

FROM THE BEES TO THE ROSES



The Magazine
of Saint Rita of Cascia

BIMONTHLY
OF THE AUGUSTINIAN
MONASTERY
OF SAINT RITA
OF CASCIA

NO. 2 MAR-APR 2014

TESTIMONY

The evolution of love

CASCIA EVENTS

Feast of Saint Rita

DIALOGUE WITH THE MONASTERY

**If the grain dies,
it bears much fruit**

**THE LOVE
THAT YOU BUILD**

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Thank you all!

Sr. M. Giacomina Stuani
Editorial Director

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of Saint Rita of Cascia
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Talking of relationship

“What does it mean that Jesus is risen? It means that the love of God is stronger than evil and death itself; it means that the love of God can transform our lives and let those desert places in our hearts bloom. The love of God can do this!”

These words from Holy Father Francis (Urbi et Orbi Message, Easter 2013) help me in talking about the theme of love that we touch on in this issue of “From the Bees to the Roses”. In particular, we focus on the love between man and woman to highlight the need to relate and the risk, that is always around the corner, of living folded in on ourselves.

Our times, in fact, lead people to be very focused on themselves, at work, in the romantic relationship, in every moment of daily life. And in this way, couples are likely to forget to make contact with whoever is next to them. To all women and all men who discover they are in love, a message that we would like to suggest is that of going all the way, towards the other, in the mutual gift of self, in the same way that the Son of God gave himself for us all the way, without sparing himself, with sacrifice, with boundless love.

Dear Friends of Saint Rita, the person we love is the centre of our world, is the most precious thing. The Pope reminds us that we are very important for God, we are the guardians of “all that the Creator has given us and gives to us”. So, if we do not forget how important the Lord judges us to be, we can more easily reciprocate His Love, giving love to those around us, starting with the person with whom we have decided to share a life project together. You should never “assume” the love that we receive. Rather, let us learn how to nurture it, generating ourselves from the other in turn. In a virtuous circle of mutual good and respect that makes up the foundation of what will become a family.

“This is what Easter is: it is the exodus, the passage of human beings from slavery to sin and evil to the freedom of love and goodness. Because God is life, life alone, and we are his glory: the living man”(Urbi et Orbi Message of Holy Father Francis, Easter 2013). This passage must be implemented in the here and now that we live in our daily lives for the people we love. The relationship between each one of us and God is a relationship of Love. So, I ask you to reflect on this and on an action: to commit ourselves together to pass from the slavery of “I” to the



The wedding ring of Saint Rita (in the foreground) is formed by two hands grasping each other, a symbol of the reciprocity and loyalty that love requires.

freedom of “Us”, to transform our lives and that of the man or woman we love through a simple, constant, small demonstration of daily love. Let us remind him or her how important he or she is for us, just as God the Merciful shows us how much we are for Him. Let us listen to her or him, as God hears our prayers. Let us confront ourselves with the person we love, facing the sacrifice inherent in relating to each other, as the God of Love confronts us, and does not shrink away, and sacrifices himself for us, and loves us even if we decide to turn away from Him.

Best wishes for a Happy Easter from our Community, from the Augustinian Fathers of Cascia, from the Beehive and from the non-profit Saint Rita of Cascia Foundation.

The evolution of love

by Monica Guarriello

This article is based on the testimony of a woman of 64 years, mother of three daughters.

It has just started to rain and we decide to stay in the parked car, In front of me are my three daughters – 38, 36 and 26 years-old. I see the desires of each one, and I would give anything for them, everything I could have done I have done, for good and for bad, for their happiness.

When the first was born, I had been married to Antonio for just a year. We had met down in the village, and I had always thought he was ugly. He had a huge tuft of hair on his forehead that I didn't like. But he kept courting me. And then, to catch my attention, he pretended to be going out with the most beautiful girl in the village. But I wasn't going to fall for that, just that I had fun being the object of his attention. And then he asked me to marry him, going against everyone in his family, who didn't want me because ignorance often commands the minds of people. He was poor, but I came from a family of "dons". Yes, because in those days, "don" was put before the names of important people, not just *Camorristi*. Don Pasquale, my father's name, was a middleman who did business by putting fruit growers in touch with wholesalers and taking a *mazzetta* (backhander).



***We knew
absolutely
nothing
about love
stories***

That's what it was called then and it wasn't anything negative.

The windows of the car begin to fog up, my daughters still have their lives to talk about. When I look at them, I realise that when I was the same age as the

youngest I had been married for a year and at the age of the oldest I had already had my three girls.

Yet I don't feel like blaming them. The things of life have changed, people have become smarter and have much more confidence in themselves than we could have had in our times. We knew absolutely nothing about love stories. Knowing a guy meant stopping to talk to him when you went out with your friends, going out

I would never have given up his company for life

meant walking through the village accompanied by a sister or a relative. And so love remained unstudied, not analysed, as they do today, analysing everything; it was a love of those that blossoms when you're very young. And then came getting married, and finding yourself in front of a man that you didn't really know so well, as instead they psychoanalyse today.

Shortly before the wedding, Antonio managed to



join the Guardia di Finanza (Finance Guard) and they sent him to Genoa. He married me and told me to stay at his mother's house until

things were settled down. But that made me angry until he agreed for me to go north to be with him. After all, I hadn't married the

THE WORD

by
Fr. Vittorino Grossi osa

For the love of Christ urges us on ... He died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them. If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! (2 Corinthians 5, 14-17)

The mystery of the Lord's Passover, from death to life, is reproduced in every believer in his passage, because Easter means 'passage': from living only for himself to living for others in the love that he has for Christ.



***Love is all
that we are.
And we are not
only beautiful***

mother-in-law; I loved him, and I knew that I loved him once I was aware that I might lose him.

I would never have given up his company for life. And so I left for Genoa and what a distant and surprising life we could have there. But nostalgia made him ask to be transferred and we moved to a town closer to his par-

ents. Over time, my daughters grew up and I and Antonio learned to know each other. As one of my daughters says, we did not have the instruments to do it without trauma, and so our lives drifted apart and overlapped, lived in parallel, then conversely. Repeatedly. Love is

not easy. The fable that they tell us when we're young is very far from reality. That is also there but it's only the first chapter of a book with many more pages. My love and that of Antonio is sacrifice, acceptance, endurance, not just pleasure and mutual exchange of affection.

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If you wish to receive the prayers of St. Rita or know more in real time about the charitable works of the St. Rita Monastery, send an e-mail with your name and surname to newsletter@santaritadacascia.org

But with my daughters, who instead are part of the era which reasons, I have understood that sacrifice, acceptance and endurance are not bad words. When love reaches that point of no return, it is not that it ends, but means that love is adapting to our bodies and our spirit, and thus becomes good and bad depending on how we are. Love is all that we are. And we are not only beautiful. We are always also a bit ugly.

Looking at my daughters, I realised all these things. I studied the pages of that book that I had not yet come to read. The oldest had met just one man, and as I had done, gave us a beautiful

granddaughter. She looks for herself in her family and in love that regenerates itself between stumbles and achievements. The middle one is living a journey in

Teach them that giving oneself is not frightening

search of herself; she frequents, as we say today, a man who would like to settle down, but her independence risks interrupting their relationship. The youngest has just rented a house to begin her "life as a single" and is with an adorable young man

who has helped her get back on track after a previous love story that destroyed her, because the guy she was going out with had deprived her of what it means to be important to someone.

My daughters are in full flow, dear Saint Rita. and I would like to entrust them to you, the patron saint of impossible things. Make them understand that love is this and the opposite of this at the same time. And it's like we are. Teach them that giving oneself is not frightening, even though you need commitment and sacrifice. They should learn that sacrifice is necessary, just as loving is necessary, which goes beyond our will, but which takes all our will for it to happen.

**TAKE
AND READ**

This book is the story of many journeys. It is the story of the journey of the Italian delegation that left Cascia to arrive on Brazilian soil in the town of Santa Cruz, on the occasion of the 54th edition of the traditional twinning of peace that the civil and religious institutions of the town in Umbria has been organising for nearly sixty years. It is the story of the journey of the Brazilian delegation to Cascia and Roccaporena for the feast of St Rita in May 2012.

But it is also the story of the personal "journey" of faith and conversion undertaken, thanks to Saint Rita, by the two writers: Marta Ferraro (Italian) and Adriano Nobrega (Brazilian). Two very different experiences and personalities who, without the twinning, would never have had the opportunity to meet and compare their stories and those of their communities, which are profoundly different and yet united in faith and devotion to the Saint of the impossible.

In the pages of their book, the two authors trace all the phases of organisation of the 54th edition of the event, describing it in great detail and with unpublished interviews with local religious and civil authorities, making this book a real historical document.

**Twinning.
Two cities, one faith**
by Marta Ferraro
and Adriano Nobrega,
Edizioni Segno, 2013



Throw-away humanity?

by Fr. Mario De Santis OSA, Rector of the Basilica of Saint Rita

Dear friends of Saint Rita, from this issue of “From the Bees to the Roses”, we will reflect together on important steps that the Church is taking under the guidance of Pope Francis, steps that all of us are called to make for “making Church”, in other words, building the dreamed of Church of our times.



Our historical moment in time presents us with an awareness: the certainties of everyday life are precarious, weak, debased in many parts of the world, and often also in our Western world, by a failure to recognise the fundamental rights that protect human dignity. The task of the Church, that is, of all those who make it up – and all of us believers are among them – is to spread the gospel of Christ who is Love, to “change direction” towards a return to the values on which a more equitable society that is respectful of every person is based. We priests want to be the first to move to help women and men who, loving each other, decide to undertake a journey together to enjoy those three delightful goods, as Saint Augustine says in his treatise “Of the Good of Marriage”: love between man and woman, the good of the children, and the good of marriage as a sacrament of the love of Jesus Christ for his Church (that is, for all of us). In their anxiety to love each other, young people today risk being deceived and

crushed by the “throw-away” logic. Pope Francis, our guide, gives his answer to young people: look for each other with tenderness, with simple and authentic gestures, and you will always enjoy loving each other. And it is precisely this, the invitation that I want to offer to the young people of the Sanctuary of Saint Rita, to the men and the women, to hold hands with tenderness, to not give in to those who want to spoil your most beautiful world, to really love one another, and to spread a culture of inclusion, of belonging and of mutual respect, which remains the reference point from which to start and where to arrive.

Pope Francis reminds us that

...masses of people find themselves excluded and marginalised: without work, without possibilities, without any means of escape. Human beings are themselves considered consumer goods to be used and then discarded [...] Faith also means believing in God, believing that he truly loves us, that he is alive, that he is mysteriously capable of intervening, that he does not abandon us and that he brings good out of evil by his power and his infinite creativity[...] Christ's resurrection everywhere calls forth seeds of that new world; even if they are cut back, they grow again, for the resurrection is already secretly woven into the fabric of this history, for Jesus did not rise in vain. May we never remain on the sidelines of this march of living hope! (*Gaudium Evangelii, Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father Francis*)



Birth of a devotion

edited by Natalino Monopoli

Testimony of the Saint Rita Prayer Group, Parish of Holy Mary Immaculate, Palagiano (TA)

Simple but poignant, with the flavour of faith and devotion in the land of Puglia, is how the testimony of the Saint Rita prayer group from Palagiano presents itself. Here are the spontaneous words of its coordinator, Ms Rocchina: "The decision to

cascin the local language, to be able to reach the highest parts of the vines, decided to make this journey to ask Saint Rita, who was from Cascia, to protect them from falls. We arrived in Cascia early in the morning, with a fresh smell in the air, and at that moment it was impossi-

ble not to think that the Lord had wanted to show us a part of paradise.

What happened during that pilgrimage is hard to describe: it seemed like Saint Rita was waiting for us, like a mother waiting for her children. That was the day in which this devotion to Saint Rita was born. We approached her story, made up of obedience to the Gospel; we tried to imitate her, coming closer to the weakest. Armed with this testimony, and under the leadership of our parish priest, the prayer group of Saint Rita was born.

Speaking about the Gospel is nothing, if you do not live it and it is not translated into fact: so the prayer group prays also with its work. In fact, the group has a volunteer centre that coordinates activities for young people with disabilities; along with them, we produce plays and works of art, games and catechesis". ■



go on a pilgrimage to Cascia was born eighteen years ago; a group of women working in the vineyards, who at that time use a crate, *called-*

***It seemed like
Saint Rita was
waiting for us***

JOIN THE PPU

Whether you are an individual or member of a group, join the PPU! In this way you will take part in our meetings, getting to know people like you devoted to the beloved St. Rita. For information, you can contact the Secretary General Alessandra Paoloni: piaunione@santaritadacascia.org

The love of will and freedom

by Fr. Victorinus Grossi OSA

The exhortation of Jesus to his disciples “And never be ye joyful, save when ye behold your brother with love” (Gospel of the Hebrews attested in Jerome, *In Ephes* 5.4) seduced St. Augustine throughout his life, leading him to his reflection on the city of two loves possible to the will of men, the city of God or the city of man who loves only himself, one intertwined with the other but, for a successful outcome, destined to love each other over the time of history whatever the difficulties. The Bishop of Hippo dedicates the twenty-two books of the *City of God* to

the theme of *The letter of love* (his commentary on the first letter of John).

In Augustine, will is the infinite field of human desires, all righteous and beautiful at the dawn of creation that offered freedom an infinite choice of good. When this was wounded by the forbidden fruit eaten by the progenitors, freedom was dropped in a field of infected desires. The beautiful in the life of Adam and Eve was transmuted into a drama for the whole human family. Expelled from paradise, man lost himself in love of himself. So it was that Cain, under the rule of a will no longer dominated by ordered love, killed his brother Abel. Man began to flee also from himself and, in that desperate flight where “pain is an ancient song, love is crushed, time is an assassin”, he began to pray to regain “Il cielo strappato” (The torn sky) (the title of the novel by Maurice Bonassina), screaming like Simone Weil’s unbeliever: “The unbeliever is like the child who does not know that there’s some bread somewhere, but cries of being hungry anyway”. For Augustine, man cries and prays to regain the health of his will, to be able to give back to his freedom the capacity of good. In *Confessions* (Conf. I, 1-5), Augustine prays:

“Great are you, O Lord, and exceedingly worthy of praise ... Despite everything, man, though but a small a part of your creation, wants to praise you. You yourself encourage him to delight in your praise, for you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you. How shall I call upon my God, my God and my Lord, when by the very act of calling upon him I would be calling him into myself? Who will grant it to me to find peace in you? Who will grant me this grace, that you should come into my heart and inebriate it, enabling me to forget the evils that beset me and embrace you, my



Bas-relief depicting St. Augustine, carved on the front door of the Basilica of St. Rita in Cascia.

only good? What are you to me? Have mercy on me, so that I may tell".

What indeed am I to you, that you should command me to love you, and grow angry with me if I do not, and threaten me with enormous woes? ... Late have I loved thee, Beauty so old and so new; late have I loved thee. Lo, you were within, but I was outside, seeking there for you."

Bearer and creator of love rediscovered with God and fellowmen is the Son of God, Jesus Christ: "The Lord, the teacher of love, came, he himself full of love, to recapitulate the word on earth, as He had predicted, and showed that the law and the prophets are based on the two commandments of love"(Commentary on the Gospel of John 17: 7).The Augustinian love of the will is not an archetype, it is the gift of God to man that enters the discipleship of the gift given-received. It is a given love that saves by forgiving, as there is in the Bible, in the manner of "the child who is born from a love". Love creates a child, otherwise there only remains a role carried out as a function that does not know the joy of meeting (Augustine's *frui*).In the era of the reign of the images, we are in a technological cocoon that shelters us from the past and from the future, as if there exists only the present, the fruit of functionality and efficiency. For those entering the school of Augustine looms the burden of constructing a spiritual space between Christian faith and modernity. There is talk of interior closed spheres, while human existence moves within a space breathed together, shared, open, able to be restored because man does not thrive in an autogenous greenhouse. This is the life of cancer, the cell that has lost contact with the whole rest and dies, devastating the other cells as well. Inside the human space open to the school of Augustine one speaks of love, of the love that qualifies life and history. Love lies in the heart of the will and freedom of men, external love is its fruit. All decisions of man are in the heart of his will, even those of God are laid there. Called by love, said Augustine to contemporaries terrified by the end of the days of the Roman Empire, Christians "generate Christian times" for everyone (Ser. 81).

SMILING AT LIFE

Send photos of your children to monastero@santaritadacascia.org with the consent of both parents for publication



1. Alessandro and Elena Martinuzzo, Caterina Guiotto, San Donà di Piave (VE) – Italy
2. Aurora and Federica Muscas, Villacidro (VS) - Italy
3. Benedetta Rita Caboni, Bolotana (NU) - Italy
4. Federico Armellini, Gemona del Fiuli (UD) - Italy
5. Gaia and Nicholas Cocco, Sardara (VS) - Italy
6. Giulia Sanna, Borgomanero (NO) - Italy
7. Isabella and Alma Cicerchia, Chacabuco (Buenos Aires) - Argentina
8. Laila and Antonio Ricca, Medford (Massachusetts) - USA
9. Luca and Anthony Cinelli, Hamilton (Ontario) - Canada
10. Océane Lionel, Bouffiuolx (Hainaut) - Belgium
11. Silvia Toneguzzi, Bussero (MI) - Italy
12. Simone Fiuzzi – Italy

APPOINTMENTS

edited by Fra Paolo Zecca OSA

Cascia (Perugia), 17 to 20 April Easter Triduum and Easter at the Sanctuary of Saint Rita

Holy Thursday:

17:00 - Mass in *Coena Domini*;

21:00 - Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament,
until 24:00.

Good Friday:

10.00 -In the Monastery of Saint Rita, we re-
trace the testimony of faith in the suffering of
our dear Rita through the procession known
as "Way of the Thorn".

17:00 - Celebration of the Passion;

21:30 - Procession of the Dead Christ.

Holy Saturday:

21:00 - Easter Vigil.

Easter Sunday:

Holy Mass will be celebrated at the following
times: 7:00 to 8:00 - 9:00 to 10:00 - 11:00
to 12:00 - 16:00 to 18:00.

Cascia (PG)-Cariati (CS), from April to May Twinning of Faith

The annual twinning, whose protagonists are
Cascia and an Italian or foreign town that has
in itself a strong bond with Saint Rita, takes
us to the 56th edition. For 2014, the town
chosen for the Twinning of Faith is Italian:
Cariati (Cosenza), in the Archdiocese of
Rossano-Cariati.

In April, the delegation from Cascia, headed
by mayor Gino Emili, will be received by the
Parish of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Cariati,
thus starting the celebrations which will end
in Cascia during the festival of Saint Rita
from 20 to 22 May.

Cascia (Perugia), from April to October Visits to the urn of Saint Rita

Every last Thursday of the month from April
to October, at the end of the 18:00 Holy
Mass, we will pay homage to Saint Rita by
joining a procession up to the Chapel which
houses her body. You are all invited to partici-
pate. Here are the dates for the visits to the
urn: 24 April, 29 May, 26 June, 31 July, 28
August, 25 September, 30 October.

Cascia (Perugia), May Marian month

To celebrate Marian month, every evening in
May at 21:00 in the Basilica of Saint Rita,
we await you for the prayer of the Holy
Rosary.

Cascia (Perugia), 4 May Feast of the Family

Holy Mass for all the families celebrating their
wedding anniversary will be celebrated at
16:00 in the Basilica of Saint Rita. During the
celebration, couples who are celebrating their
10th/ 20th/ 25th/ 30th/ 35th/ 40th/ 45th/
50th/ 55th/ 60th year of marriage in 2014 will
receive the Saint Rita Remembrance Scroll
and a rose. To receive the Scroll, it is essential
to be present and to book first at the Sanctuary
Information Office (tel. + 39 0743 75091).

Cascia (Perugia), May 12 to 20 Novena of Saint Rita

From 12 to 20 May, we will recite the Novena
of Saint Rita of Cascia, which prepares us for
the great Feast of 22 May dedicated to the
patroness of impossible cases.

Here is the schedule for the Cascia Sanctuary
(every day of the Novena):

15:30 - Welcoming of pilgrims;

16:00 - Confessions;

17:00 - Guided tour of the monastery;

18:00 - Holy Mass, followed by prayer in the
Chapel containing the body of Saint Rita.

Cascia (Perugia), 18 May Procession of the Standard

The Procession of the Standard which, by tra-
dition, is held on the Sunday before the Feast
of Saint Rita, will be held on 18 May, starting
from the Basilica of the Sanctuary of Cascia
at 21:00. Established by the Municipality in
1731, the procession is a thanksgiving re-
newed each year to Rita, to whom devote in-
habitants turned for protection from earth-
quakes in the eighteenth century. The stan-
dard (XVII century) carried in the procession
depicts the entry of Rita to the Augustinian
monastery.

FEAST OF SAINT RITA AT THE SANCTUARY OF CASCIA

20 to 22 May

▶ 20 May, Hall of Peace

21:00: Presentation of the women who will be honoured with the Saint Rita International Recognition Award 2014, moderated by journalist and TV presenter Benedetta Rinaldi.

The women of Rita, those women whose lives are very close to that of the saint of Cascia, chosen to receive the award are: **Elisabetta Parmegiani**, for having forgiven and prayed for the boy who raped and left her daughter dying outside a club in L'Aquila; **Mariella Cantamessa**, for having forgiven the man who ran into and killed her daughter on the side of the road while she was busy helping a young man who had been stabbed, in Trescore Balneario (Bergamo); **Maria Teresa Caviglia** of Sassello (Savona), for having been, together with her husband Ruggero Badano, by the side of her daughter Chiara during the painful ordeal that saw her die at the age of 19 (Chiara was beatified on 25 September 2010); **Anna Maria Brizzi** (Spoleto), for having faced, with determination and trusting in the Lord, the trials of life.

▶ 21 May, Basilica of Saint Rita

16:30: Solemn Eucharistic Celebration of the Augustinian Family, led by Fr. Alejandro Moral Antón, Prior General of the Augustinian Order.

17:30: Saint Rita International Recognition Award 2014. Father Moral consigns the recognition Scroll to Elisabetta Parmegiani, Mariella Cantamessa, Maria Teresa Caviglia, Anna Maria Brizzi, for having put into practice Saint Rita's values of forgiveness, care of the sick and acceptance of the cross.

18:30: Solemn Celebration of the Transit of Saint Rita, which commemorates the passage of our Saint from earthly life to that of Paradise, presided over by the Archbishop of Spoleto-Norcia, Mons. Renato Boccardo.

21:30: Arrival in the churchyard of the Torch, symbol of the **Twinning of Faith** which this year unites Cascia and Cariati (Cosenza), where the torch started its journey to the town of Saint Rita.

▶ 22 May, Feast of St. Rita

5:00: Start of Holy Mass in the Basilica of Saint Rita, with the joyful sound of all the bells of Cascia to honour the day of the Feast of Saint Rita. Mass will also be celebrated at 6:00, 7:00, 8:00 and 9:00.

10:15: Arrival of the Historical Procession at the Basilica. Leaving Roccaporena, the birthplace of Rita, at 9:00, the procession joins up with that of Cascia at the foot of the town to reach the Basilica together.

11:00: Start of the Solemn Pontifical and the **Supplication to Saint Rita** (after the homily) in front of the Basilica.

12:30: Blessing of the Roses (churchyard).

18:00: Last Eucharistic Celebration for Benefactors of the Sanctuary, with the choir of the Little Bees of the Saint Rita Beehive.

Saint Rita Spiritual Exercises House, Cascia (Perugia)

Take part in the courses planned for 2014

COURSES FOR PRIESTS AND DEACONS

30 June (lunch) –5 July

Patristic Institute "Augustinian"

Open to all priests and deacons

22 (evening) –27 September

International College of St. Monica

Open to other Augustinians

13 (lunch) –18 October

Mons. Giovanni Scanavino OSA

From faith to construction of the city and the church

(Encyclicals: Fidei Lumen and Evangelii Gaudium)

COURSES FOR THE RELIGIOUS AND CONSECRATED

23-28 June

Augustinian Province of Italy

Intermediate Provincial Chapter

3-9 August

Oblate Sisters of SS. Bambino Gesù

28 September - 4 October

Elective Federal Assembly of Augustinian Nuns

COURSES FOR LAY PERSONS

19-23 March

Tricarico Diocese

Mons. Vincenzo Carmine Orofino

4-6 April

Saint Rita Pious Union of Lombardy

24-30 May

German language course

P. ChristophWeberbauer OSA (email: christoph@augustiner.de)

16-22 June

German language course

P. ChristophWeberbauer OSA (email: christoph@augustiner.de)

28 July (lunch) –2 August

Fr. Remo Piccolomini OSA

St. Augustine teaches us to pray

14-18 August

Mons. Giovanni Scanavino OSA

One Rule for all, the joy of evangelisation

22-24 August

Course for fiancés

Don Gianmario Pagano

Contact: Sophie Alicino - mobile:

333.81.80.301 - email:

amicidisantapudenziana@gmail.com

1-13 September

German language course

P. ChristophWeberbauer OSA (email:

christoph@augustiner.de)

15 (lunch) –18 September

Friends and collaborators (including potential) of the Augustinians

Fr. Ludovico Centra OSA

10-12 October

Officers of Saint Rita Pious Union

Fr. Ludovico Centra OSA

21-27 October

German language course

P. ChristophWeberbauer OSA (email: christoph@augustiner.de)

27-31 October

Fr. Francesco M. Giuliani OSA

Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ? (Jn 4:29). Themes from the Gospel of John

MALE VOCATIONS

Young men in search of their vocation can spend periods of prayer and meditation on the Word of God and on fraternal life with Augustinian religious communities. Boys can call +39 0743 75091 (contact: Fr. Ludovico).

In its free time, the House willingly hosts groups organised by others.

The **fee**, including all living expenses, is € 40 per day (supplement for single room: € 8). When booking, specify whether you want single, double or triple accommodation.

Reservations should be addressed in a timely manner through

email: casaesercizi@santaritadacascia.org

Post: The Management, Saint Rita Spiritual Exercises House - 06043 Cascia (PG) - Telephone: +39 0743 71229 (number only active during the courses) or +39 0743 75091 Fax: +39 0743 76476



Feast of the Abbess

by Antonietta and Emanuela,
Little Bees of the Saint Rita Beehive

On 18 January, we celebrated the anniversary of the birth in heaven (or the death on earth, *ed.*) of Blessed Mother Teresa Fasce, the abbess who founded this magnificent Beehive. This year, the anniversary fell on a Saturday. So, because we would all have been away, back with our families, we decided to celebrate it on the following Mon-



Little Bee Laila welcomes the guest of honour of the feast, Abbess Sr. Natalina Todeschini, to the Beehive.



The cake prepared by the Little Bees.

day. On this day, we remember the figure of the Mother Abbess, who today is Sister M. Natalina. We Little Bees and the children of the Wildflowers left school early to have lunch with the Abbess, the Vicar, Sister M. Rosa, Sister Melania (who is the nun who lives with us) and with the bishop Father Giovanni (Mons. Giovanni Scanavino, *ed.*). The lunch was prepared by some Little Bees who had attended cooking classes. They made the noodles by hand, topped with a delicious sauce. For the second course there was turkey roll with a fresh salad. Then fruit, fruit cocktail and, last but not least, a beautiful and delicious cake made with the precious help of Mrs Vagna.

The cake was in the shape of a flower with a large bee in the middle and many small bees and butterflies around it. Lunch ended with a prayer and a blessing from Father Giovanni. At about three o'clock in the afternoon, we got changed for the recital that we had put on at Christmas, so that all the sisters could watch it. They were curious to see what we had prepared. We began with an opening song, then some of us took up positions to recite. The recital spoke of many important symbols of Christmas like: the figures in the Nativity Crib, Father Christmas, the *Befana*, presents, *pandoro* and *panettone*. To close, we all sang together, and then some of us improvised little ballets and played the accordion. The sisters had great fun and it was a really nice moment spent together. For everyone the message was: "It's Christmas every day and joy must be shared with those who are close to us".

Saint Rita for social issues

by Giulia Di Lauro

In December last year, the inhabitants of Facatativá, one of the oldest towns in Colombia, celebrated an important event: the fiftieth anniversary of the parish dedicated to St. Rita of Cascia. Devotion to the patron saint of impossible cases is very much felt in the country thanks to the work of the Augustinian Order which spread the message and values of St. Rita throughout Colombian territory. On 22 May, the day which marks the anniversary of the saint, there were great celebrations involving different regions of the country. However, the most solemn celebration took place in the municipality of Facatativá, which filled up on the occasion with devotees who came together to honour the saint of Cascia.

***On 22 May,
Facatativá filled up
with devotees***



The Parish of Saint Rita in Facatativá

RITA IS ALSO HERE



Country: Colombia

Town: Facatativá

Worth knowing: Facatativá is a municipality in the department of Cundinamarca, whose capital is also the capital of Colombia, Bogota. The town's name comes from the language of the Muisca, an ancient South American civilisation.

Here, as in other parts of South America, devotion to the Saint of the impossible is very much felt.

In connection with the special anniversary celebrated last year, an Augustinian father who works in the parish of Facatativá, Father Juan Alberto Cardenas, reports that his real goal is to make known the spirituality of St. Rita as a mediator of peace. Guided by this desire, Father Juan Alberto has promoted several social initiatives, in particular in the city of Barranquilla on Colombia's Caribbean coast.

***Making known
the spirituality
of St. Rita as a
mediator of peace***

THE OTHER FACE

STORY OF A CHILD SOLDIER

Pedro is a young Colombian aged about 30 who lives a life that could be called normal along with his family. However his past was not, unfortunately, exactly "normal". When he was only 8-years-old, Pedro was grabbed from his mother by the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia). Although he was only a child, he was trained for combat and sent to the front line, like a true soldier. He fought with the FARC for eight long years, then one day, during a round-up, the army captured him and took him to Bogota. It was at that moment that the fate of Pedro changed. From prison in the Colombian capital he was moved to Medellin, to Città don Bosco (Don Bosco City), the largest rehabilitation centre in Colombia dedicated to boys and girls with serious difficulties. At first, it was not easy for Pedro; he was haunted by nightmares, and often woke up screaming. But, with time and the care he needed, things have changed and now Pedro is married with a son and has a small business that makes furniture. Last year, the Città don Bosco rehabilitation programme for former guerrillas celebrated ten years of activity. Every day, it helps thousands of children and young people to regain their "normality".

There he started a work of charity in the name of Saint Rita, aimed at those women who, because of the economic and social difficulties they face, risk falling dramatically into networks of prostitution. The title of the project "Woman, you are not alone, take heart, get up and go" is already a great inspiration for those young people who struggle daily for a better future. Last year, also in Barranquilla, Father Juan Alberto organised the "Torneo de la Paz" (Peace Tournament), a football tournament in which each team participating represented a human and Christian value. The initiative,



In Barranquilla, Fr. Juan Alberto has started a project for women living in difficulty.

A work of charity in the name of Saint Rita, aimed at women

aimed at young people from Villanueva, the poorest district of the city, aims to promote unity and peaceful coexistence and, through football, to integrate the different areas of the district.

Thanks to these social works, recalling the values of the beloved Saint Rita, it is possible to bring a little peace to the troubled Colombia.



One of the works of charity for young people, in the name of Saint Rita, is the football tournament of Barranquilla

The seasons of life

by Fr. Giuseppe Caruso OSA

Each year, one after the other, the four seasons neatly follow each other: after the warmth of spring, which embellishes plants with shoots, comes the splendour of summer, the misty gloom of autumn and finally the damp chill of winter. We often like to compare the seasons with phases of our lives and the comparison is not meaningless because, in the course of earthly existence, we pass from youth, full of expectations and promise, like a spring, to old age, calm and silent like a winter night. This is the path taken by every person who lives a long life, even if today people often attempt to stop time in order to stay artificially young, erasing the signs of passing time at all costs.

Rita instead teaches us to live all of life's seasons well

Rita, our saint, instead teaches us to live all of life's seasons well, with awareness and wisdom. She also lived a youth full of expectations and hopes: as a girl she was passionate about the great ideals of the Gospel, with joyful and enthusiastic zeal, typical of the spring-like age. Rita's

Today, people often attempt to stop time

summer can be compared to her life as a wife and mother: the period of the shoots is followed by that of the fruit. Up to this point, the seasons seem to be beautiful and radiant for everyone; but the saints show us how to obtain the good even from those that appear less attractive. Autumn can be seen in Rita's widowhood: instead of shutting herself up in her pain, she committed so that from this would spring forgiveness, a forgiveness that came from

Basilica of Saint Rita, Cascia. The Glory of the Augustinian Saints, detail of Saint Rita with the angels (L. Montanarini).



THEY LIVE IN CHRIST

To you, O Lord, we humbly recommend these our dead, because as in their mortal life they have always been loved by you with immense love, so now, freed from all evil, they may enter by Your grace into eternal rest. Carry them to Paradise, where there is no more grief, nor pain, nor tears, but peace and joy with your Son and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sr. Agnese Baratti OSA (Monastery of S. Chiara, Montefalco, PG - Italy)

Alba Bao (Montecchio Precalcino, VI - Italy)

Anna Galì (Roccafluvione, AP - Italy)

Don Antonio Tassi (Loc. Grazie, MN - Italy)

Bruno Vetrò (Mississauga, Ontario - Canada)

Carlo Quintili (Terni - Italy)

Carmela Latora (San Giorgio di Piano, BO - Italy)

Didimo Martini (Dueville, VI - Italy)

Edoardo Daidone (Marsala, TP - Italy)

Emma Verdini (Pietrarubbia, PU - Italy)

Francesco Miccolis (Massafra, TA - Italy)

Francesco Moro (Montecchio Precalcino, VI - Italy)

Giordano Pasca (Ravenna - Italy)

Giovannica Marongiu (Sant'Anna Arresi, CI - Italy)

HonoréNsasiYabu (Democratic Republic of Congo)

Maria Bonato (Montecchio Precalcino, VI - Italy)

Maria Cozza (Montecchio Precalcino, VI - Italy)

Maria Zorzi Oceno (Castelgomberto, VI - Italy)

Sr. M. Monica Giovannini OSA (Monastery of S. Cris-
tiana, Santa Croce sull'Arno, PI - Italy)

Mario Sperotto (Thiene, VI - Italy)

Maura Bellano (Camerino, MC - Italy)

Pietro Dal Ferro (Levà di Montecchio Precalcino, VI - Italy)

Renata Anzini (Busto Arsizio, VA - Italy)

Rosalia Mariani (Cascia, PG - Italy)

Teresa Negrini (Verona - Italy)

Teresa Racis (Decimoputzu, CA - Italy)

Vincenzo Caccavale (Bari - Italy)

TESTIMONY OF ELOISA FERNANDA MARROCU (DECIMOMANNU, CA - ITALY)

I am a mother of five children. Unfortunately, at the end of July (2011), we discovered that the oldest, Angelo, had a chest tumour (even though he never complained). The situation was very serious. I invoked all the saints, asking all to pray for Angelo, who was to have to undergo a very delicate operation and thus lose an entire lung. You can imagine how I prayed the night before the operation and, as I did every night, I recited the midnight rosary with Radio Maria, then the one at 3 o'clock, and then, exhausted by fatigue and anxiety, I dozed off. At 6 in the morning, I felt a hand caressing me and I woke up. I saw a nun that I didn't know, very sturdy, who continued stroking me, telling me: "Wake up, the 6 o'clock rosary is about to start". There and then, I started praying. Afterwards, however, I said to myself: "I don't know this sister, I just prayed to Saint Rita". Then, looking closely at "From the Bees to the Roses", I recognised Blessed M. Teresa Fasce. It wasn't a dream, it was her, even though I'm still not quite sure if her clothes were black or grey, but the sweetness of her light and motherly hand have remained in my heart.

GRACE RECEIVED

fidelity to that Gospel which she had embraced with joy in her youth; finally, she closed her existence in the silence of the monastery, offering her Lord all that she had: herself.

At every stage of her life, Rita loved God and her neighbour; in every season, she tried to be a gift for those she met: and this is precisely why her existence was always – regardless of the seasons – rich in fruit. ■

PRAYER

O glorious St. Rita, who participated intensely in the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, obtain for me to suffer with patience and loving resignation the pains of this life and to be protected in all my needs.

If the grain dies, it bears much fruit

by Sr. M. Giacomina Stuani OSA

In each one of us, the paschal experience of Jesus becomes our “mystery of paschal grace, suffering, hallelujah, salvation”, “a space of welcoming and offering”. For Love alone! God loves man and the measures of this Love are particular measures, measures exaggerated by Love, measures without measure ...God is love: here is the salvation of man! This is put very well by one of the Eucharistic Prayers of the Holy Mass:



God is love: here is the salvation of man!

“Even when he disobeyed you and lost your friendship you did not abandon him to the power of death, but helped all men to seek and find you. Father, you so loved the world that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our Saviour. In fulfilment of your will he gave himself up to death; but by rising from the dead, he destroyed death and restored life” (Eucharistic Prayer IV).

After Bethlehem, the story of our journey takes us towards Gethsemane to “keep vigil and pray” with Jesus; towards Golgotha where the Christ we think, the beautiful one

Easter overcomes our sin

of the miracles, becomes the true Christ, the powerless who dies for love, because “if a grain of wheat planted in the ground dies, it bears much fruit (Jn 12, 27); towards the Heaven we reach after having given life until death; towards the purpose and not the end, to the goal which is to give life as free men and women, full of love, who make a covenant of love with God in this “today” of our history.

Don Tonino Bello accompanies us in our Easter journey with these words: “Let us be reconciled with joy. Easter overcomes our sin, shatters our fears and allows us to see sadness, disease, abuse and even death, from the right perspective: that of the ‘third day’. From this perspective, the crosses seem like antennas, placed for us to hear the music of heaven. The sufferings of the world will not be for us gasps of agony, but the pangs of childbirth.

And the marks left by the nails in our crucified hands will be the slits through which we will see as of now the lights of a new world”.

May our life be, in all its seasons, the daughter of this mystery of love, that is paschal and Eucharist; paschal in the essentiality and despoilment of the cross on Good Friday, in the silence of the tomb of Holy Saturday, in the joy of the paschal vigil, the mother of all vigils, in the light and

The darkness will give way to light

peace of the Risen. Eucharist in the service of bending the back to wash feet on Holy Thursday, in the humility of a small drop of water in the chalice, in the universality of a piece of bread which, having become an immaculate host, is broken for the whole world.

And then, as Don Tonino Bello continues, “the darkness will give way to light, the land will regain its colours and the sun will break through the clouds of Easter in flight”.

A legacy is a gift of love

Allocating a small legacy to the Saint Rita of Cascia Monastery means leaving a sign of your presence over time.

Thanks to these legacies, we support the “Beehive of Saint Rita” project, giving hope to all the children who will inherit your love.

Write to monastero@santaritadacascia.org and receive information on how to help children in difficulty who need you.

FEMALE VOCATIONAL ORIENTATION COURSE

Open yourself to the Truth, you will bring Life

from 18 to 23 August 2014

Monastery of Saint Rita, Cascia (Perugia)

Your vocation is witness of the Truth, discover it ...

Dear friend and sister, how many times have you repeated or wanted to repeat with the psalmist: Send out your light and your truth, O Lord: let them guide me?

The main way to rediscover the Truth is that of the heart. Widen your heart, give back space to what can help you indulge in a real and deep reflection on yourself, so that your vocation becomes the witness of the truth and leads to life. We are waiting for with your Bible, so that you may discover the Truth, meet it, welcome it and love it, together with other girls searching like you ...



For more information:
Monastery of Saint Rita of Cascia
tel: + 39 0743 76221
email: monastero@santaritadacascia.org

The afterlife scares me

Dear Abbess, what is eternity? And why, after our earthly life, whether good or bad, must we continue to exist in the afterlife? Up there, we are sure that we will not be bored? I often have this strange thought about the eternity of the soul and I fail to conceive that infinite life, it fills me with dread and almost unbearable fear! Why? (Luca)



Dear Luca,
we read in the Catechism of the Catholic Church that “God created us to know Him, love Him, serve Him in this life and in the other in Paradise”. God created us only through love and when love is true it is eternal, not even death can break it.

In Baptism, God has given us His life, the life of Grace: that is, God came to dwell in our hearts with all His love, He, God the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We are created in the image and likeness of God and carry within us the seed of eternity.

We yearn for happiness, life, eternity, because God created us capable of Him, “*capax Dei*” says St. Augustine, and because he created us through an over-

abundance of love, our being his offspring cannot end down here, it would be too little.

We do not want to die, we accept our poor humanity finished, because we are certain that death is not the last word, it is only the door to the real life that is eternal. And why should we get bored? St. Augustine says in Book 12 of his Confessions: “Heaven is your home where you contemplate and taste your sweetness, where you never tire and feel no need to turn elsewhere, where purified minds live unanimously in the bond of peace of the holy spirits, of the citizens of your city, up there in the heights of your heaven which is above our heaven”.


I think we have all experienced moments of great happiness, so much so that we wanted to stop time. When we reach our true Homeland, our Home will be Heaven, that is, the friendship of God, of Jesus, that we need no longer fear losing, and there will be endless happiness with Mary and the Saints, and with them we will live an immense joy for all eternity.

That’s why you need not fear, but with St. Augustine pray: “*O eternal truth and true charity and beloved eternity, you are my God, for you I sigh day and night*”. May God bless you and let you taste, even here on earth, a little piece of his Paradise.



THE ABBESS RESPONDS

If you want to share your hopes or fears or your doubts or happiness with us write to monastero@santaritadacascia.org, specifying your consent for publication of the letter. Mother M. Natalina will reply to everyone, either through the Magazine or in private.



It is our
task to let
them grow
serenely.

SUPPORT THE INITIATIVES OF SAINT RITA'S BEEHIVE WITH A DONATION

Here, every day, the nuns and educators lovingly take care of our Little Bees. They are girls from 6-18 years of age with a difficult past behind them for whom, thanks also to your help, we ensure the warmth of a home and the education needed to build a better future.

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alveare@santaritadacascia.org
www.santaritadacascia.org/alveare

Lets give
a nest to
those that
have none.

ESTROGENT

SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE HIVE OF ST. RITA WITH A DONATION

It is here that every day the nuns and educators lovingly take care of our young Bees. Girls between the ages of 6 and 18 who have a left difficult past behind them and for whom, thanks also to your help, we can ensure the warmth of a home and a better future.

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