

15¢
GFR 139.

BLESSED

MARTIN

DE PORRES



By EDDIE DOHERTY



Blessed Martin de Porres

By EDDIE DOHERTY

Madonna House, Combermere, Ont., Canada

COVER PAINTING BY ROBERT FRANKENBERG



CATECHETICAL GUILD EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

Spec
Capam

To the Rev. Norbert Georges, O.P.
and the Blessed Martin Guild,
141 East 65th Street, New York, N. Y.

Nihil obstat: JOHN M. A. FEARNES, S.T.D.
Censor Librorum

Imprimatur: ✠ FRANCIS CARDINAL SPELLMAN
Archbishop of New York

September 28, 1953

The nihil obstat and imprimatur are official declarations that a book or pamphlet is free of doctrinal or moral error. No implication is contained therein that those who have granted the nihil obstat and imprimatur agree with the contents, opinions or statements expressed.

COPYRIGHT 1953 BY CATECHETICAL GUILD EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

DESIGNED AND PRODUCED BY ARTISTS AND WRITERS GUILD, INC.

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A. BY WESTERN PRINTING AND LITHOGRAPHING COMPANY.

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY IN CANADA BY

PALM PUBLISHERS, MONTREAL.

Blessed Martín de Porres

1

THE BEST WAY to get acquainted with Blessed Martin de Porres is to ask a favor of him.

It is significant that in this most unbelieving of the centuries—in this day when even the most obvious truths of science are subjected to the microscope of doubt—more and more people should turn so confidently for help and comfort to a miracle-worker who died more than three hundred years ago.

It is significant that in this era of malice, bigotry, extreme nationalism and extreme hate—in this day when it is especially tragic to have been born a Negro or a Jew, or a member of any racial minority—so many millions call upon the spirit of a half-breed for their necessities.

It is significant that in this age of dictators—in this day of great power and mass slavery—multitudes should pay fealty to a humble Dominican lay brother who never had anything for himself and never wanted anything for himself.

It is significant that in this most terrible age of Christendom—in this day of blood-baths, purges, persecutions, widespread atheism, increasing diabolism, and mounting fear—so many men and women cling to hope and sanity through their faith in the kindness and love of Blessed Martin.

It is important to get acquainted with Blessed Martin, if one does not already know him. For it is important to get

acquainted with God, and Martin leads his friends to Mary, and through her, to her Son.

Martin de Porres was the son of a white man—a proud Spaniard, Don Juan de Porres, knight of Alcantara—and of a Negro woman whose people had been slaves.

Because he looked more like this mother's people than his father's, in color and features, he was called a Mulatto; and many white people despised and distrusted him.

White men and women throughout history have persecuted and enslaved the peoples of other races. They have always regarded themselves with the same self-esteem Christ condemned in the Pharisee who thanked God he was not as the rest of men. And they have always considered the child of two races as belonging not to both, but to neither. Therefore they have made him an outcast.

How many a time have we not read the phrase, "the worst vices of both races were in this crafty half-breed?" Evidently the writer has been inspired by ignorance and bias. He presumes that each race has its own particular vices; and that the white man's, being much "more civilized," can be more easily condoned. He is usually ready to forgive and "understand" such white men as Nero, Caligula, Judas, Hitler, or Stalin; but is only too often among the first to help lynch a Negro falsely accused of crime, or shoot a "skulkin' injun varmint" in the back.

The world does not yet realize that Christ is Black, and Red, and Yellow, and Brown, as well as White. He died to redeem all men and all men were to be brothers through Him. Whatever one does to the least of these brethren of His one does to Him.

The world does not yet realize that a servant of Christ

need not be ashamed to be called a half-breed since He, the Master, was labeled in ways that were much more insulting to His Divine dignity. The world does not yet realize what it has done to Christ in its treatment of His least brethren. Perhaps it does not care.

There is hardly a city or a hamlet where Christ has not been scourged, mocked, crowned with thorns, stripped, spat upon, or crucified in His little ones, His colored children, His humble half-breeds.

It is not possible that God the Father will look with patience and mercy much longer at the treatment accorded His Son in these countries He has blessed so graciously and with such abundance.

The world must get rid of its bias if it is to recover and live. Blessed Martin, who was a great doctor in his lifetime, is the physician God seems to have appointed to administer the emetic, since he cleanses many hearts by the favors he grants and the miracles he works, and has, therefore, become popular throughout the continent.

The world must repent of its sins against Christ in the Negro, the Indian, the Filipino, the Chinese, and the Jew. It must do penance in sackcloth and ashes, lest another half-breed—anti-Christ, both devil and man—turn its fabulous cities into dust and ashes.

It is most important to get acquainted with Blessed Martin de Porres. He, through his power with the Crucified *par excellence* and the beautiful Jewish maiden who gave Him birth, may save the world from all the hordes of hell!

It is related of Martin by many reliable witnesses, that he stood by the raging Rimac river in Lima, in 1634, and watched it in silence for a time. The flood grew ominously,

threatening the city, threatening particularly a church dedicated to Our Lady.

The people were in panic. They prayed aloud, but without hope. The river had destroyed many buildings on its way to Lima. What could prevent it from washing away this church, and from flooding the hundreds of homes and stores and shops in the vicinity? What could prevent it from taking hundreds of lives?

Blessed Martin stilled the panic with a smile and a prayer. He bade the hopeless to have confidence in God and His Blessed Mother. And then he picked up three small pebbles, in honor of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The first pebble he tossed at the edge of the flood. The second he tossed a little farther. The third he pitched into the furious foaming heart of the torrent.

Then he knelt, and the others knelt with him. And they prayed. The waters subsided as they prayed. The river became its normal self again. The church was no longer in any danger.

"We must do something to thank God," one of the men said. "We must build a big church to show our gratitude. But not here. We must set it higher up on the hill so that it will never again be in danger from a flood."

Blessed Martin told them that was nonsense.

"From now on," he said, "the river will behave itself. It will never endanger the church again."

An angry flood of atheism, a swollen red torrent, is gathering power and fury in the East, waiting to burst its dams and flood the western world. And every time a Negro is lynched, or jim-crowed, or is politely ignored anywhere, the reservoir of communistic devastation seethes with added venom.

It is impossible to say how many communist converts were made recently when the town of Cicero, Illinois—Catholics included—turned out to evict a Negro family. Cicero, that fawned on Al Capone and his hijackers, murderers, panders, and dope sellers, resented having an honest Negro family within its pure-white town limits!

Much has been done to swell that reservoir of murder in red Russia which is waiting to loose its waters on our land, with intent to wash away our temples, our churches, our cities, our civilization, our pride, our freedom, our very life; and to leave our soil covered with debris and slime when the red waters have receded.

When one hears that the skies are bleeding over Formosa, Indo-China, Malaya, Germany, and the Argentine, one will pray fervently to the "Holy Half-Breed," imploring him to check the flood before it reaches us.

With the pebbles of our prayers, Blessed Martin can still accomplish wonders. It is never too late to ask a favor of him, or a miracle.

But it is best to do it now!

HAD BLESSED MARTIN lived in our times he might have become as fervent a communist as any of those who died so eagerly for their religion of irreligion.

It is astonishing that he did not become an atheist, or at least a hater of Christians, in his own day and age.

Conditions were almost as intolerable in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially in Lima, Peru, the city of the Spanish conquistadors, as they are in the world today. His Eminence, Herbert Cardinal Vaughan, the great English writer, has given us a good idea of Martin's little world.

"The cruelties of the conquerors, the avarice of the merchants and their dependents filled Lima . . . with every kind of iniquity," he wrote. "The heat of the climate and its influence upon morals completed the corruption which surrounded the seat of government . . . Lima was without a hospital or refuge for the destitute. Men and women died without nurses, disease spread itself unchecked, children were exposed to death in the streets, poor Indians and Negro slaves died in holes and corners of want and neglect."

The Rev. Ignatius Smith, O.P., Ph. D., of the Catholic University of America, expands this idea.

"The motives and the hopes of life were wrong in so many of these adventurers, and in the poor who imitated them. They prized money and comfort, they lusted for pleasures

of the flesh, they thirsted for power and they craved political position and pomp . . . They gloried in their buildings and in their architecture. They prided themselves on their wealth. They boasted of their tramping armies and powerful armadas. They gloried in the raucous laughter that bespoke their licentious amusements. They disdained everything but physical health and beauty. They had forgotten that the Kingdom of God and the happiness of men were based on the opposites of these things, the opposites that were preached by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. As a consequence . . . the social conditions of the day were alien to the government of God."

Martin, rejected by his father and unloved by his mother—she could not help thinking that the child's birth was responsible for Don Juan's coldness to her—lived for his first few years in neglect, abuse, loneliness and abject poverty. He might have become a thief. He might have decided that the religion the Catholics preached was a good one, but apparently too good to live up to; and that what was needed was a religion to make the poor rich and the rich poor. He had a good mind. His intelligence was above the average. He might have become a noted reformer, a great rebel, the leader of a new cult or sect or philosophy or church.

Instead, he spent these early years getting acquainted with Our Lady and her Little Boy, growing in love for Them, and in knowledge of Them, growing in holiness and wisdom, and in the fire of charity.

Martin was born in Lima on December 9, 1579, in a house on the Street of the Holy Ghost. His father had him baptized the same day. Some years later, Martin's sister Juana was born. She too looked more like her mother's people than her father's. So Don Juan deserted the family. Now and then he

sent a few gold pieces to Lima, but not often, apparently, and not very many. It is recorded that Martin sometimes got into trouble because of those yellow coins.

His mother would send him out to buy food with them. Sometimes he met people poorer than himself and gave them the money. Sometimes he bought the food he was sent for, but gave it to people hungrier than himself. His mother punished him, but never could break him of the habit of giving away whatever he had to give.

When he was about eight years old, his father came back to Lima, and took Martin and Juana to Guayaquil. Martin stayed there two years and was taught to read and write. When he was ten, his father brought him back to Lima, had him confirmed, told his mother to have the boy apprenticed to a barber-surgeon, and deserted him again.

On his return from Guayaquil, Martin learned that his mother was living as a servant in the home of a rich Spanish woman. She had not much time to give him. Either she or Don Juan obtained a room for him in the home of Senora Ventura de Luna. There is no definite information about this; but it seems that for two years at least, between the ages of ten and twelve, Martin was thrown more or less on his own resources for a living.

Had it not been for the good Dominican and Franciscan missionaries who had followed the armies of Pizzaro into Peru, Martin could not possibly have risen above his environment, would not even have dreamed of making himself a saint.

The non-Catholic historian, Prescott, in his story of the "Conquest of Peru," gives credit to these missionaries.

"The effort to Christianize the heathen," he says, "is an honorable characteristic of the Spanish conquest. The Puri-

tan, with equal religious zeal, did comparatively little for the conversion of the Indian, being content, it would seem, with having secured to himself the inestimable privilege of worshipping God in his own way. Other adventurers who have occupied the New World have often had too little regard for religion themselves to be very solicitous about spreading it among the savages.

“But the Spanish missionary, from first to last, has shown a keen interest in the spiritual welfare of the natives. Under his auspices, churches on a magnificent scale have been erected, schools for elementary instruction founded, and every rational means taken to spread the knowledge of religious truth, while he has carried his solitary mission into remote and almost inaccessible regions, or gathered his Indian disciples into communities. . . .

“In reviewing the blood-stained records of Spanish colonial history, it is but fair . . . to reflect that the nation which sent forth the hard-hearted conqueror . . . sent forth the missionary to do the work of beneficence, and to spread the light of Christian civilization over the farthest regions of the New World.”

The lonely boy often visited the magnificent churches. They were cool and peaceful. There was a great silence in them, and a great beauty. And sometimes one heard missionaries preaching there.

It was in one of these churches that Martin de Porres found out that God loved him—loved him as much as He did the great ones of the earth. It was in one of these churches that he learned Christ had died for him, would have died for him alone, had there been no other fruit of His suffering and death; and that He had established the Church for him, and all the Sacraments.

It was a little hard to grasp at first, and more than a little hard to believe. Yet it was true, he knew. God loved the Indian, the Negro, and the white man with the same divine love. He loved the rich and the poor, the wise man and the dunce, the governor and the dirtiest beggar. And He wanted them all to go to heaven.

It was stupendous to realize that God loved the despised outcast child, Martin de Porres, as much as He loved the viceroy, or the saintly archbishop.

It was marvelous to know that God would never abandon him, as Don Juan had done. And it was most wonderful to discover that God's mother was also the mother of all men, even such an unwanted little half-breed as himself, and that she loved her children more tenderly than any other mother ever had, or ever would.

He didn't know it at the time, but he had entered the school of Mary Immaculate, the school of many saints; and he was learning, slowly, all that the Mother of Love could teach him. One knelt before her statue or her picture, in a church, in some wayside shrine, or in the darkness of the room provided by Senora de Luna, and communed with her in silence. And one learned. It was so simple.

She was Our Lady of Silence. She was the Woman Wrapped in Silence. She was the woman who "kept all these things in her heart," pondering them, tasting them, giving her pupils a taste of them, a love of them, a growing appreciation of them. She didn't need to talk. Martin understood, perhaps because Martin listened so avidly in the silence.

One entering her silence, entered her Immaculate Heart. And in that chamber he met Christ, Infinite Love!

Martin read books when he could get them, spiritual books,

books about Mary, books about Christ, books about the Holy Ghost, books about the saints. He pored over them at night, in the light of the stump of a candle. He meditated on them. He studied them thoroughly. The more one loves Jesus and Mary, the more one needs to know about Them. The more one knows about Them, the more one loves Them.

One night Senora de Luna, wondering why Martin burned so many candles, and why he was always begging her to save the stumps for him, peeked through the large keyhole into his room. She saw him on his knees, looking at a crucifix he held in his right hand, and weeping bitter tears.

The crucifix was Martin's best book, even as it was the best book in the library of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Not enough attention has been paid by Martin's biographers to these years he spent in silent nightly study. He worked hard during the day, especially after he became associated with Marcelo de Rivero, the barber. But no matter how hard he worked, nor how many hours, he found time for study and for meditation in the quiet of the nights.

It must have been in these silent hours, in the silence of Our Lady, that Martin laid the foundation for that love of God that overflowed into love not only for all men, but even for animals, and such insignificant and pestilential creatures as mice and mosquitoes.

It must have been in these serene evenings that he learned there was no limit to the progress a man could make in sanctity. It must have been then he gained his astonishing insight into the mystery of the Crucifixion; and first desired to share in it through penance, and mortifications, and sufferings of all kinds. It must have been at this time he obtained his profound knowledge of the Mystical Body of Christ.

It must have been then that he determined to show God how much he loved Him. He realized he could do this only by showing Him how much he loved his neighbors. He remembered Christ had said that even the pagans love their friends, and do good to those they like; but that a true Christian must love even his worst enemies. He would love and serve all people, the good and the bad, those who liked him and those who abhorred and ridiculed him, those who needed him and those who wanted merely to use him.

Is it any wonder that Christ Crucified, seeing Martin's love for Him, should show Himself through the boy, or that He should work such astounding miracles through him?

GOD BEGAN working through Martin when the boy was twelve or thirteen—about the same age as Christ was when He told His Mother He must be about His Father's business.

After he had served a number of Masses, every morning except Sunday, Martin hurried to the shop of Marcelo de Rivero, swept it clean, put all the jars of herbs and powders and pastes in order, and greeted those waiting to be barbered or doctored. There was more to barbering in those days than just cutting hair or shaving jowls or trimming mustaches. One set bones, tended wounds, dosed fevers, bled patients, and compounded various herbs for various diseases.

Martin found all this easy to learn. He found it easy because he was in love, and doctoring bodies was a way of showing his love. He added a special medicine to the barber-surgeon's too scanty supply—the medicine of unselfish love. Martin was a true realist. He knew that love could cure, sometimes, when all other remedies had failed.

Lima began to take more and more notice of the boy. He was a most peculiar boy. He went around in rags, but he wore them with as much distinction as the showiest warriors wore their armor and their plumes. He seemed to be content with a piece of dry bread and a little water, yet he always happened to have some bit of food to give a hungry man, or woman, or child—a great luscious orange, perhaps,

a double handful of meaty nuts, a delicious warm loaf of bread, or maybe a flagon of good wine.

Where did he get all these things? And how did he manage to carry them around without their showing? Nobody knew.

He was always smiling, as though he had fallen in love for the first time and was unable to think of anything but his love; yet he noticed things sharper eyes didn't see. And he had a touch that made one feel good, that evicted a pain or an ache, or made a wound quit throbbing and begin to heal.

Strange things happened. A man with a raging fever sipped a little water Martin handed him, and was cured within the hour. Another, stabbed in a dozen places, saw the boy sprinkle a little powder on him. He watched his wounds close. He walked away, wondering. An old woman came to Martin with a migraine. She went skipping home with a basket of food on her arm. Babies looked at him and smiled, and even the most desperately sick among them responded quickly to his caress on their foreheads.

Many people tried to give him money. Most of them he refused. They might give Marcelo de Rivero his just fees. They could give Martin only the few coppers he needed for his landlady.

When the shop was closed, Martin sallied forth to find the patients who had been unable to come to him. He visited the houses of the poor, the dark alleys of the slums where drunken men might be found—or men who had been robbed and beaten, or brawlers who had been shot or stabbed—and even the homes of the rich. Rich men suffered illnesses too, and broken bones, and terrible gaping wounds.

The good Samaritan was never too tired to help.

Martin de Porres, in the latter years of the Sixteenth Century, became the first lay social worker in the new world, the first lay apostle of Catholic Action in this part of the globe.

He was a layman and he wanted to remain a layman, feeling too unworthy ever to become a religious. But it occurred to him that he would bring more glory to Jesus and Mary if he wore Their livery, than he did now in his ordinary clothes. Some foolish people were attributing cures to him, not to the power of God.

If he were dressed as a Third Order Dominican, people would realize it was the Master who healed, not the servant.

The force of the word "servant" is lost to us today. When it was used by St. Paul, for instance, it meant not someone hired for a certain task, but a slave. It also meant a slave to most Catholics of Martin's day. And Martin considered himself as the slave of Mary and Jesus. He made himself a slave because Christ had first annihilated Himself, as St. Paul puts it, to make Himself our Ransom and our Slave. Martin knew he could never abase himself to such an infinite degree as Christ had done. But, he thought, he could try.

He believed himself unworthy of wearing the habit of St. Dominic, of being a son of that great saint, a layman son, a tertiary; but he realized that the Third Order was a way of sanctification for him. As a tertiary, he would share in all the merits of the Dominican priests, lay brothers, nuns, and other tertiaries throughout the world. He would become a member of a holy family.

Somehow the news of Martin's intention of joining the Third Order travelled all the way to Panama. Juan de Porres heard it, and was enraged. A de Porres make himself the slave of the slaves of the Dominicans? God forbid! Where was the boy's pride? If Martin had expressed a desire to be

a priest, that would be understandable. Once he was a priest he could soon become a bishop. And then— But a common, ordinary, lay tertiary! Not even as high up in the social order as the lowest lay brother in the convent! Was Martin mad?

There was some trouble about the matter, but Martin was permitted to don the habit Our Lady had chosen for the sons of St. Dominic, to be nothing but a tertiary, to live in the convent of the Most Holy Rosary, and to make himself the least servant of all the servants of God.

His earthly father didn't like it; but apparently his Heavenly Father approved most heartily, for He multiplied the miracles He performed through the child of the Black race and the White, the layman in the black and white robes of His Mother, His Daughter, and His Spouse, and of His beloved Son.

One of the first of these miracles centered about a patient in the convent, Brother Francisco Velasco, who, according to Dr. Cineto, was dying of dropsy. He had been placed in an isolated room in the novitiate and somebody had locked and bolted the doors at the hour stipulated in the rules. He was alone. He was in pain. He was burning with thirst, for the doctor had given orders he was not to have any water. It was wretchedly cold. The novitiate was not heated, and the night was bitter.

Then suddenly he was not alone. Martin was there, looking down at him with a friendly smile. His arms were laden with linen and sweet-smelling rosemary, and in his right hand he held a pan full of red-hot coals.

Immediately Brother Francisco began to feel warm and good. He no longer felt any pain. He no longer felt any thirst. Martin put down the brazier of coals, and the linen,

and the herbs. He took the novice into his arms, sat him on a bench, undressed and sponged him, put a clean linen tunic on him, changed the sheets on his bed and sprinkled them with the rosemary leaves. Then he put the patient back into bed and told him to go to sleep.

"You are not going to die," he reassured the young man. "You will be much better when you wake."

The novice could not help asking questions.

"How did you know I needed you so? How do you know I am not going to die? Do you know more than the doctor? And how did you get in here? The doors are locked and bolted. Have you a key?"

Martin answered only with a smile. The boy turned his head for a moment, and when he turned back to ask another question, Martin was not there. He had disappeared as mysteriously as he had come.

The novice tried to figure it out, but he fell asleep. Perhaps it was nothing but a dream, he thought in the morning. He stretched his arms and started to get up. He recollected himself. He was a dying man. Then he realized he was no such thing. He was more alive than he had been before. He was so full of life he wanted to jump out of bed and hurry to the chapel to thank God! But, he remembered, the doors were locked. He must wait.

Dr. Cineto came early that morning, with the novice master. He didn't believe what he saw. The patient was entirely cured. There was not the least sign of dropsy in him. What is more, he was absurdly healthy and ravenously hungry, and bothered about only one thing—how did that tertiary get into this room last night?

Father Andres de Lizon, the novice master, asserted again and again that both the first and second doors had been se-

curely locked. He had the keys in his possession. Nobody else had had them, even for a fraction of a second, during that night.

He was not as surprised as the others, however, to learn that Martin had apparently gone through the walls, with his vessel of burning coals as though he were a spirit, and the glowing embers and the linens and the herbs were spirits too. He had witnessed this phenomenon several times before. Many other rooms had been locked and bolted; but Martin had appeared in them suddenly, smiling, eager to help, and laden with all the things he needed—just as Christ had appeared to the apostles when they were together after the Resurrection.

Father de Lizon could have told the doctor and the novice many other tales of Martin; but he did not. He kept them to himself until the right time came, when he was called before the ecclesiastical court to testify in the process of Martin's beatification.

Juan Vasquez Parra, one of many of Martin's proteges, could also tell incredible true stories about the saintly servant of servants. Juan was one of the sick men Martin had found and brought to the convent. He made himself Martin's companion and servant; and though he probably knew more about Martin than any other man on earth, he said less about his wonders than almost any other man.

Juan's first acquaintance with the supernatural in Martin almost frightened him into insanity. He went tearing through the corridors of the convent crying with what breath he had for the porter, Brother Fernando de Aragones, to come to Martin's help. For a moment or two he had the porter in a state of panic. He was trying to tell the good brother something terrible about Martin, but all he could

do was stammer, tear at his hair, roll his eyes, and pull the religious with him back toward Martin's cell.

"He's kneeling before his crucifix," he managed to say after a time, "but he's kneeling in the air. He's kneeling upright, Brother, and with his arms stretched out. But he's three feet off the floor—or more!"

The good porter sighed with relief. Then he reproved Juan for scaring him that way.

"You'll see many a queer thing, being so close to that one," he cautioned him. "Keep it to yourself hereafter, and don't go frightening the wits out of everyone."

The intensity of his love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament often shone through Martin's clothing, or put such a fire, or such a blinding light about his head, that Juan was kept in a state of constant agitation. And Martin's love and sorrow for Jesus crucified often lifted him high that he might embrace and kiss some crucifix nailed on a wall, and wet it with a rain of tears. Juan saw this again and again; but he never quite got used to it.

WHEN MARTIN had been a tertiary for nine years or so, the Dominican provincial, Fr. Juan de Lorenzana, and the prior, Fr. Francisco Vego, decided he must become a lay brother.

In this year, 1603, Martin was twenty-four years old, and more than ever convinced of his unworthiness to become a religious. He, at first, begged them not to press this honor on him. He was more deserving of a crown of thorns. But, after he had listened to the silence of his Lady, he repeated her fiat to his superiors: "Be it done to me according to Thy word."

His love had already bound him with a golden chain to Mary and the Triune God. He already lived in poverty, chastity, and obedience. He could, of course, decide to marry, set himself up as a doctor, make a fortune, and become his own boss. He could do that and save his soul. He could do all that and even become a saint. But he realized it was better to give up all possibility, all thought, of such a worldly career, and to bind himself more tightly than he was already bound to Love Incarnate, and to Love's mother.

With the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, Martin became more than a slave to Love, and less than a slave—since he had, through obedience, given up even his will to be a slave. He was no longer a layman wearing a religious habit, an individual doing certain chores for the sake of love. He was simply a Dominican lay brother, one of a

group, one of a family, doing certain chores not only for the sake of love, but also for the sake of obedience. He was a self-less, will-less, desire-less part of a whole.

And immediately his duties were increased, even as were his graces. He had to sweep the cloister. He had to tend to all the laundry. He was made the infirmarian in charge of all the sick. He was given the tasks of ringing the bell, feeding the crowds of poor who came to the convent, cutting the hair of all the friars and postulants and novices and guests, cleaning the washrooms, and doing a hundred or more errands "in his spare time."

The provincial appointed him the official infirmarian of the convent, and Father J. C. Kearns, O.P., tells us in his biography, "this was no small obligation."

There were at this time, Father Kearns says, ". . . close to 300 religious, tertiaries, and retainers of one sort or another, in the large convent. . . . Moreover, it was the custom to bring the ill from the neighboring Dominican convent dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen to Brother Martin for treatment. Besides, in an adjoining wing, the slaves and servants who worked the land at the hacienda belonging to the Fathers were given over to Blessed Martin's medical supervision. . . . He took complete charge, not merely prescribing the needed remedies after diagnosing the causes of ailments, but also serving the sick with his own hands, ever manifesting such solicitude and sympathy that observers marveled."

Observers also marveled at the humility Brother Martin displayed. This virtue, the beautiful daughter of obedience and charity, accompanied him throughout his life, and is more talked about even than the miracles wrought through him by Love.

Monasteries and convents are different, in some ways,

than other places inhabited by men or women. The principal difference is that people enter them to become saints, but some have only the faintest ideas of sanctity. There were religious in Martin's time, just as there are today in various parts of the world, who were as cranky and crusty and hateful as people in the world. And they drew as strict a color line as some religious, and most of the laity, do today.

There were several of these in the infirmary when Martin was first put in charge. They resented him bitterly.

"What are you doing here, Half-Breed?" one demanded. "You don't belong in a convent. You belong in a jail! What idiot let you into my room? I'd sooner be touched by a snake than have you put a finger on me."

The poor priest's words had an amazing effect on Martin. As though they constituted the greatest compliment any one could pay him, he fell on his knees close to the patient's feet, and smiled at him.

"O Father, what keen eyes God has given you!" he said. "You have seen my sinfulness at a glance! I marvel at your patience with such as me. You speak truly, Father. But for the mercy of God I should indeed be in a penitentiary now."

The priest didn't like that. He thought Martin was being sarcastic. He made such an uproar that several other priests rushed in to see what had happened. They found Martin still on his knees, still smiling.

"It is all right," Martin told them. "My patient has discovered I am not worthy to kiss his hands. I therefore kiss his feet to show that I agree with him."

There were other patients who treated him with abuse and scorn. He tended these more tenderly and more promptly, and with more genuine love, than any of the others. He anticipated their wants, pulling mangoes out of his wide

sleeves when they wanted that sort of fruit, or bringing a salad of capers to one and a dish of berries to another, as though he had read their thoughts and knew how much they wanted those particular foods.

Despite the many duties given him to perform, and despite the attention needed by his numerous patients, Brother Martin found opportunities to go out into the city of Lima, begging, feeding the poor, running errands for poor men and women, and looking for people in any kind of need. Frequently, from these trips, he brought new patients into the convent, keeping them in his own cell as long as he could.

It happened that after he had brought in an old man covered with running sores, placed him in bed, and bathed and healed him, a crotchety lay brother came along. He arrived in time to see the old man go away cured. He peered idly in at Martin's bed. Suddenly he noticed that it was covered with blood and dirt and pus. It had an evil smell. It frightened and angered the lay brother.

"What do you think you're doing, you stinking yellow Mulatto," he cried, "bringing a contagious patient like that into the cloister! You want to kill us all? I don't trust any of you breeds."

This time Martin did not smile. He shook his head sadly. "Don't mind the stains on the linen," he said, "nor fear contagion. Dirty linen can be washed clean, and contagion can be halted. But hatred of a neighbor can be washed out of a man's heart only by tears and penance."

The lay brother was not the only one in the convent who objected to Martin's "unorganized" charity. They made numerous complaints to the provincial, and the latter made a final ruling.

"This is a cloister, Brother Martin," he said. "It is intended

only for religious, not at all for the laity. You must not bring anybody in here for treatment again. Surely there must be somewhere else you can take the patients you find outside."

Martin bowed in instant obedience.

"I shall take them, hereafter, to the home of my sister," he said.

"Good," the provincial said. "That will save us a lot of trouble. The ones who complained about you have a point. You could bring infection into the cloister, or troubles of many kinds."

Yet just a few days later Martin found an Inca bleeding to death in the street. He did what he could to staunch the flow of blood, then picked the man up and deliberately brought him into his cell in the cloister.

There he cured the man, as though by a miracle.

But the provincial was not impressed by this. Martin had deliberately disobeyed. That was a grave fault. Indeed it might be a most heinous mortal sin, since the brother had taken a vow of obedience.

There was no punishment great enough to expiate the enormity of such a sin. Lucifer, the brightest angel in God's heaven, and the first creature ever to sin against obedience, was cast immediately into hell, with all those who joined in his sin. And Adam and Eve, who were induced to disobey by Lucifer in the guise of a serpent, brought death and suffering and endless toil to themselves and all their children. Disobedience was born of the devil!

The provincial sternly reprimanded Brother Martin, therefore, and gave him the severest penance he could think of. Martin listened humbly to his superior's condemnation, saying no word in his own defense, and performed his penance with joy—because it was unmerited.

Sometime later he explained to his superior that it was a question of one man's life or another man's rule.

"Maybe I was wrong," he said, "but I knew the Indian would die before I could get him to my sister's home, whereas he might live if I could take him to my cell, which was so much closer. I thought that, in this case, obedience should yield to mercy, to charity. Was I wrong, Father?"

The provincial restrained a desire to hug the lay brother, to beg his forgiveness for the penance inflicted on him, and the harsh words he had said when he inflicted it.

"You acted in good faith, my son," he said gently. "And perhaps you did well. At any rate, in the future, be guided by your own common sense—and your charity."

AS SOON as it became known to the people of Lima that Brother Martin had been given charge of the convent infirmary, the sick who could walk, or hobble, or crawl, or get somebody to carry them, came to the convent doors. The infirmary became not only a clinic but a first-aid hospital—and occasionally something more. It also became a dispensary for medicines, clothing, and food. There were many among the patients who were suffering only from malnutrition, or hunger—and some whose bodies had been afflicted through exposure because they lacked the clothing that would have protected them against the inclement nights.

Now and then Martin was sent by his superiors to the farm at Limatambo. It seems these superiors thought Martin needed “the rest,” the tranquility and the pure fresh air of the country.

The place was not too far away. Every step of the distance was traversed eagerly by Brother Martin. He was going to see not only his brethren at St. Mary Magdalen’s, but also the servants and the slaves, the poor of the countryside, and the tired and sick work animals of the farm. Most thrilling of all, he was going to see his dear friend, Brother John Massias.

People who really love God are as rare as four-leaf clovers. And, like four-leaf clovers, they stand out clearly from their brothers and sisters in the patch, so that keen eyes cannot fail to see them. Also, where you find one you may find two or three, half dozen, or a score or more.

There were in Lima at this time, among the children of St. Dominic and St. Francis of Assisi, quite a few of these four-leaf clovers. Among them were St. Rose, St. Francis Solano, Blessed Sebastian Aparicio, Brother Juan Gomez, a very holy Franciscan lay brother who may someday be raised, like his comrades, to the altars of the Church, Blessed Martin de Porres, and Blessed John Massias. The latter two were beatified on the same day by Pope Gregory XVI.

Brother John, a sprig of the Spanish nobility, was a few years younger than Martin. St. John, the beloved apostle, appeared to him one day, he told Brother Martin, and bade him go to Peru. He had often talked to St. John and to other saints. He was glad to have Martin to talk to, and Martin was glad to have him. Blessed John was like Martin in many respects. He too fed the poor, took care of the sick and the unfortunate, and begged alms. He had trained a donkey to go around begging for him, loading itself with various kinds of merchandise and bringing it to the convent. The donkey trained himself to take care of all the goods placed by Blessed John's friends in his saddle bags. No thief ever tried twice to rob that clever beast.

Sometimes the two brother friars, the white man and the Mulatto, would talk for hours about the saints, about the loveliness of Our Lady, about the mercy and the love of God for sinners like themselves, and about the necessity of doing something for the love of God. Sometimes they would enjoy long hours of silence together, each knowing the other's thoughts. Sometimes they would take turns scourging each other with whips or chains or faggots full of thorns so that each in turn might experience something of the agony the Saviour felt when He was scourged for the sins of men.

Always, before he went anywhere near his bed on the farm at Limatambo, Martin would visit the servants and the slaves, help them in whatever tasks they might be doing, and then go into the barns and sheds to see what he could do for the animals.

“But you must rest, Brother Martin,” someone was always sure to say.

Martin would laugh at the sheer absurdity of that. Why, he would assert, he had done very little that day. In fact, in the eyes of the Lord, he had done nothing. Nothing at all. And that was terrible. For the devil could take advantage of that. It was surprising what the devil could do with nothing!

Once in awhile, when there were no patients in the infirmary, or none that needed special attention, Brother Martin would ask permission to visit Limatambo. He knew when his patients were going to die, and when they were going to live. He revealed this to a grouchy priest who complained he was being neglected. “Be glad if I seem to neglect you, holy Father,” Martin said. “It means you are going to recover. When you see me giving someone more than the usual attention, pray for him. Death is near.”

Frequently Martin would visit the bakeshop at Limatambo and fill the wide sleeves of his tunic with freshly-baked and fragrant loaves of bread. At such times, the wise ones knew, he was getting ready for a journey. They could only speculate as to the direction he would take, and the spot where he would land. One thing only they knew for certain. Those loaves were not for himself. They would be given to hungry people in China, Manila, Tripoli, Mexico City, Marseilles, or some other far-off place.

That seemed impossible, of course. But what was impossible to one so beloved of God as Martin?

Out of his love for God he had bewailed his indolence, his laziness, his inability to do any work at all. True, he swept the corridors until they shone. He cleaned the washrooms and lavatories. He collected the laundry, sorted it into piles, washed and ironed every piece, and distributed it to the various priests and brothers and novices and others. He cut hair for all the convent. He prepared meals for the sick and tended their needs. He operated. He sewed up wounds. He dosed fevers. He fed long lines of poor. He went into the city collecting alms. He did a hundred errands, and went out of his way to do a hundred favors. He rang the dawn bell. He rang the Angelus. He worked around the sacristy. He served a few Masses.

He usually had no sleep and only a bit or two of food, because he was so far behind in his work. Why was he only one man, capable of working only to a limited extent, and only for twenty-four hours a day? Why couldn't God multiply him, so that he wouldn't be such an unprofitable servant? If he could be in two or three places at the same time, or four or five or six, then perhaps he needn't feel so ashamed of his idleness.

"Lord, give me five or six bodies, instead of just this one ugly and shiftless set of bones and muscles; let me be a real slave to You, not just a pretense of a slave. There are so many people who need You, so very many all over the world. I could be helping them to find You, Lord, if I weren't such a poor specimen of manhood, so bound to my own lazy self. How am I going to save my worthless soul, Lord, unless I really work for You? If I weren't such a miserable creature I might do as much work for You as other men manage to do. But I need to be a half dozen men or more to equal any one of them!"

Such was the gist of his prayer. And, incredible as it seems, the testimony of many witnesses points to the conclusion that God granted that prayer in full.

Strangers coming into Lima from many foreign lands would spy Martin walking down some street. There would always be a crowd around him—a crowd of laughing children, or a crowd of needy and crippled and crying men and women. So there would always be witnesses to the stranger's meeting with Brother Martin.

—Always, according to these witnesses, the stranger showed amazement at the sight of the Dominican friar. "Brother Martin! But what are you doing here?" They would speak in Spanish, in French, in Italian, in some tongue nobody knew. The surprise in their faces made their words intelligible.

Frequently the stranger hugged Brother Martin in a mighty grip, and wept tears of joy all over his much-patched habit. And sometimes he would take notice of the children, or the adults grouped around the lay brother, and would say something to this effect: "Brother Martin comforted me many times when I was a slave of the Moslems." "Brother Martin is the one responsible for keeping us from starving in China." "Brother Martin did so much for the school in Manila." "The last time I saw Brother Martin I was dying. That was in Mexico City. I called for him, and he came. The door was locked, but he came in anyway. And he cured me."

Always Brother Martin tried to hush up such a man. Never did he succeed. Once Martin himself let slip the fact that he had attended a certain operation in a hospital in Bayonne. He was explaining to someone how he had learned a certain technique. It probably never occurred to him that he had revealed a secret.

Most of Martin's intimates knew something of his gift of bilocation; especially after they learned how the prior of the Convent of the Most Holy Rosary, needing Brother Martin, had sent five novices out to look for him. Each went to a different section of Lima. Each saw Martin. Each reported the fact. And, as they were talking, there was Martin in the midst of them.

So, when the brothers at Limatambo saw Martin stocking up on bread, they knew he would soon "take off" to feed the hungry in some corner of the earth they would never see—yet, at the same time, he would remain at Limatambo, though the bread would disappear.

They knew another strange thing too. No matter how much bread Martin took with him on these journeys that were and were not journeys, the baker never missed a loaf; nor did anybody else.

Which is easier to believe—that a saintly lay brother could make himself a cargo-carrier and, in a moment or two, transport himself from Peru to Europe or Asia, or anyplace else where there might be serious need of him—or that the same lay brother, with the mere touch of his hand, could cure a patient whom the doctors had advised to make his will?

The Most Reverend Feliciano de Vega, Archbishop-elect of Mexico City, visited Lima, in 1639, en route to his new see, and was stricken with a grave illness. The best surgeons in Peru were called to attend him. They gave him up, advised him to put his temporal and spiritual house in order and prepare to die. His nephew, the Rev. Cypriano Medina, (who later became a bishop, thus making good one of Martin's prophecies) then suggested that His Excellency call in Brother Martin.

"When he comes," he said, "command him to place his hand over those parts of your body where you suffer the most pain."

The prior at the convent sent for Martin, but no one could find him. Then someone remembered Martin had been at Communion that morning and, as usual, had gone somewhere to be alone with Love.

"Command him to come here immediately, under obedience," Father Medina suggested. The prior gave the command, and immediately Martin appeared. Father Medina took him then to the room where the archbishop lay dying.

Many people were in the room—weeping relatives and friends. They saw Martin place his hand on the patient as he was bidden; and saw the look of pain leave the face of the prelate. Within a few days the archbishop was well enough to go to the Dominican convent and beg that Brother Martin be permitted to come with him to Mexico.

Some of the brethren teased Brother Martin about the archbishop's esteem for him. One suggested the prelate might make a priest of the humble lay brother. Martin assured him that could never be. Another said Martin might take life easy in the Bishop's palace. To him Martin gave the classical answer that he would rather spend his life cleaning the lavatory in the convent in Lima than endure the luxury and idleness he might expect in Mexico. He meant no disrespect to the purple, nor to the gracious man who wore it; he meant only to say that he preferred his humble duties to all the honors that might be heaped on his shoulders.

WHICH is the easiest to believe, that through the infinite power and love of God a man can be in many places at once, that he can cross half the earth in the twinkling of an eye, that he can heal mortal illnesses by the laying on of hands, or that he can bring dead animals or dead men back to life?

One of the best attested miracles attributed to Blessed Martin was the resurrection of a dog—a worthless, blind, diseased, offensive-smelling animal that had been thrown out on the street by the procurator of the convent many times. The silly creature had come back again and again to its master. Finally the procurator had given orders that it be taken far away and killed.

When Martin heard about this tragedy, he went to the procurator and rebuked him with as stern language as he could command; and it is strange how stern the saintliest of men can be. Or is it strange? Christ Himself, when He was angry, said harsher things than had ever been heard before.

Martin brought the body of the faithful old dog into his cell, prayed over it, and saw it return to vigorous life. His brethren saw him take it out of his cell the next morning, and heard him talking while he fed it.

“You must remember one thing,” they heard Martin say. “That is—and remember it well—never go back to your un-

grateful master's service. He does not appreciate your affectionate devotion."

The dog lived for many years, the witnesses swore, and followed Martin everywhere. But whenever he caught sight of the procurator he fled.

There is no denying that Martin had some of the same love for God's lesser creatures that characterized the seraphic St. Francis. He never chased a mosquito or a gnat or a fly, even when the insect was feasting on his blood. It was made by God, he would explain; therefore, it had a right to live. If his blood sustained the wee beast's life, so much the better. Perhaps God had directed the little pest to light just there, knowing it was hungry. "And see," he would exclaim, "with what exquisite beauty God has endowed it!" He conversed with mules, and gentled the stubbornest of them. He pacified a mad bull on a rampage through one of the city streets, and tamed him in a second. He even made pets of fierce birds of prey.

Perhaps the best known stories about Blessed Martin have to do with his care for mice. There are so many stories of this type that some people fear they will obscure Martin's holiness. St. George, these maintain, is lost in the shadow of his dragon; and St. Bernard is hidden behind one of his big dogs. They do not want Martin overshadowed by a mouse.

It is true that Martin's dog, cat, and mouse, all ate amicably out of the same plate. It is true, according to the testimony of reliable witnesses, that Martin once freed a mouse from a trap, and ordered it to tell all its relatives and friends to leave the convent at once; and that the mouse obeyed, leading hundreds of others out to a shed where Martin fed them daily.

There are men and women all over the world who declare, on their honor, that whenever they ask a favor of Blessed Martin, and he decides to grant it, he lets them see a mouse. The humble little creature acts merely as a messenger, they claim. These, however, are people who do not mind mice. People who have a horror of mice are never bothered by this particular attention of Blessed Martin. If they see a mouse, it is not one of his messengers.

A man I know slightly was taken to the general hospital in Pembroke, Ontario, on the morning of Feb. 29, 1948. The doctor in charge of the hospital looked at his heart through various sorts of instruments, and didn't think much of it. It might stop in twenty minutes, he said. It might keep beating for twenty years.

The man's wife, sitting by his bedside the next morning, heard a mimic commotion in a wastebasket, one of those tall types made of tin and painted a poisonous blue. She looked into the receptacle and saw a tiny mouse battling furiously with some papers. He was trying to get himself into a position where he could jump over the walls. But even if there had been no papers to impede him, he would have found it as difficult to get out of his prison as it would be for a man to jump over a tall pine tree.

Obviously he could not have jumped into the basket from the floor. And the basket was so placed that he could not have dropped into it from any desk, table, shelf, cornice, molding, bed post, or chair.

She tilted the basket on its side. Blessed Martin's mouse scampered under the radiator and disappeared. But the woman didn't care. She knew that her husband had more than twenty minutes left to live. The nuns and nurses, and the doctors too, told her it was impossible for any rodent to

get into the hospital. She didn't care about that either. She saw what she saw, and heard what she heard.

And she felt that even if her husband died, Blessed Martin might come and treat him as he treated his friend, Brother Thomas, in the convent of the Most Holy Rosary, when Martin was alive.

The story of this miracle was related, under oath, by Father Fernando de Aragones, O.P., who had been a lay brother in the convent, and served as a porter. He became a priest, as Martin predicted he would, after he had spent fourteen years as a lay brother.

"In a room of the infirmary," Father de Aragones testified, "there was a sick lay brother being treated with mercury unctions. He was elderly, had worked hard in religion, and was of an exemplary and virtuous character. Moved by his virtue . . . the Servant of God, Brother Martin, in his great charity, visited him often and saw that he was made comfortable. He gave a young Spanish boy a bed within his cell in order that he might assist the sick brother day and night.

"One morning, about nine or ten o'clock, the boy lit some candles under a brazier in order to warm up a bowl of maize and egg-yolks which was the brother's daily food. Having given it to him to eat, the boy extinguished the candles and bade the brother good-bye until one o'clock. When he returned to the cell he found the man dead.

"Seeing him lifeless he ran out to report the fact to Brother Martin who happened to be with me in the clothes room. We ran and found him dead and cold. On seeing this, the Servant of God bade the assistant infirmarian to sound the clappers and call the community. The brethren came and began to recite the Psalter.

“Brother Martin locked the door, straightened the body, uncovered it in order to prepare it for burial, and took up a habit to clothe him. Before putting this on him, however, he prayed in front of the crucifix which the dead man had kept over his pillow. While he prayed I stepped back and stood leaning against a table.

“Having finished his prayer, the Servant of God bent over the ear of the dead man and cried out, ‘Brother Thomas!’ After this first call the sick man made a noise such as one would make in regurgitation. Brother Martin said to me; ‘Is he alive, Brother Fernando?’ I said, ‘Not so far as I can see.’

“Brother Martin called his name again, and the man on the bed breathed as one in his last agony, and moved his tongue and lips a little. Then the Servant of God called him a third time, and he took a strong breath.

“Brother Martin said to me, ‘Don’t you see that he is alive?’ Then he covered the body and went to the door and unlocked it and said to the community, ‘You may go. He has recovered.’

“All I could say was, ‘Powerful is God who can give back life to the dead!’

“Brother Martin sent me out for the boiled yolks of three fresh eggs. When I brought them, I noticed that the only sign of life in the sick man was a movement of the lips and the eyes. Otherwise he was immobile and insensible, apparently not seeing anything, nor hearing anything, nor understanding anything. I gave him the egg yolks. He had much trouble in swallowing them. The Servant of God remained, assisting him continuously, until he had regained complete consciousness and health!

“I kept all this quiet at the time because of the excitement

it might arouse. God permitted me to keep it a secret then, in order that I might tell it now.”

The good priest had many another story to tell before he was finished. He related a story about the death of Fr. Lorenzo de Pareja “as further proof” of Martin’s miraculous powers.

The priest was not in bed. He was walking about the grounds of the convent, but he complained of pain, and Brother Martin remarked to Brother Fernando that he would die “very quickly.”

The next day the priest called a doctor. The latter, after his examination, advised that the patient be given the last Sacraments. But Brother Fernando didn’t pay much attention to that, since Father de Pareja got out of bed as soon as the doctor had left, put on his clothes, and sat down in a chair. He looked well, to the porter’s eyes. It seemed foolish to think he was anywhere near death.

“Then the Servant of God, Brother Martin de Porres,” he testified, “came to me, and taking out of my hands what I was working on, said, ‘Get everything ready for the last Sacraments.’ All was done in a very short time, but before we, who accompanied the priest bringing the Lord in viaticum, had passed the last arch of the infirmary, Father Lorenzo de Pareja had died.”

IF MARTIN had any special delight in any of his many tasks it was in taking care of the novices and postulants. He was one of the first to serve them. He cut their hair, "monastic style," as soon as they arrived, found out what he could do for them, cheered them when they felt homesick, saw that they had little extras—bunches of grapes, for instance, or sweets, or tarts just out of the oven—told them many things about themselves they didn't know, and sometimes told them of things that would happen to them. Sometimes he even helped them in their studies.

It is recorded that he once happened to hear a rather excited discussion on a point in theology. One of the young students jokingly asked Martin for his opinion. Martin gave it, and added, "You'll find that in the Summa of St. Thomas." He gave the youth the page and paragraph.

Some of the postulants and novices were full of zeal. Others became bored with community life, the monastic spirit, the discipline, the food, or the constant talk of obedience and of conformity to the will of God.

Two of these reluctant religious decided to leave the convent, but they did not want to be bothered by having to explain their reasons to the proper authorities. They procured street clothes and sneaked away, like prisoners escaping from a reformatory.

The master of novices looked for them until he met Brother Martin.

"Oh," Martin said, "don't worry about them, Father. They're safe, and sound asleep this minute."

Perhaps Martin was filled with the knowledge sometimes given chosen souls by the Holy Ghost. He did know where the fugitives were. The novice master assumed they were in Martin's room, and went away satisfied. But the boys were in a private dwelling several miles away. They were, however, indeed sound asleep and safe.

A few minutes after he had spoken to the novice master Brother Martin appeared in the boys' temporary bedroom and awakened them gently. They were astonished to see him, since they had locked the door; and they were alarmed, too.

But Martin calmed them, and began to talk about the beauty of the priesthood, the beauty they were deliberately discarding from their lives. He told them how dear to Our Lady and her Son are all the priests ordained according to the Order of Melchisedec. He told them of the power that dwelt in these "other Christs," not only the power of conferring tremendous sacraments, but that of exorcising devils, and—if they had sufficient devotion and faith—that of wresting the world and all its people from the possession of the devil.

It is true a priest must put up with much, since he is another Christ. He must carry a cross—a heavy cross. He must carry it up a steep and narrow path. He must suffer pain, and loss,

and agony of heart, and loneliness akin to despair. And what awaits him at Calvary, the end of the blood-stained path? Only the Alleluia of the crucifixion!

Yet even the brightest angel in heaven would eagerly trade places with a priest!

The boys were weeping long before Martin had finished talking of the beauty and the power they had rejected. They were eager to go back, they told him. But, of course, it was too late now. The doors would be locked against them. They could not sneak in. And if they aroused anyone the whole convent would know. They would be dismissed in terrible disgrace.

Martin smiled at them, told them all was well so long as their hearts were well. And—it is recorded—he brought them back with him, into his room, without making any disturbances, without waking anybody, without unlocking any doors.

The story of this strange adventure was not made known until after Brother Martin's death, at which time the run-aways had become priests. But nobody would have doubted it if it had been told at the time of the adventure; for there were at least thirty other novices who had had a somewhat similar experience in Martin's company.

These novices had been allowed to have a picnic in a wood about half a league from the convent. Brother Martin was appointed to go with them. The novice master knew he was a good influence for the boys. He would not only keep them happy, he would see that they got back to the cloister at a certain hour.

Just what happened was never made clear, but the picnic did not end when it should have. Someone suddenly looked up at the sun and noted with horror that it was fast sinking

behind the western horizon. They would be late. Therefore they would be punished.

Martin bade them not to worry, but to pray, and to follow him. "Instantly," one of the blessed half-breed's biographers states, "without having taken a single step," the thirty boys found themselves at the convent doors. Another biographer is more cautious. He declares the boys walked only far enough to say a few Credo's. At any rate they all traversed that half a league—say a mile and a half—more swiftly than any others did after them.

Martin could also be tough with the novices, as many witnesses averred. Once a boy stole a coin Martin had put aside—with a pile of others—for his beloved poor. The lay brother was not there when the theft occurred, and there were a number of boys in the room. But he missed the coin as soon as he came in, and he accused the right boy of having picked it up. The latter denied this vehemently.

"Take it out of your shoe," Martin commanded, "and give it to me."

The boy obeyed.

Another boy pretended he was sick when he wasn't. His idea was to get out of the convent. He told the prior he needed special medical attention and he could get it only at his home. The superior gave him permission to go.

But Brother Martin knew the young man had lied, and knew also that he had no intention of coming back. He told him so and begged him to stay. The boy didn't like this, especially as it came from an humble colored lay brother. He hardened his heart. He became abusive.

"Poor boy," Brother Martin said. "God will punish you. May He forgive you also for giving up your vocation."

The young man died at his home.

Eventually newcomers to the convent learned immediately about Brother Martin's mysterious powers; a number of them spent most of their spare time in his company. They saw him, they declared in later years, sometimes rushing through the corridors as though he were in flames. They saw him, at other times, accompanied by four "most beautiful young men"—whom they took to be angels—each of them carrying a lighted candle. Sometimes they saw these strange acolytes around him when he went to ring the dawn bell in honor of Mary, his mother, his queen, and his great love; or when he put flowers near one of her statues.

Long after these novices had become priests and Brother Martin had gone to the joy his love had prepared for him, they told the ecclesiastical courts many things about his holiness. They assured the courts that they had always been sure Brother Martin was a saint.

Sometimes Martin had to deal with boys even younger than the novices; and these all held him in awe, though they too regarded him as a saint.

One boy of eleven or twelve volunteered to take a letter from Brother Martin to his friend Brother John Massias. When he got on the street, safe from any prying eyes, he opened the folded paper and read it. He put the paper back into its proper shape and carried it to its destination.

Even before Brother John took the letter into his hands he said to the boy, "Son, don't you know it is wrong to read a letter entrusted to you? Curiosity can lead one into serious sin."

The boy was too frightened to utter any denial. He had not yet recovered his composure when Brother John gave him an answer to Brother Martin's letter, forgave him, presented him with a peach, and sent him happily on his way.

Halfway to the convent of the Most Holy Rosary, the boy wondered if Brother John had written anything about him to Brother Martin. It would be natural if he did. Surely he would want Brother Martin to know the boy had done wrong. Surely he would. Oh, most surely.

He couldn't resist it. He unfolded Brother John's letter, refolded it, and went whistling swiftly onward. Brother John hadn't mentioned anything about him.

But Brother Martin didn't have to be told anything by anybody.

"So," he said, "once wasn't enough! You had to repeat the offense. Child, what's going to happen to you if you keep repeating faults?"

That particular boy never committed that particular fault again. He never came near Martin again either. He never quite dared to. The brother knew too much. No one could fool him. But the lesson remained with him all his life. He told the courts about it some years after Martin had died. He thought they'd like to know.

Another boy who lived in awe of Martin was the one who assisted him in planting medicinal herbs and fruit trees—plants that grew magically, it seemed to the boy. They were ripe almost before they were put in the ground, the boy declared.

They were far away from the convent one afternoon, and it was getting late.

"Hadn't we better go?" the boy asked. "It will be dark soon."

Martin looked at the lowering sun. Without a word he picked up a stout piece of wood and beat himself on the shoulders and legs, and the soles of each foot.

The boy almost wept in his terror. He didn't understand

that Martin was giving himself a penance which would help him, somehow, to perform the miracle he had in mind. This miracle was to waft himself and the boy from the field to the convent gate.

They traveled, the boy declared, without traveling at all. In less time than it takes to flick an eyelash they had gone from one place to the other. They did not walk. They did not run. They did not ride. They did not fly. They just went from one place to the other.

How? The boy never knew. Nor did anybody else.

DDLY ENOUGH it was not miracles people thought of when they mentioned Brother Martin. It was his charity they remembered, his going through the streets of Lima day and night, and about the outskirts of the city, feeding all the hungry from a basket that never seemed to be emptied, and stopping now and then to minister to some sick or injured person or bird or animal.

And they remembered that he was a most excellent beggar. It is estimated that he collected at least \$2,000 a week in the currency of his day—which would be equivalent to \$20,000 and more today. Some witnesses said he had a clothes-closet, or a niche, or a cupboard filled with gold and silver pieces. All these coins, of course, were given to the poor, or spent for their benefit.

He had a system in the expenditure of the moneys he collected—even as he had a system in his collection. He placed his various needy families (some estimate the figure at 160) on budgets ample to care for their every need. He did not forget anybody in his charity. He walked miles out of his way to feed some poor and forgotten soldiers. He helped uncounted poor priests and seminarians. He helped some of

the rich and mighty when they were beggared by bad investments or royal command or other accidents. He provided dowries for many girls who, otherwise, would never have found husbands.

And he built the first school for orphans in the western hemisphere!

For this school he could have raised a lot of volunteer teachers and supervisors. But he chose to select the best teachers available, and to pay them much better salaries than any other school would pay. Boys and girls of all kinds were welcomed—Indians, Negroes, or Spanish—the children of slaves or freedmen. He insisted that the boys be taught trades that would assure them a decent living.

The girls, he felt, should be taught not only to read and write, add and subtract, but they should also be taught how to sew, how to cook a tasty meal, how to conduct a household, and how to raise the children marriage would someday bring to their homes. He made a provision that each girl would be given a dowry.

Blessed Martin's devotees seldom think of him as a ball of fire whizzing down the corridor to assist some dying priest or novice, nor as one suspended before a crucifix or a picture of Our Lady, nor as a man busied about laundry, cleaning lavatories, ringing bells, or preparing meals for the sick.

They think of him as a smiling old man in a well-worn black and white habit, a rosary around his neck and another hanging from his belt, a pair of shoes held together only by a miracle, and the most disreputable hat in all the world hanging to the back of his neck by a knotted string. They think of him as a "man about town," one who stopped and talked to everybody—not as politicians do before election, nor yet as a census taker or an income tax investigator—but as one

in love with people and eager to help each and every one of them in any possible way he could. They think of him as one of the most human of all the great lovers of God.

This little girl, he decided, needed sweets as well as milk and eggs and yams. This one ought to have a new doll, seeing how ragged and soiled the old one had become. This boy needed not only a new pair of sandals and a warm cloak, he also needed the brightest ball in the costliest store in the city. And this one needed a violin and a bow. The poor need luxuries more than the rich. How few people know that.

There was nothing about people and their needs that didn't touch Martin's charity. Even a young woman's vanity—if you want to call it that—could find a sympathetic response in him.

There was his niece, Catalina—the daughter of his sister Juana—going to a party, and without a decent wrap. She didn't tell her uncle how she felt. She didn't tell anybody, except maybe the Infant Jesus and His mother. Possibly it was They who let Martin know.

Now whether it is vanity for a girl to want to look her best at such an affair, or whether it is just common-sense—for every girl knows she is entitled to look her best when she is young and it is Spring and marriageable boys will look at her—Martin didn't hesitate. Perhaps he asked a friend for money. Perhaps he didn't. The records are vague about this part of it. But what we know for certain is that Martin stepped into a store, picked out several wraps and sent them to Catalina's home so she could take her pick of them.

Did Cinderella's fairy godmother do more for her than that?

Thousands and thousands of other girls have made their wants known to Blessed Martin in the years that have gone

since that unforgotten day. They have asked not only for wraps, but for decent shoes, warm overcoats, good silk stockings, a raise in pay, a better room, a chance to meet a nice boy, a miracle of healing for someone dear to them, a little rest from toil and worry, enough money to fix up dad's old car, or to put down on a new one, good marks in the next examination, and a million other things—frivolous, important, or essential.

Brother Martin wore next to his skin a heavy rough serge tunic and a horsehair shirt. He fasted so much that a number of biographers swear he seldom ate anything. He went without sleep many nights, or slept on boards, on a catafalque, or on a cold stone floor. He lashed himself every day and every night with a double rawhide, or with a mesh of spike-studded chains, or with a mass of knotted cords, until everything around him was spattered with blood. And sometimes he rubbed salt and vinegar into his wounds. He beat himself so severely and so often, that most of the time, his garments stuck to his flesh, as Christ's seamless robe adhered to His blood-covered body during the march to Calvary!

But he didn't want anybody else to live like that.

He wanted all to be happy. If they were not happy they would not be inclined to love God; and if they did not love God, they could not possibly be happy.

The Rev. Norbert Georges, head of the Blessed Martin Guild, 141 East 65th St., New York, N. Y., in an article describing Blessed Martin as a patron of social justice, called attention to the lay brother's love for people—especially the unfortunate and the poor—and his delight in serving them.

“For this work [of social justice] God chose a man from the underprivileged,” he wrote . . . “God chose this poor cast-off child as His instrument for good in order to show His

power. To us it would seem much easier to inspire a rich man to use his wealth and influence for the good of the poor than to lift up a man at whom society looked askance, to the point where he could command the sympathy and the purse of that very society which had disowned him.

“To us it seems natural for the well-born to become saints, but we are surprised to find a boy of the streets became a friend of God, a worker of miracles, and a man of eminent holiness. To us it seems easier to inspire a rich man to give up his riches than to persuade a poor man to give up even a desire for the riches he sees other men enjoy. But it is just this complete detachment from even the desire of riches that was and is an essential characteristic of a patron of social justice. . . .

“No one called on him in vain. Rich and poor, learned and ignorant, the convict and the citizen, Red; Black; and White men, all were alike to him when they were in need. It was not always necessary to be in Lima to get his help; it was not always necessary to send word to him to have him come to you. There is testimony under oath that he came in response to calls that were not even uttered, to calls from persons as far away from Lima as Mexico City, and Algiers in Northern Africa.

“As far as it was possible for one person to do so, Blessed Martin, a colored man and a lowly lay brother, reestablished in Lima, Peru, that order planned by God, instituted by Jesus Christ, and so strenuously preached by St. Paul; that order in which all men are united in one spiritual body, each member of which is obliged to love and care for the other; the employer paying a living wage and the laborer giving an honest day's work; the rich dispensing their superfluities generously to the poor and the poor giving in return the

spiritual benefits they possess from poverty borne patiently for the love of Christ; the healthy devoting some of their time to the sick and receiving in return something of the merit gained by one who suffers cheerfully in union with the cross of Christ; the privileged granting not patronage but that fraternity due to the underprivileged as brothers in Christ, and that opportunity for economic and social development that will enable the latter to rise to their true dignity as brothers of Christ.

“When Blessed Martin died he was mourned as a father by all alike. . . . What blessed Martin accomplished three hundred years ago he can accomplish now, provided he becomes a living reality to the men and women of our day.”

WHEN IT was learned that Brother Martin was dying, the rich and mighty of the city flocked to the convent to have a last word with him. Among them were the Archbishop of Mexico, and the Viceroy of Peru.

Martin was told that distinguished guests waited to see him. He did not speak. He seemed to be transported out of himself with some celestial vision; but he managed to impress upon the prior, Father Gaspar Saldana, that the "big shots" must wait. They waited for fifteen or twenty minutes, perhaps, chatting with the prior, and then Martin signaled they might come in.

It wasn't much of a room. It was a narrow cell with a wooden cross on one wall, a picture of the Blessed Mother, a picture of St. Dominic, and, high up on another wall, the picture of the Holy Face as imprinted on the veil of Veronica.

There were no chairs for the celebrated visitors. There were but a few planks on the bed with a light covering over them, a stone pillow under Martin's head, and, close to his hand, an old skull—almost as good a book to some of God's friends as the crucifix itself.

The visitors went down on their knees and kissed the dying Negro's hands, then asked his prayers.

When he had escorted the guests to the convent gates, and had properly apologized for having made them wait, the prior came to Martin's cell and rebuked him for his outrageous conduct toward these representatives of the Church of God and the king of Spain.

Martin said nothing until he was told to explain. Then he said that he had been entertaining guests of his own.

“Our Lady was here,” he said. “St. Dominic was with her. And St. Vincent Ferrer. And St. Joseph, of course. Wherever Our Lady is, St. Joseph is there too, whether you see him or not. There were many other saints. And many angels. I didn’t think it wrong to keep earthly visitors out while the Queen and her court were paying me such honor.”

Martin’s devotion to the founder of the Order was demonstrated during the earthquake of 1630, as was St. Dominic’s devotion to his humblest son.

It was a little before noon. Martin was in the convent chapel. Near him knelt Fr. Pedro de Mendoza. When the earth began to shake, and the structure started to rock, Father Pedro got up off his knees and started to run outside. But he saw Martin, kneeling high up in the air before the statue of St. Dominic. Martin’s face was serene, even shining. But there was something even stranger to be seen. The face of St. Dominic’s statue seemed to have come alive, and it had turned from its normal position so that it looked toward the tabernacle of the main altar!

“Brother Martin,” one of the other friars said later, “had evidently asked St. Dominic to join him in begging God to soften His anger and temper it with mercy for the poor sinful people of the city.”

Martin kept the secret of the turned statue for many years. He revealed it to Fr. Saldana shortly before his death—when he pleaded that the old statue be not discarded in favor of a new one sculptured by Father Gabriel de Zarate, the provincial of the Dominicans in Peru. The statue, he said then, had really seemed to come to life, and to pray with him for the mercy of God on the people.

IN SPITE of his rigid fasts, sleepless nights, incredible labors, austere penances and continual scourgings, Blessed Martin lived a long life. He was nearing his sixtieth birthday when he became aware that he was soon going to meet that other outcast, the One who had been put to death on the cross.

Father Juan de Barbaran saw him in a brand new habit, and stopped to comment upon it. The sight was so unusual the good priest's curiosity might be excused. Martin in anything but the most tattered clothes was like a stranger.

"Why the finery?" he asked—much as one of the apostles asked why Christ had let that foolish woman pour so much rich ointment on His feet.

"It is for my burial," Martin explained.

Shortly after he had selected this shroud he was attacked by a fever. At first he kept working as usual. But the day came when he was unable to arise from the boards that constituted his mattress.

He rejoiced now, for he was really ill. All his conscious life, ever since he had first fallen in love with God, he had suffered joyfully. But he had brought most of his sufferings on himself. This fever was a gift from God Himself, a proof of the divine love.

Now Martin could lie on the naked wood, as his Master had done, and feel a little of the tortures of the crucifixion.

The crown of fire, he could understand now, must have sent sparks cascading down from the forehead of the Son of

God onto the furrows the heavy cross had plowed in His shoulders.

And thence the embers of pain had jumped into the wrists and the palms of the hands, to set them blazing with intolerable flames; then down through all His body into the crossed spiked feet. How the fire must have danced in those holy feet!

Thanks to the fever, Brother Martin could also experience something of the thirst Christ suffered on the cross, the unslakable thirst in His dustlined throat, His burning mouth, His dried and heated tongue, His dried and aching bones and muscles, and in His heart.

The doctor was there, bleeding the patient skillfully. Was it like that with Jesus? Did He see His rich blood spattering the bent red-gold head of Mary Magdalen, spattering the soldiers dicing for His seamless robe, spattering the mocking, jeering, hating rabble? Did He notice that John was blind with tears? Did He see what agony shone through His mother's eyes, and what submission to the holy will of the Father?

They took Brother Martin out of his tiny cell and placed him gently in a soft bed, not realizing that one accustomed to the honest and stable friendship of hard wood would suffer through such comfort.

Martin smiled at the physician, Dr. Francisco Navarro, and told him that his was a useless task, for the day and the hour of death was fast approaching, and nothing could prolong it for a second.

"Kill some hens," the doctor bade a lay brother, "and we'll make a poultice from their blood."

"No," Brother Martin protested. "You'd kill the chickens needlessly. They wouldn't help me in any way. They would

not alleviate the pain in the slightest. Let the poor hens live.”

Sometimes the pain was so terrible that Martin didn't feel it any more. Then he would wake as from a coma, and find himself once more stretched out on the cross. And the soldiers were taking their time with hammers, talking to each other about this and that, not looking at the spikes particularly, so that the hammers fell sometimes on the iron and sometimes on the flesh. Soon now they would stop hammering. Soon they would raise him up and let him drop into the hole prepared for the foot of the cross.

And the voices of people! Did Christ suffer those noises too, when He was raised high above the multitude, with His hands nailed so that He could not stop up His ears?

The strident voices of angry men, of jeering priests and cursing soldiers, of gossipers and slanderers, and of those interested only in business, politics, sciences and themselves. How they must have tortured the ears attuned to the praises of angelic choirs, the lullabies Joseph sang Him when He was a child, and the music-voice of His mother, Mary! Of course He must have heard those voices, the voices of the world.

And perhaps He still hears them.

At times severe chills invaded the realm of the fever—chills that shook the wasted body, as the raising and dropping of the cross may have shaken the body of the Lord. But the fever always came back, with its dancing hot coals of pain. And its dryness. And its thirst.

The devil came to taunt the dying lay brother. Or so it seemed to the watchers.

“Don't argue with him,” a priest warned.

Martin smiled faintly. “Oh, Father, Lucifer is too proud to argue with such a poor ignorant soul as mine.”

Brother Martin had no terror of the devil. He had routed him a number of times in his long life. He had met the infernal spirit, the first time, on a winding staircase in the convent. Martin had a pan of hot coals in one hand, a hamper of medical supplies in the other. The black angel tried to stop him. Martin put down his brazier and his hamper, took off his belt, and beat the devil out of his way. There was a Rosary attached to the belt. The devil was afraid of it.

Martin picked up a glowing coal and burned a cross into the wall. The devil fled.

Sometimes, after that incident, the fiend came to annoy Martin in his cell. Brother Fulano de Mirando told the ecclesiastic courts that on one occasion he and Brother Martin were both attacked by demons. They were beaten and thrown around, he said, and then suddenly Martin's little room was full of fire and smoke. Brother Fulano confessed that he would have run away had not Martin assured him that it was only a diabolical conflagration, and they were in no danger.

Sergeant de la Torre also swore that he had witnessed one of Brother Martin's encounters with the master of hell.

"I was sleeping in an alcove of his room," he said, "on a pile of infirmary mattresses. I heard the brother talking angrily to somebody, and that wasn't like him. So I got up and went to see who was making trouble. I didn't see the devil. I just saw Brother Martin being rolled around, and thrown this way and that, and I could hear somebody striking him many blows. Then I saw that someone or something had set fire to a pile of clothes Brother Martin had heaped up for poor people. There was plenty of smoke too. I helped Brother Martin beat out the flames. I went back to bed, but I was so frightened I couldn't sleep. When Brother Martin

got up, about 3 o'clock, to ring the dawn bell in honor of Our Lady, the dawn of Christianity, he lit a candle so I could see, and so I would quit shaking with fright. There wasn't the least sign of fire in the cell, no charred wood or clothes, no ashes, no smell of burnt materials. That frightened me more than the fire itself."

Toward the end of his long ordeal Martin was asked if he wanted the community summoned, that they might speed his soul to heaven with their tears and their prayers. Martin, suddenly looking rested and at peace, nodded his consent and began to kiss the crucifix he held. A priest kneeling near his bed told him there was another man dying in the infirmary, and asked Martin's prayers for him.

Hearing this, Martin tried to get up, but he could not.

He reproached himself severely.

"Brother Martin," he said, "where is your charity? A dying man needs you, and you lie here on your soft clean bed! Ah, where is your charity?"

The chamber into which the dying lay brother had been moved soon filled up with visitors, secular and religious. An old friend wiped the cold sweat off Martin's face with his handkerchief, which afterwards he kept as a relic. The perspiration, he said, had an aroma better than the most delicate perfumes.

Martin joined in the prayers for the dying. When they came to the words, "and was made man," his soul left his body.

Christ Crucified and His crucified disciple were together.

“**A**T HIS obsequies,” Father Cypriano de Medina testified, “I saw the following: after his death in the early part of the night his remains were immediately placed . . . in the church. . . . At about 3 or 4 o’clock in the morning, accompanied by the other religious who were watching over the body, I approached the bier, and on touching the corpse I found it so hard and stiff that I said . . . in the presence of all and in a loud voice . . . ‘How is it, brother of mine, that you are so stiff and rigid at this time when the day is at hand and the whole city is getting ready to come and see you and glorify God in you? Beg Him to make this body flexible.’ . . . Strange to say, hardly a quarter of an hour passed when we noticed it was more supple and docile than when he was alive. . . . When the people entered the church they noticed not only this fact, but that it gave forth a fragrance that enveloped all those who came near.

“The people cut pieces from his habit, forcing us to reclothe him many times, and to beg a special guard for the body. It was decided to bury him that evening to avoid difficulties. A great crowd assisted at the burial, proclaiming him a saint. He was carried on the shoulders of the Archbishop of Mexico, of Don Pedro de Ortega Sotomayor, then a dignitary of the Cathedral and now Bishop of Cuzco, of Don Juan de Pennafiel and other gentlemen of high station. They did not wish to let down the stretcher from the time they left the church to the chapterhall, which is quite a distance.”

The body was placed in a new vault, in a section originally reserved for priests; and even before the vault was sealed, all Lima was discussing the miracles God was granting through

the intercession of the dead lay brother. Within a few years not only the people of Lima, but those of many other countries, were praying to the holy brother. Crowds came to Lima as pilgrims from many parts of the world. Martin's cell became a shrine.

Twenty-five years or so after Martin's death, the Dominican fathers decided to remove the body to a more suitable place. As soon as the vault was opened, those present smelled the sweet odor that had filled the church during the hours Martin's body had remained there.

When the body was examined by the appointed witnesses, they found most of it in an incorrupt state, and the flesh looked as if it had not known death. One of the witnesses swore that it bled when a surgeon thrust a knife into it.

The witnesses thought they were working in secret. Nothing had been told the people in the city. Yet within a few minutes after the tomb had been opened, great crowds started fighting their way into the Church of the Most Holy Rosary; and the overflow—those who could not possibly get into the church—fought to stay as close as possible to the door—to stay there and breathe!

During the removal of the body, its dismemberment, and its re-burial, it is recorded that a young religious, thinking himself unobserved, stole a portion of one of the bones and hid it beneath his habit. It burned him so badly that he almost cried out. But that would be tantamount to confessing his strange crime. He hurried to his cell and hid the relic there. But it threw out such tremendous heat that he was forced to reveal what he had done.

He wanted to give back the bone and keep it too. He broke off a tiny piece of it, and gave the rest to the prior. Brother Martin wouldn't permit that either. The fragment the young

man kept was even hotter than the rest of the bone. He was forced, the second time, to confess his sin and give back what he had pilfered.

Hundreds and hundreds of miracles continued to remind the world of the power of God, which He continues to exhibit through Brother Martin. Only two were selected by the Sacred Congregation of Rites and given official approbation for the beatification.

Senora Elvira Mariano of Lima, who had accidentally cut out her eyeball with a sliver of glass from a broken vase, applied a relic of Brother Martin to the wound. The pain vanished immediately. And, wonder of wonders, overnight a new eye formed in the empty eye socket!

There were many witnesses to attest the truth of this miraculous happening, including the doctor, "a celebrated surgeon named Don Pedro de Urdanibia," according to the biographers.

The second miracle was concerned with the fall of a two-year-old child, Melchior Varanda, from a window of his mother's home in Lima. His skull was crushed, according to witnesses including the same celebrated surgeon who had attended Senora Mariano. He told the mother that the only doctor who could help the boy was Brother Martin de Porres. A neighbor drew a rude portrait of Martin, and pressed it against the child's bleeding head with a prayer.

In less than three hours, say the witnesses, the boy was running around the house in his usual fashion—without any sign of injury and with no visible symptom of shock—ready, perhaps, to fall out the same window again, twenty or thirty feet onto the same stone pavement.

But the Church never hurries in its routine, no matter how many miracles its holy children work from above to show

they are in heaven. It was not until April 29, 1763, that Pope Clement XIII issued an Apostolic Decree proclaiming the heroic character of Brother Martin's virtues. It was not until July 31, 1836, that Pope Gregory XVI published the decree of approval. And it was not until September 10 of the following year, that Brother Martin became known officially as Blessed Martin.

He died on the 3rd of November. Ordinarily this would have been his feast day in the calendar of the Divine Office. But another Dominican lay brother, Blessed Simon Allacchi, had been given that day. So the 5th of November was given Blessed Martin.

Millions of people, all over the world, are praying now for the canonization of Blessed Martin. They want the full honors of the Church for him.

He's willing to wait centuries more to win his degree of sanctity from the hands of the Holy Father, if it be the Will of God. Meantime he keeps working as he did on earth, without ceasing, without sleeping, and in many places at once.

Blessed Martin is a shortcut to the Immaculate Heart of Mary—and Mary is the mediatrix of all graces, the gateway to Christ, Who is the Way. How can you lose, asking help of Martin?

Madonna House
March 25, 1953

152884



GUILD FAMILY READERS

GUILD FAMILY READERS bring you the works of famous Catholic authors in compact, inexpensive booklet form.

- GFR 126. THE PASSION**
by Msgr. Ronald A. Knox
- GFR 127. THE FIFTEEN MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY**
by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen
- GFR 128. FOLLOW THE MASS**
by the Rev. Gerald Ellard, S.J.
- GFR 129. THE CHRISTMAS STORY**
by Fulton Oursler
- GFR 130. BLUEPRINT FOR ENSLAVEMENT**
by Father James A. McCormick, M.M.
- GFR 131. THE RISEN SOLDIER**
by Francis Cardinal Spellman
- GFR 132. MARY TALKS TO US**
by Don Sharkey
- GFR 134. HOW YOU CAN SHARE YOUR FAITH**
by the Rev. John A. O'Brien, Ph.D.
- GFR 135. CRISIS IN HISTORY**
by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen
- GFR 136. YOU CAN CHANGE THE WORLD**
by James Keller
- GFR 137. MEDITATIONS FOR THE FAMILY ROSARY**
by Joseph A. Breig
- GFR 138. THE ANSWER TO COMMUNISM**
by Douglas Hyde
- GFR 139. BLESSED MARTIN DE PORRES**
by Eddie Doherty



GUILD FAMILY READERS are available on your parish pamphlet rack, through your Catholic book dealer, or on direct order from

**CATECHETICAL GUILD
EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY**

147 East Fifth St., St. Paul 1, Minnesota