

St. Louis de Montfort Academy Newsletter



SPRING/SUMMER 2005

Rome Eternal, of Martyrs and Saints!

by Thomas Schneider, 10th grade

During the Academy Easter break, Our Lady made it possible for a few of us to go on pilgrimage to Rome. Along with our headmaster, Mr. Ted Huerena, and a close friend and Academy graduate, Mr. James Bascom, I was one of the fortunate few.



We were in Rome for only twelve days and therefore did not see all we would have liked. However, we saw plenty, and there were three highlights of the trip that I would like to share.

The first highlight was our visit to Saint Mary Major, one of the four major basilicas of Rome. It is entirely dedicated to Our Lady.

On entering, I was amazed to see so many fabulous mosaics and paintings amid so much gold and marble. To have an idea

of the church's splendor, just bear in mind that the basilica's coffered ceiling is gilded with the first gold from Spanish America. The church fittingly houses the crib Our Lord used in Bethlehem. It is kept in a magnificent chapel in the crypt.

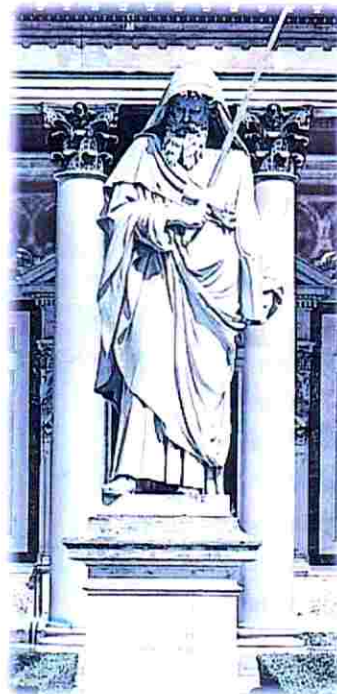


This relic together with the grandeur of the whole basilica astounded me.

The second highlight was our visit to the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls. This church is built on the site of St. Paul's tomb, which was beyond the city limits, and so the name. At the church entrance stands a large statue of Saint Paul holding in his right hand a sword, the weapon of his martyrdom. St. Paul radiates resoluteness and faith. The inside of the church glows at certain times of the day, when the light shines through the

alabaster windows. The mosaics seem to be on fire almost. One cannot but marvel.

As for the final highlight, on Holy Saturday we visited



the shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Genazzano.

Besides being one of the most touching depictions of Our Lady I have ever seen, the fresco of Our Lady of Good Counsel is miraculous. It is not attached to the church wall; it is actually "floating"! To pray before this fresco was one of the greatest blessings of the trip.

St. Peter's Basilica was most impressive, of course, but the crowds of tourists made it difficult to appreciate.



The trip from beginning to end was a real gift from Our Lady, full of religious and historical lessons as well as graces.

The City of Our Lady of Good Success

by John Paul Willett, 11th grade



In January of this year, I had the honor of going to Quito, Ecuador, to help move the famous statue of Our Lady of Good Success. For part of the year, the statue is kept in the church of the Conceptionist nuns; the rest of the time it is in the cloister of the convent. Getting it back and forth takes a few strong men.

The statue dates to the sixteenth century, when the Blessed Mother appeared to Sister Mariana de Jesus Torres, a nun of this convent. The Queen of Heaven gave her prophecies about the twentieth century and the mass apostasy and chastisement the



world would go through. She also requested the making of the statue, which an angel completed.

Quito is full of magnificent churches built by the Spaniards and the natives. Of the many churches that I was able to visit, one stands out as the most spectacular: the Jesuit church.



Its colonial exterior is similar to that of other churches in the city, but the interior of this house of God--recently restored--is unmatched for its beauty and splendor. The main and side altars are inlaid with gold. The sunlight

streaming in through the dome and nave windows, light up the interior in a way I had never seen in a church.

I knelt to pray and reflect. The glory that filled the church made me think of Heaven. If God's house here on earth can be this beautiful, what must His Kingdom in Heaven be like?

Though the stay in Quito was a short one--just a few days--it showed me the faith of the Ecuadorean people over the centuries, and it inspired me to have greater devotion to the Mother of God, especially through the invocation of Our Lady of Good Success.



Braving the Cold for the St. Dominic Savio Gym

The conversion of a large farm building into a humble gymnasium named after St. Dominic Savio is finally finished. It could never have been done without the help of our donors. Among them, Joseph, Gabriel and Dominic, sons of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Jordan, deserve special



mention.

One cold winter day, to help raise funds for the gym, Joseph and Gabriel

played their trumpets in front of the local Walmart while Dominic turned the music sheets for them. They raised \$200!

Many thanks to these brave boys and to all who generously donated to this project that will bring many hours of joyful and healthy exercise.

Servus Dominae Nostrae



"Slave of Our Lady"
by Benjamin Garcia,
10th grade

"The more we honor the Blessed Virgin, the more we honor Jesus Christ, because we honor Mary only that we may the more perfectly honor Jesus, since we go to her only as the way by which we are to find the end we are seeking, which is Jesus."

St. Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort



The consecration of oneself to Jesus Christ through Mary according to the method of Saint Louis de Montfort is highly recommended by the Church.

When I first heard of the practice, however, I was reluctant to adopt it right away, since it requires such a radical giving of oneself.

Maybe what most encouraged me to take the step was the realization of how difficult it is to be good in the world today. I sensed that more than ever I needed Our Lady's special protection. Without her what would I be?

The answer was easier to accept when I thought of St. Alphonsus de Liguori's reminder that we are dust, or "food for worms," as he puts it. I decided I would entrust myself entirely to Mary for the rest of my life.

Mary is the Mother of God and mediatrix of all graces. She

deserves total devotion, the kind of devotion Our Lord showed her during His earthly life.

An important guide to understanding why we should consider giving ourselves to Mary is the book *True Devotion to Mary*. Here St. Louis de Montfort explains in detail why Mary deserves special honor and how it is through her that we can obtain perfect love of Christ, like the love she had for Him.

As I gradually prepared through prayer and study for my consecration to her, I felt extremely happy. Our Lord had chosen Our Lady as the way to come to us. I was choosing Our Lady as the means to go to Him. He had given Himself entirely to her, and I too would give myself entirely to her. She, in turn, would take me to Him. I was going to be Our Lady's slave of love and she would forever be my protectress.

There were seven of us making the consecration. We chose February 20, the feastday of Our Lady of the Great Return (and of the Fatima seers Blessed Jacinta and Francisco Marto) for the actual consecration.

After attending Mass, we went over to the altar of Our Lady. Each of us had a parchment of St. Louis' prayer of consecration. We recited the prayer aloud and then signed our parchments. We were now slaves of Mary Most Holy.

Later, we received a symbol of our consecration in a simple ceremony. We renewed our baptismal vows and were given a red sash. The whole time I was telling Our Lady, "I am now yours, completely and fully."

I think that anyone who wants to be closer to God should consecrate himself as a slave of love to His Mother as I did.

To Jesus through Mary!

Fishing on Chesapeake Bay

On April 25, ninth- and tenth-graders went deep-sea fishing on Chesapeake Bay. Our boat, the *Lisa Ann*, was piloted by Captain Pete and Skipper Billy.

It was a clear and sunny day, and we were grateful for it, because bad weather had obliged us to cancel an earlier trip. All the same, we soon discovered how windy it can be at sea even on a calm day in port.

On the way out we saw barges, lighthouses, and cliffs all along the coast. We passed lots of seagulls too.

After a thirty-minute cruise at 20 knots, we began fishing. The first half-hour was uneventful. Then, suddenly, Skipper yelled, "Fish on!" One of us jumped to the line. After struggling for a

by Thomas Appleby,
9th Grade



while, he reeled in a big sea bass! Then came another yell, "Fish on!" Instantly, the next person grabbed that line. As the fish tugged at the lines, eager Academy boys waited to reel



them in. At one point, four of our thirteen lines had fish on them!

After three hours of fishing and more than enough fish to show for it, we headed back to port.

Fishing on the Chesapeake is a wonderful experience! At least it was for us.



From the e-mail

Subject: I'd like to say something...

My husband and I drove from our home near Coudersport, PA (almost 4 hours) to Harrisburg for the first Tridentine High Mass a few weeks ago. It was Mark's first and the first for me in many, many years.

Since then I have told every Catholic I come in contact with about Bishop Rhoades' generosity and the most holy Mass I have ever experienced. At least 6 people are awaiting the opportunity to get to Harrisburg to see what I am so excited about. I would love to bring a busload of youngsters with me. While we do have a few Latin Masses in our own

diocese, I feel that participation of the Academy boys is something far too awesome to miss.

I want to say to your young men who assisted Father Gabet in that particular Eucharistic celebration, that their posture and piety is something I will never forget. They were like soldiers, kind of a holy drill team. It was most wonderful and I want to thank you from the deepest part of my heart.

Even upon our entrance to the church, we were amazed at the sweetness, the light and the grace of the young man who greeted us. He, the altar boys, the magnificent all male choir, Father

Gabet and the bishop, of course, gave my husband and me a gift we will never forget. I emailed our gratitude to the bishop immediately upon our return home.

Mr. Kevin Ritchie of TJP and I met at the church. When I expressed my awe over all the young men we saw at Holy Mass, he told me about the academy. He is sending me several sponsorship forms to be used as support for some of your boys.

I will do whatever I possibly can to help the Academy. I will be in touch.

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam!

P.G.



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