

St. Louis de Montfort Academy Newsletter



FALL 2005/WINTER 2006

Reaching Out to the Scottish Nation

The Faith was first brought to Scotland by Saint Columba. For centuries the country remained Catholic. When Protestantism erupted in Europe, however, preachers like John Knox led many Scots into heresy. A long persecution began that nearly destroyed the Church in Scotland. In modern times, with the rise of religious tolerance, the persecution abated. Catholics could now work openly to restore Scotland to the Church.

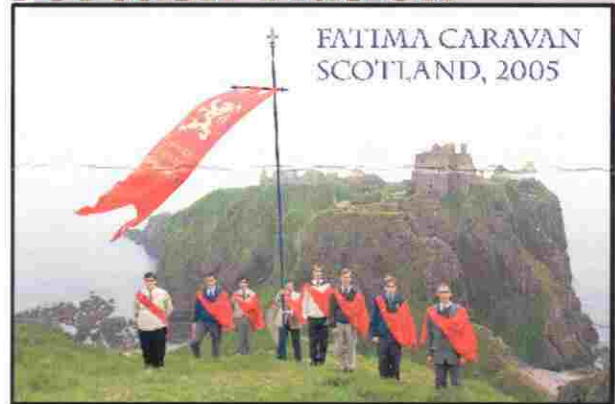
To support this lofty goal, some of us accepted an invitation of the Tradition, Family, Property Bureau for the United Kingdom to help spread the Fatima message in

Scotland in early summer. While nearly a century has passed since the Blessed Virgin appeared at Fatima, her message is more relevant than ever: Mankind must convert and make reparation for sin.



For the first week and a half of our stay in Scotland, we distributed flyers in the Lowlands. We handed out thousands of them in places like Glasgow, Edinburgh and Paisley. However, we found people in smaller cities like Motherwell, Hamilton and Falkirk more receptive.

We then headed north to Stirling, Dundee, Aberdeen and



Inverness. This part of the trip proved more challenging. Considering the value Our Lady gives suffering when it is embraced for love of God and neighbor, we deemed it very worthwhile.

Reactions varied. Many people were indifferent. Some opposed us, a few saying, "You should do this in a church, not on the street."

However, Our Lady sent encouragement. In difficult moments, often someone expressed support, as a lady did when she kindly insisted we all accept candy bars from her.

We began and ended our flyer distribution "campaigns" with a prayer requesting Our Lady's protection and assistance. Distribution in each city usually lasted about three hours.

(continued on back page)



Admiring the Works of an Angelic Artist



At 5:45 a.m. on January 21, we leapt out of bed like soldiers ready for a glorious

fight. Excitement and enthusiasm were written all over our faces because we were going to have a once-in-a-lifetime glimpse at the beauty of the Middle Ages.

A special exhibition of over 70 works of Blessed Fra Angelico had come to the United States. Although he lived in the early part of the Renaissance, Fra Angelico took medieval painting to its highest perfection. We were anxious to see his achievement. We ate a hearty breakfast and set off for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

On arrival, we got out of the vans in no

time, eager for the reward of a grueling four-hour ride. After crossing the medieval section of the museum, we found the spectacular display of Fra Angelico's art. It was a feast for our souls.

One painting that touched us deeply was of the Coronation of Our Lady. It depicted the Virgin draped in a blue mantle. A deep golden background gave an idea of the sublimity of Our Lady's coronation. Our Lady expressed her humility by kneeling at the feet of God with her head bowed and her hands folded. An angel held the ends of her flowing mantle, while floating as it were in the air, a reminder that angels are pure spirits. The whole scene helped increase one's love for Our Lady and Our Lord.

Another particularly striking painting was of the Last Judgment. A quantity

of gold surrounded the people who were saved. They wore rich gold, red and blue robes with gems and other sparkling stones. They had joy on their faces. They were happy to see others going to heaven and seemed to ignore the damned at Our Lord's left. A great number of angels greeted the just, and a rejoicing angel--perhaps the guardian angel--escorted each of the saved souls to the gates of heaven.

Contrarily, the devils were shown as charred, black beasts dragging the damned to a hideous pit: Hell. It was a really good illustration of how terrible devils are,

(continued next page)



A Jolly Event

If Ebenezer Scrooge had happened to pass by the Academy on December 11, 2005, he certainly would have wrinkled his brow and grunted, "Bah, Humbug!"

We beg to differ!

On that day the Open House was filled with many happy people full of the Christmas spirit. While all was cold and bleak outside, one simply had to cross the threshold of the Academy to be greeted by a cheery fire blazing in the hearth and to find oneself in the midst of lively company. In the dining room, the tables were spread with red cloths topped with snacks and drinks plentiful enough to please all.

Midway through the afternoon,

everybody gathered in the makeshift auditorium to watch the student-performed skit "A Christmas Morning Escape" based on a story from the time of the French Revolution.

As the storyline goes, one brave man attempted to single-handedly fell a



revolutionary general.

Despite a valiant effort he was taken captive, yet later escaped with a sympathetic guard on Christmas morning. They returned to his town and successfully defended it against the attack of the general and his revolutionary army that night. The

performance enchanted everyone.

Following the skit, the many weeks of evening choir practices paid off as the students sang their well-rehearsed carols for the welcome guests.

As the afternoon wore into evening, many were surprised to find the happy hours had quickly gone by unnoticed. As we bid our guests a final "Merry Christmas," we contented ourselves with the hope of seeing them, and others, next year.

Martin Shibler, 12th Grade



Students Comment on the Exhibition:



The paintings were sublime, with scenes of the Passion, of Mary and the Christ Child, of St. Nicholas, St. John the

Baptist and many others. The colors Fra Angelico used were still vivid and fresh looking, with amazingly varied hues. I was particularly struck by a painting of Jesus crowned with thorns. His face was sad and filled

with anguish. His eyes, which were bloodied, showed His immense suffering. This work left an indelible picture in my mind of the gratitude we owe Him.

*Jose Walter Ferraz,
12th Grade*



When I entered the exhibit, I found myself in awe of the beautiful and vibrant paintings. It impressed me to see how an artist was capable of such works. In this day and age, nothing comes even close to these wonderful depictions. No longer can one find the almost supernatural beauty of the

medieval art that I found there. Virtue shines in the physical beauty of its figures. I also marveled at the golden halos above



the saints' heads. This unexpected trip helped me to have a better idea of what evil has done to the minds of modern artists, how beautiful art can really be, and what medieval culture was like.

*Andrew Womack,
7th Grade*



(continued from previous page)
greedily stealing souls from God and constantly plotting against their salvation, yes, even our own. These frightful creatures seemed to be in absolute terror of God.

Fra Angelico's *Last Judgment* reminds us that we need to be vigilant so we do not fall into the devils' traps.

Also that if we correspond to God's grace, we can be escorted by our guardian angels to the eternal happiness of heaven.

In his paintings, Fra Angelico showed the beauty of virtue and the ugliness of vice. Artists after him may have been better in other ways, but in this he was superior. Thanks to him,

we understood more clearly the tremendous difference between modern art and medieval art, between the modern world and the Middle Ages.



Joseph Siebenmorgen, 8th Grade

A Princely Visit: Living History

Many guests have honored us with their presence over the years. None, priests excepted, more than His Imperial Highness Prince Bertrand of Orleans-Braganza, a direct descendant of St. Louis IX and a member of the Brazilian imperial family.

While among us, Prince Bertrand spoke at our request about the entry into the Church of several Japanese monarchists who visited him in Brazil a few years ago.

Prince Bertrand encouraged them on



that occasion to see the Church as a defender of legitimate authority and the good of the past, tradition.

During a subsequent visit, he

introduced them to a priest who explained to them why the Church is the only true church. Prince Bertrand then put them in touch with a priest in Japan who continued their religious instruction. They were later baptized, with Prince Bertrand serving as godfather.

After meeting with the Prince, the students filed from the chapel to the

(continued bottom next page)



(continued from front page)



Between "campaigns," we visited important historic sites. For instance, we walked through the ruins of Arbroath Abbey, where Scots once signed a declaration that they

would continue fighting for independence whatever the cost. We toured Edinburgh, Bothwell and Blair castles.

To end our Scottish adventure, we climbed Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in the British Isles. On its peak we prayed for the conversion of Scotland.

With Our Lady's help, we had distributed 35,000 fliers throughout the country. May the Immaculate Heart of Mary triumph there one day.



*John Mahoney,
12th Grade*



Many Thanks ...

The students who traveled to Europe during the summer gratefully thank all their financial supporters, especially the generous "Godparents" without whose aid the trip would not have been possible. At each of the shrines your intentions were remembered, and your kindness is not forgotten in their daily prayers.

(continued from previous page)

hall, singing "The March of the Kings." It was the Feast of the Three Kings, and a special dinner had been prepared. It may not have been a meal fit for a king, but the Prince seemed to enjoy it.

We later gathered around the Christmas tree, where the Kings had left presents for us. Prince Bertrand handed a gift to each student after receiving a gift

himself.

The choir then sang some Christmas carols. Our illustrious guest told us the story of one of them, "When Christ the Son of Mary." St. Alphonsus Liguori had just arrived at his new parish. He was about to begin the Christmas procession when he was informed of a local custom: every year the parish priest sang a new song during the

procession. Saint Alphonsus composed this one on the spot! It happens to be one of the Prince's favorite carols.

As it was getting late, our royal visitor thanked us and bade farewell. The place felt different with his departure. It was the end of an exciting encounter with living history!

*Christopher Vermett,
8th Grade*

*St. Louis de Montfort Academy
RR 1 Box 2009, Herndon, PA 17830
www.montfortacademy.edu*

St. Louis de Montfort Academy admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin.