aged. You have no family it would be for you an experience. A psychological, psychiatric experience.” I put it on thick. I challenged him.

‘He said, “I have nothing to do next vacation time. I’ll do that little thing.”

‘He wrote to Lourdes. He eventually got permission to go on the Board. When you become a doctor in Lourdes for a certain spell, you are allotted some patients.

‘Lourdes does not accept psychological cures. They must be physical. So he was allotted a T. B. patient. She had T.B. of the bone. It was such a bad T.B. that you could see the bone for the flesh had been eaten up. She weighed practically nothing. ‘The orderly and nurse gave him all the x-rays and information.

It was a miracle she arrived from wherever she was from - Switzerland, I think. He was there to meet her. From the moment she arrived he was supposed to follow her and he did. 'He told us all this when he returned.

He said, "I walked around these places where they dipped those people in. It was a very cold flow. They dipped those people in one right after another. My doctor's heart practically turned upside-down because one person after another with boils and whatnots! The water should be contaminated.

"Came the time for my patient to come there. I shivered. There was nothing I could do. She wanted to get in there, they wanted her to get in there. What could I do? So I said to myself, 'Ok, if she gets cured I'll become a Catholic. There are no two ways about it. It will never happen'.

"Three times she was dipped into it. She fainted but she came to on the third time. I examined the leg. There was no wound. There was nothing. Just a perfectly healed leg. I couldn't even know where the thing was if I hadn't seen it before."

---

## The Advent Wreath

Have you ever pondered the meaning of the Advent wreath and the five candles. There are many ways of reflecting on them.

The three purple candles tell us of the need to pray, reflect and repent, the pink candle of Joy and the coming celebration of the Nativity and the white candle remind us that Jesus is the light of the world that comes to dispel the darkness of the world.

They also represent Hope Peace, Joy and Love. They are also telling us of the history of salvation; the Patriarchs, the Prophets, John the Baptist and finally Our Lady and Jesus' birth. Yet another way is to ponder on 'waiting and preparing', 'accepting and journeying' and then bringing to birth the Truth. There are many traditions but all point to a realisation of a great event THE SALVATION of the world by Love itself, Prophet, Priest and King.

Please feel free to copy and distribute unaltered.

"You know," he said, "I am not ashamed to say that right in the midst of all those places where they bathe, I fell on my knees. I was struck like lightening. There she was. One moment she had a wound. The next moment she had nothing. The next moment she got up, thin as she was, weak as she was, and this was proclaimed a healing. I had to sign all this.

"There were about 11 doctors besides myself who read all her x-rays and all that. I came out of there and said, 'lead me to a catholic priest'".

'And he came back to the hospital I trained in from an atheist to a Catholic. 'This is a miracle of God.' (Taken from: *In the Footprints of Loneliness* by Catherine Doherty).

Are we prepared to send people on such a journey which may bring them to Faith?

## Missionary Intention for December

That children and young people may be the messengers of the Gospel and that they may be preserved from all violence and exploitation.  
**Pope Benedict XVI**

### — Lady of the Trinity —

Maid who wed Infinity,  
Clay that shaped Divinity,  
Lady of the Trinity,  
*Life is filled with fears.*

Golden wheat that made the Host,  
Mortal woman loved the most  
By Father, Son and Holy Ghost,  
*Life is wet with tears.*

Flame of wisdom, holy shrine,  
Chalice of the Bread and Wine,  
Vineyard that produced the Vine,  
*Death speeds like a dart.*

Immaculate virginity,  
God-filled femininity,  
Lady of the Trinity,  
*Keep us in your heart.*

— Father Eddie Doherty  
Madonna House Community

Do remember to attend Mass for the feast of The Immaculate Conception of The Blessed Virgin Mary on the 8<sup>th</sup> December and Saint John of the Cross on the 14<sup>th</sup>.