



*The Bambino Jesus, from Rome*

**THE GUARDIAN OF CRUSADERS**  
Bulletin of the Eucharistic Crusade for Canada

December 2011 # 220

# LONGING FOR CHRISTMAS

Dear Crusaders,

Christmas is approaching. It is a great joy for both children and adults. We could really say that children and adults are longing for Christmas. Unfortunately, the reasons we desire Christmas are not always the best. We are looking forward to the Christmas tree, and for the things that are hidden beneath the tree! It would be a big mistake to care only about the gifts that we hope to get for Christmas.

A good Christian should not think only about material things. Christmas is much more than a family gathering where we exchange gifts. It is the birthday of the Child Jesus. Had Jesus not been born on Christmas Day, there would be no celebration on December 25<sup>th</sup>. Had Jesus not been among us, we would be all trapped in our sins. Nobody else would have been able to free us from sin.

It means that our desire for Christmas has to be focused mainly on the lovely Child Jesus who was laid in a manger in Bethlehem and who lays now in our tabernacles. Who would be able to teach us about the right way to think about Christmas? Certainly, it would be the men who lived before the coming of Christ.

The Jews were longing for freedom from sin. All their prayers and sacrifices were done for that purpose. Let us repeat like the faithful people of the Old Testament: “Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the Just!” Unlike the Jews, the pagans were in darkness, but one of them said nevertheless: “We need God to come and save us.” Remember the great joy of the three pagan kings of the East who witnessed of their desire for the Saviour before King Herod: “We have seen his star in the East, and are come to adore Him.”

However, we will not need to wait a long time like the Jews, or to travel afar off like the Three Wise Men. Jesus is coming to us within a few weeks, and we will find Him in the Nativity set during the night of Christmas. The same Jesus who was lay in a manger will come to our souls with His Humanity and Divinity, when we receive communion at Christmas. This will be the most beautiful Christmas gift, worth so much more than anything hidden under the Christmas tree.

Fr. Dominique Boulet

**\* On December 4<sup>th</sup>, a Mass will be said for the intentions of the Eucharistic Crusade in Canada**

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## ST. RITA OF CASCIA - SAINT OF THE IMPOSSIBLE



Rita was born in the village of Rocca Porena, Italy in the year 1381. Her father was Antonio Mancini and her mother was Amata Ferri. Her parents had not thought of a name for their little girl but during the night after her birth, an angel appeared and told them to name their child—“**Rita**”.

The day after Rita was baptized a swarm of white bees, such as have never been seen before, made their appearance. They buzzed about the Rita’s cradle, and after sitting for a moment on her face

they went in and out of her little mouth. And another marvel was that Rita did not take any milk at her mother’s breast on the day the bees were there.

Rita’s parents watched over her with much care so that she would not take a step off the road that leads to Heaven. But Rita’s parents need not have worried because by God’s special grace the girl loved to do God’s Holy Will and God had given her advanced wisdom for her age. Rita did not care to play children’s games as many children do. Instead she would pray, think about God, do penance and help her parents.

Rita did not love fine clothes and jewellery. Although she was very obedient to her parents, she became uneasy whenever they wished her to put on a piece of jewellery. She even used to run away at such times until she saw that her parents smiled and allowed her to go unadorned. She

was satisfied with her simple dress and took more pains to adorn her soul with virtues than make herself look pretty. By her simplicity in dress she set a wonderful example for girls her own age as well as for older ladies as well.

Our saint also curbed the desires that most women have to be curious and gossip about so many people and things. She would keep her thoughts occupied with the things of God. She also avoided all human conversation as far as good manners and obedience permitted.

Rita had a great love for retirement and prayer. Whoever wished to see her was certain of finding her either at home or in church. The church was her favourite place for prayer and there she would spend hours in meditation and devotions.

Our saint was not afraid to do penance. From her earliest years Rita chastised her body by different mortifications, and by fasting. And to please God even more, she gave her food to poor children in the neighbourhood. Not only did her spirit grow and become strong by the exercise of these beautiful virtues, but also her progress in all virtue was extraordinary.



In reality, Rita would loved to have lived the life of a hermit—away from the world, praying to God and thinking only about God and the things of God. But since she loved and needed to help her aged parents, she decided to make a room in the house into an oratory where she could pray and meditate. She decorated the oratory with pictures of Our Lord's Passion and there she would go to speak to Jesus and He in turn would speak to her heart. Thinking and meditating constantly on the Passion and Sorrows of her beloved Jesus, in the midst of tears, Rita's heart would be filled with Divine compassion and she

experienced that true peace and happiness of soul, which only God can give. She saw that the things of this world were as nothing and that the world traps us with its evil pleasures. Rita therefore resolved to have no part of this evil world and to become a cloistered nun.

*(Continued on page 9)*

## THE CHRISTMAS DONKEY

### *Little Talks to Little People*

A long time ago a donkey named Wilbur went looking for some water to drink and he found a well. But the water was very low in the well and he could not reach it. He tried and tried but still he could not reach the water. Finally Wilbur bent his knees to reach even further and suddenly tumbled into the well. The well was very large and round and he was able to stand up again. He had a drink but the old water tasted terrible. Then Wilbur realized that he could not get out of the well.

He pawed at the stones that had been used to build a wall up to the top of the ground. But the stones were all cemented together and Wilbur could not break any of them loose. What should he do? Then he started to bray. Wilbur brayed very loudly indeed and before long a farmer came near the well and saw that his donkey had fallen in.

***“Wilbur, it’s you! What shall I do?”*** cried Mr. Brenner.

He ran to get his neighbours and they all agreed that it would be impossible to get the donkey out of the well. They decided to fill the well with dirt so that no other animal could fall into the old well. But what would happen to **“Wilbur”**?

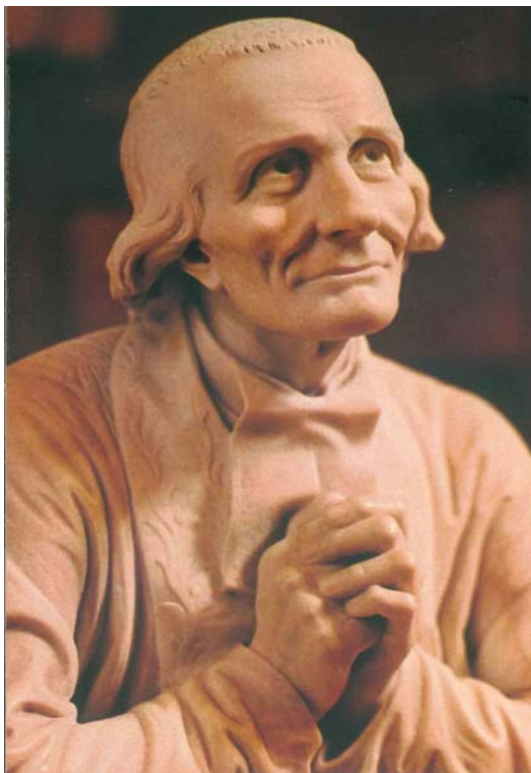
Mr. Brenner threw a lasso around Wilbur’s neck. The neighbours brought pails of dirt and dumped them into the well all around the donkey. Mr. Brenner coaxed his donkey to stamp on the dirt and step up. He did this by dangling some hay on a rope in front of the Wilbur’s mouth, for him to nibble on and by giving the other rope around Wilbur’s neck, a little tug. During all this time the children prayed to their guardian angels to help Wilbur get out of the well—for he was their special donkey.

Slowly, slowly, it was working. Wilbur was stepping up on the dirt and he was coming closer to the top of the well. The neighbours were tired from hauling the dirt and Wilbur was tired from stamping on the dirt and being in the well for so long. But finally after about five hours there was Wilbur out of the well and on solid ground.

The children brought Wilbur some apples and carrots to eat and a pale of fresh water. And they rejoiced knowing that he would again be used for their outdoor Christmas play. For Wilbur had a very important part in the play. On his back he carried a girl who acted the part of the Virgin Mary.

Prayer always helps—the children knew it and that is why they prayed to their guardian angels to help Wilbur get out of the well. They wanted their special donkey to be in their Christmas play just as he had always been. They wanted Wilbur to carry the Virgin Mary in their play for many more years. They loved doing this play every year because they loved the Christmas story. And the children wanted all the surrounding townspeople who came to see the play, to love the Christmas story as well.

## INTENTION FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2011



St. John-Mary Vianney, a holy priest

### Daily offering

(To be recited every morning when you wake up)

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer Thee all my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day, for all the intentions of Thy Sacred Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, and in reparation for my sins. I offer them particularly **for the holiness of priests.**

#### September 2011 Treasure Sheets

	Daily Off.	Mass	Sacr. Com.	Spir. Com.	Sacrif.	Dec. Ros.	Visit Bl. S.	15 Min.	Good Example	Quantity
NB & NS	82	15	7	4	60	100	0	1	38	2
QC	160	24	1	180	0	410	32	0	8	1
ON	955	212	161	770	1603	4680	169	278	1284	34
MB										
SK	213	38	38	202	975	1220	41	74	929	7
AB	147	35	34	104	213	766	62	144	171	5
BC	396	87	58	114	278	1292	52	1	97	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>1871</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>1370</b>	<b>3069</b>	<b>8368</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>2489</b>	<b>62</b>

**TREASURE CHART FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2011**

Day	Daily Offering	Mass	Sacr. Com.	Spir. Com.	Sacrifices	Decades of Rosary	Visits Bl. Sacr.	15 Minutes Silence	Good Example
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
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24									
25									
26									
27									
28									
29									
30									
31									
Total									

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**December 2011**

Total of the Month									
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To be sent to the secretariat of the Eucharistic Crusade, 1395 Rue Notre-Dame, St-Césaire, QC, J0L 1T0, or e-mail: [EucharisticCrusadeCDN@gmail.com](mailto:EucharisticCrusadeCDN@gmail.com)

# DECEMBER 2011

C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	G	Q	W	Z	A
Q	Z	E	M	A	R	Y	P	R	A	Y	E	R	U
V	Q	F	A	S	T	I	N	G	R	Z	X	O	G
C	H	U	R	C	H	Z	X	Z	D	X	Z	S	U
J	I	S	T	R	I	T	A	D	E	Q	P	E	S
E	T	E	Z	X	Q	Z	C	O	N	V	E	N	T
W	A	D	Q	T	H	O	R	N	J	F	N	Z	I
E	L	X	D	E	V	I	L	K	E	I	A	Q	N
L	Y	Z	X	A	S	I	N	E	S	G	N	Q	I
L	Z	X	C	R	O	S	S	Y	U	S	C	Q	A
E	B	E	E	S	S	I	C	K	S	Z	E	X	N
R	U	B	L	I	W	P	R	I	O	R	E	S	S
Y	R	G	N	A	Q	G	O	D	Z	D	I	R	T
T	E	M	P	T	A	T	I	O	N	S	X	Q	Z

**AUGUSTINIANS**  
**TEMPTATIONS**  
**JEWELLERY**  
**CHRISTMAS**  
**PRIORESS**  
**CONVENT**  
**PENANCE**  
**REFUSED**  
**FASTING**  
**WILBUR**

**GARDEN**  
**CHURCH**  
**DONKEY**  
**PRAYER**  
**ST RITA**  
**ANGRY**  
**THORN**  
**TEARS**  
**CROSS**  
**DEVIL**

**ITALY**  
**MARY**  
**JESUS**  
**ROSE**  
**BEEES**  
**DIRT**  
**SICK**  
**FIGS**  
**GOD**  
**SIN**



*(...Continued from Page 4)*

In time Rita told her parents that she had a vocation and that she wanted to join the convent. But her parents begged her not to abandon them in their old age and they in turn found a husband for her so that they could have her help from time to time. The man's name was Ferdinand. He was emotional and had a wicked temper and was the terror of the neighbourhood.

Hardly had a few days passed after Rita's marriage when her unworthy husband began to hit her and reproach and threaten her. Rita tried every means to please her husband but he was set in his brutal ways.

Two sons were born to them, the older son was named Gian and the younger son was named Paolo. But sad to say both sons inherited their father's quarrelsome and angry temperament. Rita shed many tears for them and prayed many prayers for them without stopping.

Rita bore all these crosses with love, patience and gentleness. At length she won her husband's heart and brought unity and love into their home. Whenever afterwards Ferdinand felt inclined to get angry, he would leave the house until his mind was calm again. Then one day, completely overcome by Rita's sweet gentleness, Ferdinand threw himself at her feet and asked pardon for all his faults and promised to correct his ways. He kept his promise and Rita thanked God for his conversion.

One day Rita received a heavy cross when her husband was carried home dead, covered with wounds. She never found out why he was killed but she forgave her husband's murderers. Broken hearted as she was, she resigned herself totally to God's Holy Will.

Poor Rita received another cross when she found out that her two sons wanted to find and kill those who murdered their father. So Rita in her agony and sorrow prayed that God would change her boys' hearts or that He would take them out of this world before they would kill somebody—for she did not want them to commit a mortal sin. Her prayer was answered, for soon her two boys became very sick. During



their illness, Rita nursed her boys tenderly and succeeded in bringing them to a better mind, so that they died forgiving those who murdered their father and they were also forgiven for their sin of desiring to kill their father's enemies.

Now poor Rita was left all alone in the world and she desired again to join the Augustinians. She tried to enter the Augustinian Convent at Cascia, but the Prioress told her that only virgins could join their convent—this was one of the rules. Rita tried three times to join the convent but every time the Prioress refused her admission.

It was about 1413, and Rita was nearly thirty-two years old. She kept on praying for she knew that God wanted her to enter the convent. And God answered Rita's prayer in a miraculous way through three saints that she loved—St. John the Baptist, St. Augustine and St. Nicholas of Tolentine. They appeared outside her house and took her to the Augustinian



Convent in Cascia. The locked door opened for Rita and let her into the cloister and then the door locked again.

In the morning all the nuns accepted Rita into their convent when she told them of the miraculous manner in which she arrived there. She became a novice and progressed in virtue and holiness. Some time later she took her vows and was an example of virtue to all the sisters.

One day the Prioress tested Rita's obedience and asked her to water a dead tree in the garden. Our saint did so and after watering the dead tree for some time it bloomed with flowers and began to bear fruit—God had rewarded Rita's obedience. And Rita continued in perfect obedience towards her Superior setting an example for all the sisters to follow.

The devil did not leave Rita alone and tempted her with sins of impurity. She was already pure like an angel but the devil wanted her to fall into sin. He even appeared to her in sinful ways in order to tempt her but she always overcame him by the sign of the cross, prayer and

penance. The devil even tempted Rita to think that she was a saint after she had overcome so many temptations, but Rita overcame these temptations by prayer and humility.

In 1443, when Rita was sixty-two, she heard a wonderful sermon about Our Lord's crown of thorns. Sometime later while she was prostrated in prayer before a huge painting of Christ Crucified, she begged Our Lord to let her share in his sufferings. Suddenly a thorn from the picture of the crown of thorns on Jesus' Head darted as quickly as an arrow into Rita's forehead. Rita fainted from the pain.

In time the wound grew larger, festered, and became wormy. It became an open wound with a terrible smell. Rita had to stay in a cell furthest from all the nuns so that they would not have to suffer from the smell. Rita rejoiced in her thorn wound because it provided more chances for her to practise humility, patience, retirement, silence, prayer and the love of God.



Because of Rita's prayers the wound healed in 1450 so that she could go with the other sisters to Rome for that jubilee year. But the wound came back after Rita's return from Rome

and remained with her until her death.

When Rita was seventy-two years old she became sick with an unknown wasting disease. But in spite of this illness, she always did much penance and would not sleep on anything softer than rough straw.

Roses, which are Rita's emblem and which are blessed in Augustinian churches on her feast day, refer to an old tradition. When Rita was nearing her death a visiting relative asked her if she wanted anything. ***"Yes,"*** said Rita. ***"I beg you to go to the garden of my house as soon as you reach Rocca Porena and pluck a rose there and bring it to me."*** Her friend was doubtful as it was January with its snow and ice, but

she went anyway. When she arrived in the garden she saw on the rose bush, a red rose in full bloom. She hurried back to the convent and gave the miraculous rose to Rita who gave it to the nuns. Another time her relative came and asked if she could do anything for her. **“Yes”**, Rita replied. **“Bring me two figs from the garden.”** The visitor hurried back and found two ripe figs on a leafless tree. She brought these to Rita and everyone rejoiced at the goodness of God.

Shortly after the miracle of the roses and the figs, Jesus and Mary appeared to Rita, who was longing for Heaven. They told Rita that in three days she would be taken to Heaven. Rita died May 22, 1457. After Rita’s death, a nun saw her soul ascend toward Heaven, the wound on her head now looked like a shining jewel and a heavenly perfume flowed from it. Rita’s body took on a supernatural beauty, her cell shone with a beautiful light, and the convent bell rang by itself.



Since her death, St. Rita’s body is incorrupt. St. Rita has worked very many miracles since her death and she will help you as well.

Note: In an old wall opposite the convent, special bees with red on their back live in this wall. These bees hide and fast for eleven months and appear only

on those days dedicated to the Passion of Our Lord and certain Augustinian Feast days. They are indeed St. Rita’s Bees.

St. Rita—Pray for Us

*The End*

