

MICHAEL'S LETTER

and

WHAT DEVILS FEAR MOST





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by

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MICHAEL'S LETTER

In 1951 Fr. Walter Muldy, a US Navy Chaplain, was invited to speak to 5,000 Marines at a naval base in San Diego, California. His subject was a letter that had recently been written during the Korean War. Having personally spoken with the marine and the sergeant involved in the incident, Fr. Muldy assured his listeners that the story he was about to relate was absolutely true.

This letter has since been reprinted in secular and Catholic publications. It is by a young American marine who wrote it to his mother in 1950.

Dear Mom,

I wouldn't dare write this letter to anyone but you because no one else would believe it. Maybe even you will find it hard but I have got to tell somebody.

First off, I am in a hospital. Now don't worry, you hear me, don't worry. I was wounded but I am okay you understand? Okay. The doctor says that I will up and around in a month.

But that is not what I wanted to tell you.

Remember when I joined the Marines last year; remember when I left, how you told me to say a prayer to St. Michael every day. You really didn't have to tell me that. Ever since I can remember you always told me to pray to St. Michael the Archangel. You even named me after him. Well I always have.

When I got to Korea, I prayed even harder.

Remember the prayer that you taught me?

"Michael, Michael of the morning fresh corp of Heaven adorning," you know the rest of it. Well I said it every day. Sometimes when I was marching or sometimes resting. But always before I went to sleep. I even got some of the other fellas to say it.

Well, one day I was with an advance detail way up over the front lines. We were scouting for the Commies. I was plodding along in the bitter cold, my breath was like cigar smoke.

I thought I knew every guy in the patrol, when alongside of me comes another Marine I never met before. He was bigger than any other Marine I'd ever seen. He must have been 6'4" and built in proportion. It gave me a feeling of security to have such a body near.

Anyway, there we were trudging along. The rest of the patrol spread out. Just to start a conversation I said, "Cold ain't it." And then I laughed. Here I was with a good chance of getting killed any minute and I am talking about the weather.

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My companion seemed to understand. I heard him laugh softly.

I looked at him, "I have never seen you before; I thought I knew every man in the outfit."

"I just joined at the last minute," he replied, "The name is Michael."

"Is that so," I said surprised. "That is my name too."

"I know," he said and then went on, "Michael, Michael of the morning..."

I was too amazed to say anything for a minute. How did he know my name, and a prayer that you taught me? Then I smiled to myself, every guy in the outfit knew about me. Hadn't I taught the prayer to anybody who would listen. Why now and then, they even referred to me as St. Michael.

Neither of us spoke for a time and then he broke the silence. "We are going to have some trouble up ahead."

He must have been in fine physical shape or he was breathing so lightly that I couldn't see his breath. Mine poured out in great clouds. There was no smile on his face now. Trouble ahead, I thought to myself, well with the Commies all around us, that is no great revelation.

Snow began to fall in great thick globs. In a brief moment the whole countryside was blotted out. And I was marching in a white fog of wet sticky particles. My companion disappeared.

"Michael!" I shouted in sudden alarm.

I felt his hand on my arm, his voice was rich and strong, "This will stop shortly."

His prophecy proved to be correct. In a few minutes the snow stopped as abruptly as it began. The sun was a hard shining disc.

I looked back for the rest of the patrol, there was no one in sight. We lost them in that heavy fall of snow. I looked ahead as we came over a little rise.

Mom, my heart stopped. There were seven of them. Seven Commies in their padded pants and jackets and their funny hats. Only there wasn't anything funny about them now. Seven rifles were aimed at us.

"Down Michael!" I screamed and hit the frozen earth.

I heard those rifles fire almost as one. I heard the bullets. There was Michael still standing.

Mom, those guys couldn't have missed, not at that range. I expected to see him literally blown to bits.

But there he stood, making no effort to fire himself. He was paralyzed with fear. It happens sometimes, Mom, even to the bravest. He was like a bird fascinated by a snake.

At least that was what I thought then. I jumped up to pull him down and that was when I got mine. I felt a sudden flame in my chest. I often wondered what it felt like to be hit, now I know.

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I remember feeling strong arms about me, arms that laid me ever so gently on a pillow of snow. I opened my eyes, for one last look. I was dying. Maybe I was even dead. I remember thinking- well, this is not so bad.

Maybe I was looking into the sun. Maybe I was in shock. But it seemed I saw Michael standing erect again, only this time his face was shining with a terrible splendor.

As I say, maybe it was the sun in my eyes, but he seemed to change as I watched him. He grew bigger, his arms stretched out wide. Maybe it was the snow falling again, but there was a brightness around him, like the wings of an angel. In his hand was a sword. A sword that flashed with a million lights.

Well, that is the last thing I remember until the rest of the fellas came up and found me. I do not know how much time had passed. Now and then I had but a moment's rest from the pain and fever. I remember telling them of the enemy just ahead.

"Where is Michael?" I asked.

I saw them look at one another. "Where's who?" asked one.

"Michael, Michael that big Marine I was walking with just before the snow squall hit us."

"Kid," said the sergeant, "You weren't walking with anyone. I had my eyes on you the whole time. You were getting too far out. I was just going to call you in when you disappeared in the snow."

He looked at me, curiously. "How did you do it kid?"

"How'd I do what?" I asked half angry despite my wound. "This marine named Michael and I were just..."

"Son," said the sergeant kindly, "I picked this outfit myself and there just ain't another Michael in it. You are the only Mike in it."

He paused for a minute, "Just how did you do it kid? We heard shots. There hasn't been a shot fired from your rifle. And there isn't a bit of lead in them seven bodies over the hill there."

I didn't say anything, what could I say. I only looked open-mouthed with amazement.

It was then the sergeant spoke again, "Kid," he said gently, "every one of those seven Commies was killed by a sword stroke."

That is all I can tell you Mom. As I say, it may have been the sun in my eyes, it may have been the cold or the pain. But that is what happened.

Love, Michael

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WHAT DEVILS FEAR MOST

CHAPTER 1



This is a true story about Saint Dominic. Yes, the same St. Dominic who, in 1214, received from Our Lady herself, the devotion we know today as the Holy Rosary. Why did he receive the Holy Rosary? Because he was at his wit's end and ready to give up hope on the stubborn Albigensians who plagued Europe and Dominic's life. Dominic didn't mind the part about his life, because he'd given it to convert them and save others from falling into their traps and errors. What was making him weary was the fact that his life's work was bringing about little fruit and countless souls hung in the balance.

You might logically be wondering what an Albigensian is. Albigensians are those heretics who believe in what is known as the Albigensian heresy. What is a heretic? To clearly know, you must first understand what a heresy is. When Jesus was on earth, before He ascended into Heaven, He taught His Apostles all the Truths they would need to know and believe in to be a Catholic and therefore to be saved. A heresy is a belief that denies or contradicts one or more of these Sacred Truths that Christ taught and made known to His one true Catholic Church. A heretic is someone who, after having been baptized into the Catholic Church, places themselves outside of it, by embracing and believing one or more of these heresies. To embrace heresy is to deny the Truths of the Catholic Faith. Unfortunately, heresies have grown and spread their error and rebellion since the early days of the Catholic Church. The twelfth century harvested its own new crop of error to erode the Faith of the faithful. This brings us back to the Albigensian heresy.

The Albigensian heresy consists of a number of errors. Not the least of which is the error in which they believe that, although Jesus Christ was sent from God, they deny the Truth that He, Himself, is the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity. They believe that everything material is evil and that only the spirit is good. Now, that cannot be true, because God created the material world and everything that He creates is good. What the Albigensians fail to see or believe is that it is Man's sin which causes the corruption of the physical earth as well as the moral disorders in the human race. They do not believe any good comes from the Catholic sacraments, and that it is not Baptism but their own ceremony known as the "consolation" which purges the soul from sin. Neither, according to their errors, will there be a resurrection of the body since it is "evil", even though the resurrection of the body is a Truth we profess in the Apostles' Creed. They believe that this world is the only "hell" and punishment for the human soul, not the battle for our salvation that it really is. Albigensians think that the soul will be liberated one day from its evil captor, the human body. Even plants and animals by their very nature are, in their heretical view, evil. Now these are not even all of their erroneous beliefs. Apart from the damage done by rejecting the Truths of the Catholic Faith, belief in such nonsensical ideas brings about horrible immoral behavior in its believers. According to the Albigensians, suicide is the most perfect thing to do to your horribly evil body. Why should murder be a problem if the flesh is evil? They consider it unlawful to have children, and Matrimony is popularly

abused and abandoned. As this horrible sect grew in population, its members were harshly pressed and instructed to stay absolutely faithful to the errors they had embraced. Hundreds of souls fell prey to their teachings and the Catholic Church found herself with few men who would shepherd these lost souls back into Christ's flock.

At this time of great need in the Church, when men were getting tired of fighting for the Truth and the laity were being deceived into error, God raised up Saint Dominic. St. Dominic fought the Albigensian heresy with all his might, while striving to convert the heretics and protect and instruct the ignorant. His brilliant speeches got him nowhere and his efforts were fruitless. The error spread and it seemed like Truth would be defeated. St. Dominic turned to the Mother of God for help. He fasted, prayed, and did penance for the Albigensians for three whole days. At the end of this period, he was so exhausted by the severity of his penances that he collapsed onto the floor. It was then that Our Lady appeared to him and gave him the fifteen mysteries of Her Most Holy Rosary. She said it was the "weapon the Blessed Trinity wanted to use to reform the world." She told St. Dominic to preach Her Rosary if he wanted to "reach these hardened souls and win them over to God." His heart full of joy, St. Dominic thanked his Queen and immediately set out to preach the Rosary. The difference was night and day. The grace given through the recitation of the Holy Rosary was so incredible, the only explanation was the intercession of the Mother of God. St. Dominic was greatly encouraged by the numerous conversions and continued to proclaim and promote the power of Our Lady's Rosary. Our story begins during one of his many sermons about the Rosary.

Once, in a place near Carcassone, over 12,000 people gathered to hear St. Dominic preach about the Holy Rosary. Before these thousands of witnesses, a few men interrupted the priest's sermon and pressed their way through the large crowd. "Father Dominic!", they cried, and the immediate circle of people surrounding the Saint split, creating a generous opening for the men who sought him. Hardly had Dominic seen them when he knew the purpose of their visit. In the company of these newcomers was an Albigensian, well-known for not only refusing to say the Holy Rosary, but publicly attacking its sacred 15 mysteries. The heretic instantly recoiled at the Saint's gaze and struggled violently to flee from his presence. The Albigensian was possessed by devils and his friends had brought the poor wretch to St. Dominic for an exorcism. The devils inside him knew this and dreaded the exorcism which would banish them from the heretic's body and back into hell. St. Dominic, instead of beginning the exorcism right away, decided to ask the devils some questions in front of over 12,000 witnesses. In spite of themselves, the devils were painfully forced to answer the Saint's questions. When he asked how many devils possessed this wretched man, they responded "15,000". The people shuddered and St. Dominic inquired as to why 15,000. To that, the devils said that every legion (thousand) of them had a right to him for each mystery of the Holy Rosary which he so foolishly and pridefully had attacked. The evil spirits continued to speak, saying how much they hated St. Dominic more than anyone else on earth, for the souls which he rescued from their wicked snares through the devotion of the Holy Rosary. They said that whenever he preached the Holy Rosary, he put fear and horror into the very depths of hell. The people were astonished to see the significance of the Rosary, which Saint Dominic had for so long, tried to convince them of. As the devils finished speaking, everyone watched and waited. Dominic wasn't done just yet. He carefully placed his Rosary around the possessed man's neck and asked the devils his final question.

CHAPTER 1

“Who, of all the Saints in Heaven, is the one feared most by all of you, and who should therefore be the most loved and revered by men?” Then came a reaction that even St. Dominic couldn’t have expected. The heretic threw himself back violently and began acting wildly. The devils within him let out such unearthly screams that seemed to echo from the very depths of hell. The thousands of people were seized with horror and a cold fear began to fill all their veins. As the demons’ shrieks continued to fill the air, many of the people fell to the ground, faint from fear...

CHAPTER 2

“Answer me!” Dominic said boldly. He had no fear of these cowards. The devils then tried to use all of their cunning and wiles to avoid answering his question. The heretic’s face grew long and melancholic as the demonic look in his eye changed. The demons had changed their tactics. Suddenly, from within the heretic came out immense cries of anguish and sorrow. The devils wailed so pitifully, that many of the people in the crowd wept, purely out of natural human sympathy. Amidst their weeping, the demons called out through the Albigensian’s mouth to St. Dominic. In heartrending tones, they pleaded with him to leave them alone.

“Dominic, Dominic,” they cried woefully, “have mercy on us. We promise you that we will never hurt you. You have always had compassion for sinners and those in distress; have pity on us, for we are in grievous straits. We are suffering so very much already, so why do you delight in heightening our pains? Can’t you be satisfied with our suffering without adding to it? Have pity on us!”

Hardly an eye in the crowd was dry, as the people wept in compassion for these supposedly innocent suffering creatures. But the demons were not interested in what the multitude thought. The demons did not accept the sympathy of the crowd but waited instead to see St. Dominic’s response.

“I will not leave you alone until you answer my question,” was the impassive response. The Spanish priest was not one bit moved with their emotional performance. The devils were enraged by their failure. They had convinced thousands of others to the point of tears and the one man they sought to fool had seen right through their lies. With great self-control the demon’s withheld their anger from the heretic’s face. Their clever minds had once again changed tactics. The Albigensian’s head stooped low and through his mouth a demonic compromise was proposed.

“We can whisper it,” the devils told St. Dominic, “so that only you can hear it.”

“No,” the Saint insisted. “You must speak clearly and out loud.” It was important for the people to hear it from the devil himself. To that, the demons had no reply. The Albigensian sat silent, deaf to the orders issued from the holy priest. They would not comply with that man’s wishes. No one would know who these cowards feared most. But the Spaniard’s determination was stronger than the fallen angels’. Having the humility and wisdom to not rely on his own strength, the priest took recourse to a greater strength than his. The crowd silently peered over each other, in anticipation of what would happen next. The devils were stubbornly quiet and seemed to be waiting as well. Everyone watched St. Dominic kneel down on the hard earth and raise his eyes to Heaven. A loving prayer came forth from his frustrated heart.

“Oh, all powerful and wonderful Virgin Mary, I implore you by the power of the Most Holy Rosary, order these enemies of the human race to answer me.” All was silent; but when St. Dominic finished that prayer, the crowd was startled by an unexpected burst of fire. Necks were straining, while others were cringing, as all reacted to a glowing flame which leaped out of the ears, nostrils, and mouth of the Albigensian. Everyone shook with fear, but the fire hurt no one. Dominic rose from his knees to listen to the devils, whose tongues had suddenly been loosened.

CHAPTER 2

“Dominic, we beseech you,” they cried, “by the passion of Jesus Christ and by the merits of His Holy Mother and of all the Saints, let us leave the body of this man without speaking further, for the Angels will answer your question whenever you wish. After all, are we not liars? So why should you want to believe us? Please don’t torture us any more; have pity on us”

They are liars, but God would be glorified with the Truth they would witness to. St. Dominic, slightly annoyed with their wailing complaints, briefly replied: “Woe to you wretched spirits who do not deserve to be heard.” He knelt down and prayed once more to his Queen.

“Oh most worthy Mother of Wisdom, I am praying for the people assembled here who have already learned how to say the Angelic Salutation properly. Please, I beg of you, force your enemies to proclaim the whole truth and nothing but the truth about this, here and now, before the multitude.”

Suddenly, the face of the heretic became calm. The demons actually grew quiet, so quiet in fact, that it took everyone by surprise. No one knew what to expect next, but they knew the battle was not over...

CHAPTER 3



he crowd grew tense. Their gaze went from the bent figure of the priest to the contorted person of the heretic. Everything was deathly still, the only movement coming from the Saint, who slowly raised his bowed head. Trouble fled from his eyes and a smile spread across his face. His eyes looked past the Albigensian without focusing on the crowd. A new multitude was visible to him, that of an Angelic nature. And there, surrounded by hundreds of Holy Angels was the Blessed Virgin Mary Herself. In Her slender hand, She held a rod of gold. She gazed lovingly into Dominic's eyes, giving him great interior consolation and joy.

With a slight turn of Her beautiful head, the Holy Virgin stepped towards the silent heretic. Without warning, She raised Her arm and struck the possessed man with Her golden rod. With a voice of incredible dignity and authority, the Woman commanded the possessed heretic: "Answer My servant Dominic at once."

The people watched St. Dominic's face reacting to what was happening, while they themselves were still unaware of their Heavenly Mother's presence. Suddenly, to the crowd's terror, a horrific cry, a hundred times more intense than before, came issuing from the Albigensian's mouth. With diabolical hatred, the demons began screaming at Our Lady:

"Oh You who are our enemy, our downfall and our destruction, why have You come from Heaven just to torture us so grievously? O Advocate of sinners, You who snatch them from the very jaws of hell, You who are the very sure path to Heaven! Must we, in spite of ourselves, tell the whole truth and confess, before everyone, who it is who is the cause of our shame and our ruin? Oh woe unto us, the princes of darkness! Then listen well, you Christians."

The crowd trembled at the frightful screams. Although they were glad at the demons' defeat, they could feel the hatred with which the devils were about to answer St. Dominic's question. So half in triumph and half in fear, they listened to the demons' reluctant revelation.

"The Mother of Jesus Christ is all-powerful," the fallen angels hissed, **"and She can save Her servants from falling into hell! Mary is the sun which destroys the darkness of our wiles and subtlety. It is She who uncovers our hidden plots, breaks our snares and makes our temptations useless and ineffectual."**

We have to say, because we are forced to tell the truth, that not a single soul who has really persevered in Her service has ever been damned with us. One single sigh that She offers to the Blessed Trinity is worth far more than all the prayers and aspirations of all the Saints.

We fear Her more than all the Saints in Heaven together and we have no success with Her faithful servants. Many Christians who call upon Her, when they are at the hour of

death and who really ought to be damned according to ordinary standards, are saved by Her intercession.

“Oh if only that Mary,” they disgustedly screamed, **“had not pitted Her strength against ours and had not upset our plan, we should have conquered the Church and destroyed it long before this; and we would have seen to it that all the Orders in the Church fell into error and disorder. Now that we are forced to speak, we must also tell you this: *no one who perseveres in saying the Rosary will be damned*, because She obtains for Her servants the grace of true contrition for their sins, and by means of this they obtain God’s forgiveness and mercy.”**

The astonished multitude gazed wide-eyed at their reluctant speaker. They were deeply moved by what the demons had said. And yet, hadn’t they heard something similar about Our Lady all this time? Partially in shame, the people, remembering his past exhortations, looked towards St. Dominic for what to do.

The Spanish priest did what he always had done. He turned to the Blessed Mother and led the multitude in the recitation of the Holy Rosary. Following the Saint’s holy example, the crowd prayed that Rosary as they never had before. With the greatest devotion, they slowly recited every decade. As the humble prayers poured forth from the earnest hearts of the assembled company, a wonderful thing happened.

One person at a time, the entire huge crowd came to realize that with each Hail Mary they prayed, a great number of devils left the heretic’s body. The demons were visible to the people only as red-hot coals which issued from the wretched man’s mouth. As the multitude finished the Rosary, reverently crossing themselves, the heretic sat still, freed at last from the devils which had possessed him.

Then Our Lady, who was still invisible to the crowd, gracefully raised Her hand in blessing. When the Blessed Mother bestowed Her blessing on Her erring children, a deep joy filled all of their hearts. Accompanying Our Lady’s blessing was a grace for everyone present and for the work of St. Dominic.

From that grace and the witnessing of the miraculous expulsion of 15,000 demons from the Albigenian, many heretics who embraced the same heresy that he had, were converted to the Catholic Faith. So great is the intercession of Our Lady, that they were further given the grace to join the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary. Thus was the security of their salvation strengthened, for as the demons themselves said, *“No one who perseveres in saying the Rosary will be damned.”*

How is this possible? Because the Queen of Heaven and Earth always obtains for her faithful, loving servants the grace they need to be truly sorry for their sins. In this way, they obtain God’s mercy and forgiveness and salvation. After the Redemptive suffering and death of Jesus Christ, the greatest act

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of God's mercy to poor, sinful humanity was the gift of the Blessed Virgin Mary as our Most Loving Mother and Most Powerful Queen. Knowing this, how could any sane person not begin to pray the Holy Rosary every day exactly as Our Lady has requested and beg God for the grace to love Her as much He desires us to? But then, as the Holy Bible tells: we each have a free will; we can choose life or we can choose death, we can choose Heaven or we can choose hell, we can choose to love and serve the Queen of Heaven and Earth or we can choose to ignore her (or worse). We each have a free will. We each have a choice to make.

We can join the demons in their hatred and rebellion, or in spite of them, choose to love "what devils fear most."

THE END

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