

SAINT LOUIS DE MONTFORT ACADEMY BULLETIN



Spring 2004

And the Chase Was On!

Have you ever asked yourself what you would do if you witnessed a robbery or some other crime? What if a lady was robbed of her purse? Of course, we boys would stand up tall and say, "Well, let's not wait one second! Let's chase the thief down." You can almost hear some skeptic in the background murmuring "o sure, tell me about it."

Well, forget the skeptic because what I am about to relate has really happened.

One bright Sunday last April, the Academy had just finished attending the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the beautiful church of Saint Alphonsus in Baltimore when something quite out of the ordinary took place. As we headed to the parking lot where our vans were parked, we heard a woman screaming, "Help! Help! He's got my purse! Help! Help!"

Downtown Baltimore is full of buildings and this made it difficult for us to tell where the voice was coming from. Martin, a 10th grader from Kansas had fallen behind a bit and was able to detect from where the cry for help was coming. He took off in one direction and we all followed.

As we turned a street corner, our eyes locked on a middle-sized colored fellow in his late twenties, with a large purse under his arm. He was only reaching the street corner just opposite of where we were. Glancing over his shoulder he had a look of surprise to see all of us catching up to him. The thief pointed behind him and screamed: "The lady, the lady! She's hurt and she needs help! Go help the lady!" No way! We weren't going to fall for that one! We kept chasing.

As we gained on him, he took a sharp turn around the front of a parked car, trying once again to shake us off. As Martin was getting really close to the scoundrel, Mr. Ted, our headmaster, had already cut across the street and was now coming upon the thief from that direction. The thief, realizing he had been trapped threw the purse towards Mr. Ted and yelled, "Fine! Take it!" But it was too late. Martin had already thrown his weight on the man's shoulders and shoved him down to the pavement. As he was holding him by the shirt collar, Martin commented later that he was debating on what to do

with the "miserable scoundrel." At this point, our headmaster ordered Martin to let the man go. After all, we had gotten what we wanted. Somewhat reluctantly, Martin complied and let go as we all watched at a certain distance.

The thief walked off muttering unrepeatable language and probably very shaken and surprised to have been the object of a chase by young boys dressed up in their Sunday best.

The poor lady had been following us all along and was visibly shaken. After she got her purse back, a friend of hers approached the scene of the struggle. He told us he had witnessed everything from his apartment building, and that he had called the police who would be arriving soon.

While waiting for the police to arrive, the lady expressed her thanks and surprise that we were at the right place at the right time. Of course, when the police arrived we had to tell and retell the entire event, giving a detailed description of the snatcher. Finally, all had been clarified and the police left to pursue the thief.

Once more, the lady showered us with her gratitude and thanked us again and again. She took down all our names and address after which we received a very nice letter and a generous donation a week later.

It is true that there was some risk in what we did. But we returned to the Academy that Sunday feeling we had a little more of the hero in ourselves. We all went to bed that night feeling very good. For indeed we had done a good deed.

By Keith Douet
10th Grade

April 20, 2004

Dear Mr. Ruerena, Cesar, Martin, Kieth and Thomas,

Sunday, April 18, 2004 is a day that will stand out in my memory for the rest of my life.

Two things happened within three minutes of one another that represented opposite ends of the spectrum - evil on the one hand and genuine goodness on the other.

I will never be adequately able to express my gratitude to all of you for so unselfishly intervening on my behalf to retrieve my pocketbook. I still cannot believe the miraculous outcome.

Baltimore City is indeed a dangerous place. I should know, having worked in one of the most affected areas for nearly seven years. In spite of my knowledge, I did not fully absorb the consequences of walking unescorted with a purse. I guess I never believed anything would ever happen to me. Well, it did, and despite the fact that you successfully recovered my belongings, I will never take such a chance again.

I feel very strongly that a good education is the foundation for a bright future and wish each and every one of you success and fulfillment in the years ahead.

With my sincerest thanks,

Ann O'Connell

Letter of thanks for chasing down the "purse-snatcher."

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Students Comment on *THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST*

"The movie clearly shows that even when a great sinner sins, he is still able to ask for pardon from Our Lord. St. Peter was one of those who committed a sin, and his sin was denying Our Lord not once, but three times. Judas also committed a grievous sin. Unlike Judas, however, St. Peter sought forgiveness from the Mother of God and then wept bitterly. St. Peter ended up in eternal happiness because of this act of repentance, while Judas ended up in eternal misery because he did not seek forgiveness but despaired. A good example for all of us."

Alexander Goldsborough, 8th Grade

"The thing that struck me most about Mel Gibson's film, was the way he portrays Our Lady's participation in the passion of her Son. When Jesus was struck, Our Lady asked Mary Magdalene 'Why is this night different from all others?' Throughout the movie a person can see the pain that she was going through just by looking at her face. At a certain point she was waiting for Jesus to pass by. When Saint John tells her that Jesus is coming, she cannot hear him very well because of the pain that she was going through."

Bernard Slobodnik, 9th Grade

"In *The Passion of the Christ*, Our Lady's compassion for Our Lord is brought out in many ways. One way is when Our Lord is being interrogated by the Sanhedrin and she looks with great compassion. Her gaze is full of sorrow, and as she looks about the courtyard, it seems as if she is looking for a person to go and help her Son. Another example is when Our Lord is being scourged. Our Lady looks on, her eyes full of sadness. One cannot help but think that the enormity of the sins committed against Our Lord wound Our Lady's heart so much that she feels as if she were also being scourged."

Jose Ferraz, 10th Grade

"I was struck with the thought that there

was a certain contrast and similarities between the action of St. Peter and that of Judas. An important aspect of their similarities is shown during the passion. Both commit the atrocious sin of betrayal towards Our Lord. St. Peter denies Christ three times. Judas betrays Him by selling Him to the Pharisees. But there is a fundamental difference between the actions of the two afterwards. St. Peter repents and begs the forgiveness of Our Lord and Mary. Judas, on the other hand, falls into the temptation of the devil and despairs. Thus we learn a valuable lesson that despite the sin of both men we can follow St. Peter's example of humble repentance and know that Christ will forgive us."

Keith J. Douet, 10th Grade

"What called my attention the most, was the great contrast between Pilate's weakness and cowardice in contrast with Veronica's strength and courage. For instance, even though Pilate was the ruler of Jerusalem and had total power over the soldiers and the people, he was afraid to do something that was against the wishes of the people. He even asserted his stand on the matter when, after having finished his interrogation with Jesus, he went before the people and said, "I find no fault in this man." But, because of his weaknesses and self-interest, he decided to be rid of the matter and hand Jesus over to the mob to be crucified. On the other hand, Veronica had an undaunted courage which led her so far as to go into the midst of the brutal Roman soldiers to succor Our Lord and wipe the sweat and blood from His Divine face."

Martin Shabler, 10th Grade

"When Our Lord's holy hands were chained to the pillar He did not complain or try to free Himself, which He could have easily done because He was God, but prayed that God the Father would give Him the sufficient strength and courage to endure such a mer-

ciless scourging. The two torturers scourged the Divine Body with a diabolical hatred first with rods of bamboo to cover His body with welts. Then they scourged Him with a whip with hooks to open the welts. During the whole scourging Our Lord did not yell once."

Patrick Stein, 8th Grade

"Mr. Gibson portrayed something that was very impressive. The film faithfully demonstrated the disposition of Our Blessed Mother throughout the Passion. According to Venerable Anne Catherine Emmerich, Our Lady 'suffered everything with Him in spiritual contemplation.' Although the sight of Jesus suffering caused her extreme anguish, she bore her cross as she watched her Son carry His. Our Lady knew that this was the plan of God, and therefore consented to it in humble submission."

Stephen Duncan, Class of 2004

"In the newly released film *The Passion of the Christ* the love that Our Lady showed for Jesus Christ is tremendous. An example of this might be after the scourging when the wife of Pilate gave Our Lady some towels. When she saw Jesus' blood on the ground she knelt down and started to gather all of it up. The Blessed Mother did not want even a drop of Jesus' blood to remain on the ground. Another example of His Mother's love for Him was during the carrying of the cross. Whenever Jesus looked at her she would look back with the tender love of a mother."

Thomas Appleby, 8th Grade

"The scourging at the Pillar: The scene starts out when Pontius Pilate ordered Our Lord to be scourged. Then while Our Lord is tied up a crowd gathers in a walkway to watch the scourging. Among these are Our Lady, Saint Mary Magdalene, and Saint John. When Our Lord begins to be beaten with wooden rods His expression was such that it showed He could have only done this because He loved us and He had to atone for us. When the torturers reached the end of the count of the blows they were out of breath, for they had put all of their strength into the beating."

Thomas Schneider, 9th Grade





A History-filled Field Trip



Going from the rolling countryside of rural central Pennsylvania to the busy streets of Washington, D.C. was quite an exciting thing for the students of St. Louis de Montfort Academy. Little did they know just how much history they would be seeing during their field trip. On the feast of our patron saint, April 28, the students visited the Supreme Court and the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

Approaching the impressive neo-classical Supreme Court building, the students had to weave through placard-bearing protesters, policemen and reporters. That day the Court was hearing the oral arguments for *Rumsfeld v. Padilla* and *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*, cases involving the detaining of American citizens as enemy combatants in the war on terrorism. After setting off metal detectors with their rosaries or candy money, the students quietly made their way into the back of the courtroom. Before them sat the nine justices of the highest court of the land. It was impressive to listen to the lawyers as well as to the justices, who would interrupt them with questions, often pointed and difficult to answer. The chamber was packed with spectators that included some senators. The students were also gravely awed by the fact that they were sitting in the very room where the infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision was argued. The boys were

roused from their reflections when Chief Justice Rehnquist slammed the gavel down adjourning the Court.

Moving away from political history, but unable to get away from the ubiquitous metal detectors, the students went to the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. The students admired God's creation in the form of animals and minerals. They looked up in silent amazement at the bare teeth and skeletons of dinosaurs like the Tyrannosaurus Rex. "I wouldn't want to meet one of those in the woods," one would say. "At least not without a very big dinosaur gun." Much less fearsome was the awesome gem collection. They must have had every precious metal and mineral known to man displayed there. Combining "natural" history and human history, the boys admired the dazzling dia-

mond earrings that once belonged to Queen Marie Antoinette of France. They also saw such famous historic jewelry as the "Hope Diamond" and the diadem of Archduchess Marie Louise of Austria, second wife of Napoleon Bonaparte.

As the boys learned during this field trip to the nation's capitol, history and nature are often inseparable. From the impressive stone of the Supreme Court building wherein historic decisions, famous and infamous, are made, to dazzling yet fateful diamonds, inanimate materials seem to come to life. Even the metal detectors, though hardly natural, were reminders of historic events. Next time, however, it would be best to leave the candy money in the piggy banks.

Stephen Duncan
Class of 2004



A group of students gather at the entrance hall of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C.

The Books We Read

Good books play an important role in the development of a Catholic boy's character. How fondly do we recall those stories of heroic adventure and virtue that provided us with food for thought, inspiration and occasions for grace? Every morning during breakfast, the students of St. Louis de Montfort Academy listen to one of their classmates as he reads aloud. Here are some of the books we have read this school year, which we recommend to our friends.

- *A Kingdom and a Cross; St. Alphonsus Liguori* by Helene Magaret
- *Dreams, Visions & Prophecies of Don Bosco* edited by Rev. Eugene M. Brown
- *The Great Siege: Malta 1565* by Ernle Bradford
- *The Life of the Very Noble King of Castile and Leon, -Saint Ferdinand III* by C. Fernandez de Castro, A.C.J.
- *The Wise Man from the West* by Vincent Cronin - The true story of the man who first brought Christianity to fabled Cathay, Fr. Mateo Ricci.

A Game of Shield Ball

Courtesy, affability, manners, justice, loyalty, and social sensibility are some of the qualities that games or sports teach according to the great educator of boys, St. John Bosco. We strive to develop these virtues when we play sports at St. Louis de Montfort Academy. Besides playing more common sports such as volleyball, baseball, soccer, or tennis, we also play a game called Shield ball.

The game takes its name from the goal: the shield. The shield is usually made of wood and is colorfully painted with a heraldic symbol such as an eagle or a castle. The main objective of each team is to knock down the shield of the opposing side with a ball the size of a soccer ball. The shield is propped up in the center of a circle about ten feet in diameter inside of which only the goalie may stand. The goalie guards the shield from the ball, which can come hurtling in from all angles. There are two shields and they are placed twenty yards apart.

The game begins by one side "kicking off" the ball, as soon as the referee shouts "Our Lady Help of Christians!" After both teams respond with a strong "Pray for us!" the battle begins. One team takes the ball and rushes towards the opposing side's shield. Players carry the ball, but may not kick the ball on the ground. A good team will pass the ball frequently among team members. Tackling the carrier of the ball is permissible. Once the player who has possession of the ball is on the ground, he must give it up. He may attempt to pass the ball to a team member, but he must toss it away as soon as he is clearly down. Play does not stop until a shield is knocked down, and either side can take possession of the ball at any time.

Teamwork is the key to success in this

game. The strategic placing of team players around the goal circle is often the best means to make a score. Team members pass the ball to one another around the circle until they see a clear path to the shield. It is almost impossible for the goalie to guard all 360 degrees around the shield when he is surrounded.

There are also opportunities for "solo" feats in this game. The goalies, while being helped by his teammates to keep the ball away from the shield, are practically all on their own when the ball is within close proximity. It is then that he often has to dive in order to keep the ball

Courtesy, affability, manners, justice, loyalty, and social sensibility are some of the qualities that games or sports teach according to the great educator of boys, Saint John Bosco.



Knocking down the shield is the object of the game.



Above: Shield ball played at the Medieval Games during a TFP Summer Course.

Left: "You are not getting by me!"

from hitting the shield. His reflexes must be very quick. At the same time, he has to be very careful not to knock the shield over himself. He gives the opposing team a point if he accidentally knocks it over.

Sometimes a player will run full speed towards the shield and make it look like he will throw the ball on one side of the goalie, but when he sees the goalie follow the bluff, he throws it towards the other unguarded side. A few very skilled boys have successfully knocked the shield down by running by the goalie and throwing the ball from behind their backs!

After the time is up, the referee announces the score and the winning team shouts the name of their patron, "St. Ferdinand!" or "St. Michael!" after which all respond with a hearty, "Pray for us!" Also, if a team has chosen a battle cry, they will shout something like, "It is better to be an eagle for a minute!" to which all will respond, "Than a toad for a lifetime!"

Jose Ferraz
10th Grade