

# THE STORY OF THE MOTHER OF GOD BROTHERS

By one of them.

CARITAS + VERITAS

## Called to lead others to Jesus

' "God wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, himself Man, Jesus Christ who gave himself a ransom for all" (1 Timothy 2: 4-5), "neither is there salvation in any other" (Acts 4:1-2). Therefore, all must be converted to Him as He is made known by the Church's preaching. All must be incorporated into Him by baptism, and into the Church which is His Body.'  
*Vatican II Missions* (par. 7).

'The presentation of the Gospel message is not an optional contribution for the Church. It is the duty incumbent on her by the command of the Lord Jesus, so that people can believe and be saved. This message is indeed necessary. It is unique. It cannot be replaced. It does not permit either indifference or alteration. It is a question of people's salvation. It is the beauty of the Revelation that it represents. It brings with it a wisdom that is not of this world. It is able to stir up by itself faith - faith that rests on the power of God. It is truth. It merits having the apostle consecrate to it all his time and all his energies, and to sacrifice for it, if necessary, his own life.'  
(Pope Paul VI, '*Evangelii Nuntiandi*' par. 5)

All Catholics and followers of Jesus are called to spread the Kingdom of God with all the means at their disposal, and with all the gifts and talents they have received from God. Sometimes the Holy Spirit, Who gives life to the Body of Christ and all its members, calls some disciples to live the three vows of chastity, poverty (or self-abandonment to Divine Providence), and obedience, so they can devote themselves entirely to the Lord and His service.

The Mother of God Brothers' story describes how a number of young men were chosen to spread the Gospel and care for their brothers in need.

## **The History**

Michael Foran, the founder of the Community, was searching for truth and the meaning of life when he read the Gospels and Church history and came to the obvious conclusion that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, Redeemer of the world, and the Great Lover of every person. At seventeen years of age, he gave himself to Jesus and was baptized a Catholic. Soon after, he received a call from the Lord to found a Community, which would spread the Gospel to others who had not yet experienced God's Love and Redemption. As time went on several other young men joined him. In 1973 the small band moved from their native city of Auckland, New Zealand, to Sydney and then to Wagga Wagga in New South Wales, Australia. They continued to spread the Gospel by the spoken and written word. They also shared their community way of life with various people in need of Christian care and support.

The Bishop of Wagga Wagga at that time, Bishop Francis Carroll, took a special interest in the young group and in time, the Community became officially recognized as a Private Association of Christ's Faithful according to Canon 322 of the new Code of Canon Law. This recognition took place on January 1st, 1985, the Solemnity of the Mother of God, by Bishop William Brennan, the successor of Bishop Carroll.

## **The Apostolate**

The Brother's chief apostolate is to spread the Gospel of Christ as it can be experienced in full sacramental communion in the Church Our Lord founded.

Secondly, they aim to provide a Christian community for persons in need. To further this work of providing Christian care and support for persons in need, Bishop Carroll had made available to the Community a former orphanage at Albury in 1978. This orphanage was called *Guadalupe House*, and was the Mother House of the Community and home to 25 intellectually handicapped men, who shared in the love, care and purpose that a Christian community offers. At Guadalupe House everyone lived and worked together like members of a large family and everyone was treated with the respect and dignity that every child of God deserves. This is true of our new community called *Rosary House*.

The concern of the Brothers for justice and the welfare of every human being, has led the Brothers to take an active part in the pro-life cause. Several of the Brothers have led a daily vigil outside one of the biggest abortion chambers in Sydney for a period of over four years in the 1980's. Like all Catholics, they still continue to protest at the slaughter of the innocents in the womb.

The Brothers evangelize in a direct but sensitive way. They approach young people in parks and streets and ask if they are interested in talking about Christ and the Catholic faith. Sometimes they have worked with other evangelical groups like the Legion of Mary and talked to people in hotels, clubs and on beaches about Christ. They have discussed the Catholic faith with members of other Christian groups. Often a very fruitful dialogue has occurred. Usually the person who stops to talk with the Brothers is given a Catholic Enquiry Centre card and encouraged to see a priest if he wishes to find out more about Christ and His Church. He is also invited to keep in touch with the Community if he wishes.

At times, the Brothers have conducted parish visitations and catechetics in State schools.

### **The Urgency**

The Brothers' apostolate is to reach out to all those who need Christ's Love and Salvation. This means being prepared to go wherever the people go 'for the Son of Man has come to seek out and save what was lost' (Luke 19:10)

### **Special Devotions**

The Brothers have a special devotion:

to the Eucharist,  
to the Pope and the teaching authority of the Church,  
and to Mary the Mother of God.

They pay special honour to the Immaculate Heart of Mary as requested by Jesus Himself to one of the children of Fatima in the 20th century.

*Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us.*

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**WITH ECCLESIASTICAL APPROVAL**