

8-22-1981

7th letter from John S. Stokes, Jr., to Jane A. McLaughlin

John S. Stokes

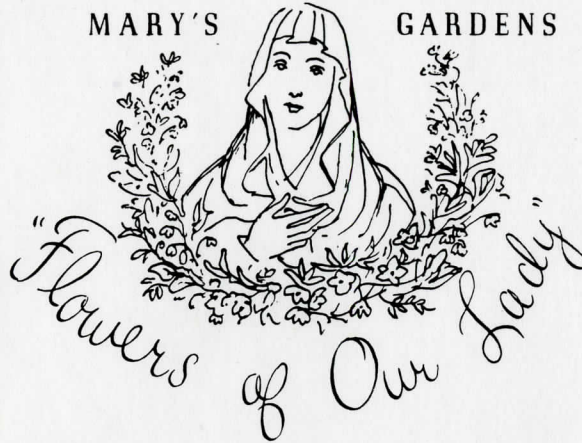
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MARY'S GARDENS



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August 22, 1981
Queenship of Mary

Ms Jane A. McLaughlin, Parish Historian
25 Nobska Road
Box 187
Woods Hole, MA 02543

Dear Ms McLaughlin,

wrote

Last night I/an article draft, which I hope at some later date to ^{simplify and} polish up, and also to augment with some additional specificity about the Flowers of Our Lady symbolism so as to move from the broad general interest in the Mary Garden movement back to the topical interest of St. Joseph's Centennial and the Golden Jubilee of Our Lady's Garden . . . for submission to a national Catholic magazine for publication next Spring.

Since this article places much of the material I have been sending you in a thematic context, I have abstracted this portion of the article, and slightly adapted it, under the title of "Why An Angelus Tower and Garden of Our Lady in Woods Hole?", enclosed for your reference as you develop your presentation of the Tower and Garden for your Centennial Book.

While it is in pretty rough form, if you should wish to use any excerpts from it for the book or publicity, you have my permission to do so, with credit. In saying this, I realize that I may not have made it clear that you also have our permission to use any portions of our published articles and leaflets, as we were careful to obtain written permission for re-use from all the magazines involved. Here, of course, credit should be given to both the author and the magazine.

I realize you are moving towards your deadline for the book, and wish you well in this task.

Sincerely,

John S. Stokes Jr.

John S. Stokes Jr.

Copies: Fr. Dalzell, Miss Pyne, Mrs. Roberson

WHY AN ANGELUS TOWER AND GARDEN OF OUR LADY IN WOODS HOLE?

John S. Stokes Jr.

We are told that Mrs. Frances Crane ^{Lillie} Lily established the Angelus Tower and Garden of Our Lady at St. Joseph's Church in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, in the early 1930's as a call to the ^{religious dedication and} sanctification ~~and religious ordering~~ of biological science and work, in Woods Hole and throughout the world.

In pondering what Mrs. Lillie's reasons might have been in selecting a tower and garden honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary for this purpose, it is well to reflect ^{to start with} ~~that~~ that the tower and garden are blest sacramentals . . . which, like all sacramentals, through their form, summon and quicken us [↓] to religious thought, resolve, prayer and acts; and ^{which,} through their blessing according to the rites of the Church, ^{for us} serve as channels of sacramental grace.

^{it is} In this/helpful to cite the reaffirmation of the importance of sacramentals made at the Second Vatican Council (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, par. 60 & 61):

"Holy Mother Church has...instituted sacramentals. These are sacred signs which bear a resemblance to the sacraments: they signify effects, particularly of a spiritual kind, which are obtained through the Church's intercession. By them men are disposed to receive the chief effects of the sacraments, and various occasions of life are rendered holy.

"Thus, for well-disposed members of the faithful, the liturgy of the sacraments and sacramentals sanctifies almost every event in their lives; they are given access to the stream of divine grace which flows from the paschal mystery of the passion, death and resurrection of Christ, the fountain from which all sacraments and sacramentals draw their power. There is hardly any proper use of material things which cannot thus be directed toward the sanctification of men and the praise of God."

^{we first learn} From this viewpoint, ~~it can be seen~~ that as sacramentals, the Angelus Tower and Garden of Our Lady ^{direct} channel religious thought, resolve, prayer, acts and grace towards the sanctification of biological work ^{— as a means to} and towards the ~~religious ends~~ of salvation, the building of the Peaceable Kingdom, and the renewal of the face of the earth, ^{first} ~~of all~~ through the inscriptions on the Angelus bells, Mendel and Pasteur: "I will teach you of Life and of Life Eternal", and "Thanks be to God".

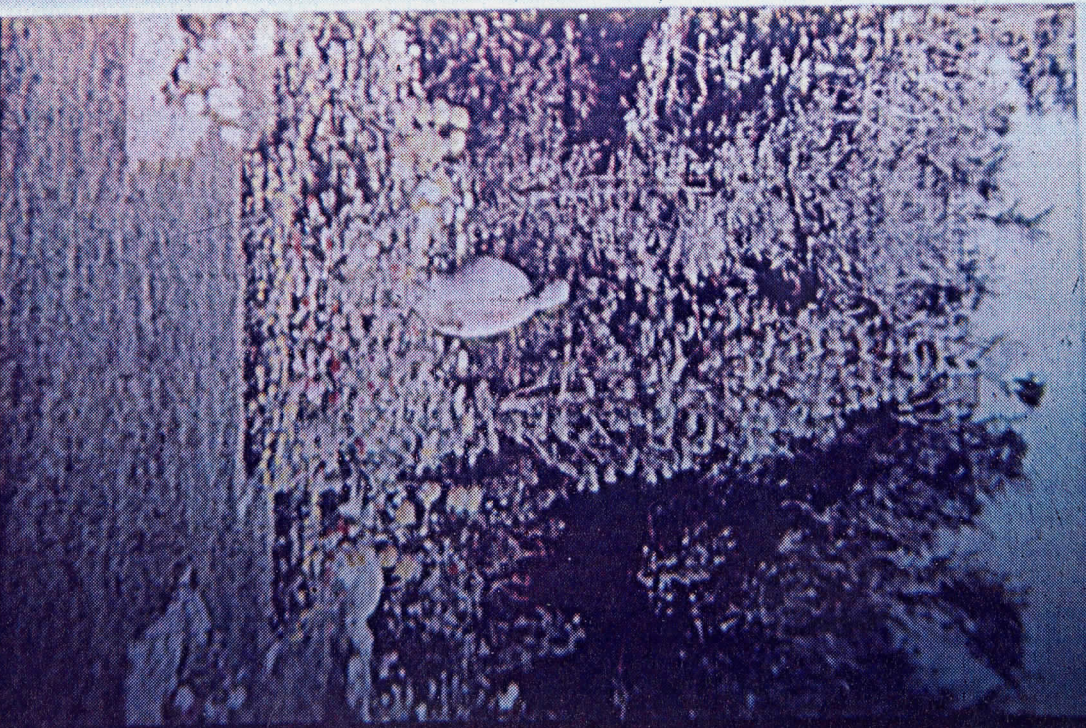
This is borne out by the press report of the dedication and blessing of the Angelus Tower in 1930, which states that "Following the service in the oratory (in the base of the tower), the procession, followed by many of the crowd, returned to St. Joseph's Church where the bishop (Rt. Rev. James E. Cassidy, Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Fall River) preached a short sermon, linking science with religion, and gave the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament."

The particular ^{sacramental} ~~religious~~ purpose of the tower and garden ^{then} serves ^{as} the context according to which we are to draw upon the riches of the ~~Angelus~~ ^{found various elements of the Angelus in the} Angelus itself; of the library of Catholic classics Mrs. Lillie gave for the tower oratory; of the artistic representation of the Christian joyful mysteries on the bronze oratory door, ~~of~~ the sorrowful mysteries in the stations of the Cross on the oratory walls, and ~~of~~ the glorious mysteries through the symbolical vertical thrust of the tower; of the sculptured figure of Our Lady in the garden; and of the rich religious symbolism of the Flowers of Our Lady planted in the garden.

Further reflection elucidates for us still more ^{clearly} ~~specifically~~ the basis ~~for~~ the selection ~~of~~ the Angelus Tower and the Garden and Flowers of Our Lady as the form of this sacramental of biological work. ~~This~~, ^{concern} from the viewpoint of the ~~preoccupation~~ of biological science and work with life, we see that the Blessed Virgin is that living creature and person who uniquely made possible the opening up to all earthly life ^{of} the redemptive action of the supernatural life of God . . . through her fiat ~~acceptance~~ ^{her call by} ~~the call~~ of the Angel of the Annunciation to espousal with the Holy Spirit of God and, through his action, ^{to} ~~the~~ conception and birth of Jesus Christ, the God-man, divine Son of the Father.

In this context, then, the ^{ringing of the} Angelus ~~Tower~~ recalls for us the fiat of Mary's humility, which enabled her to accept the annunciation of the angel . . . and the Garden and Flowers of Our Lady recall for us her immaculate purity, through which she was capable of ~~penetration by and attunement to God, whereby she was enabled to give~~ ^{and responsiveness to God in giving} birth to, nurture, ^{ing} educate ^{ing} and cooperate ^{ing} with ^{his and her} ~~her~~ Divine Son, ^{our} Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Redeemer of the world and of all life.

ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH
WOODS HOLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CENTENNIAL 1882-1982



Further, the all-encompassing symbolism of the Flowers of Our Lady recalls for us Mary's other excellences, privileges and prerogatives, whereby:

. . . as Mother of Christ, she gives continuing spiritual birth in grace to the ever-increasing membership of his Mystical Body on earth, the Church, and to the souls who form the living stones of the risen Temple of his heavenly body;

. . . as eternal spouse of the Holy Spirit, she ^{cooperates in} ~~participates~~ his pentacostal spiritual action of sanctifying souls and renewing the face of the earth; and

. . . as immaculate daughter and image of the Father - gloriously assumed and crowned in heaven, beholder of the beatific vision of the glorious shining of God's countenance, and Queen of Angels - she shares in and shows forth his goodness, mercy, power, providence and other attributes by ~~interceding~~, mediating, distributing and nurturing them ^{to and in us,} together with grace and Spirit, for the providential leading of the human family towards the Peaceable Kingdom, through which God's name is to be fully hallowed, on earth as it is in heaven.

Thus perceived, the Angelus Tower and Garden and Flowers of Our Lady form together a magnificent symbol and source of sacramental grace for thought, resolve, prayer and acts, directed - ^{vehicle} ~~in accordance with~~ ^{as proclaimed by} the inscriptions on the bells - towards the sanctification and providential ordering of biological science and work, in accordance with the divine plan for Creation and the world.

Our praying to Mary for her intercession, mediation, distribution and nurturing in the operation of divine grace, Spirit and providence - where others would have us pray directly to God - is not some sort of idolization of Mary or diminishment of God . . . but testimony to our recognition that God has begun to achieve, in Mary, his creative purpose of fully showing forth and sharing his goodness ^{and activities} and attributes with ^{persons,} the human ~~family~~ ^{to this end} whom he created in his image and likeness. "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee."

Having prayed thus to Mary, we then turn directly to God in thanksgiving, praise and rejoicing that he has thus begun to achieve his creative purpose ^{in and} through Mary . . . in confidence that our prayers ^{- to} both ~~to~~ Mary and ~~to~~ God ^{thus understood}, will be supremely pleasing to God, and that for this reason they will elicit God's special love and Mary's special intercession, such that they, our prayers, will be answered even more bountifully - in outpourings of movements of grace, promptings of Spirit and leadings of providence, towards Salvation, Kingdom and Renewal - than if we had prayed to God alone.

For those of us who, through our work, are in a position ^{in addition to praying,} to act concretely ~~as~~ ~~well as to pray~~ in the biological field (or other fields) for Salvation, Kingdom and Renewal, the library of religious classics Mrs. Lillie provided for the tower oratory present ~~the~~ the riches of Catholic ascetical and mystical teaching and tradition from which ^{we can} draw to this end. Through them, those of us so resolved, can learn how ~~we~~ - beginning with the mortification and purification that come of living by the Ten Commandments; the virtues, precepts and counsels; and the love of God and neighbor - ^{in imitation of Mary,} we can then act to attune ourselves ~~spiritually~~ to grace, Spirit and providence, through meditation and action ^{in accordance with such teachings,} on time-tested texts ~~such~~ as:

- Thomas à Kempis' "Movements of Nature and Grace" from the Imitation of Christ
- St. Ignatius of Loyola's (on whose feast, July 31st, the Tower was dedicated and blest) "Spiritual Elections" and "Discernment of Spirits" from the Spiritual Exercises; and
- Fr. J. P. Caussade's Abandonment to Divine Providence.

~~And~~ In this we ~~also~~ turn again in prayer to Mary, for her motherly intercession, mediation, distribution and nurturing of the more specific, immediate, movements of grace, promptings of the Spirit, and leadings of providence we need in our personal and work circumstances. Also, whether it is a matter of movements, promptings or leadings, or of basic morality and ethics, we pray always to Mary, Virgin Most Powerful, for the fortitude and strength to do what ^{in love,} we know should be done.

Social

From the viewpoint of the [^]issues of biological power raised in the 1980's by such developments as molecular biology, recombinant DNA, genetic engineering, the mining of top soils and the chemicalisation of horticulture and agriculture, the increasing threat of insect damage to crops due to aggravated ecological imbalance, and the production and stockpiling of means of biological warfare, Mrs. Lillie's act of establishing the Angelus Tower and Garden of Our Lady as a sacramental of biological work in the 1930's seems highly visionary and prophetic. broader

While there are those who believe that following the logic and determinism of science, technology and marketing wherever they lead will bring us eventually into harmony and peace with the universe, there are others who are increasingly concerned about the ever greater powers that are being released thereby, and who look for harmony and peace in morality and ethics ^{as a guide of morality} transcending material development. Cardinal Medeiros of Boston, for example, in his remarks to the World Council of Churches Conference on Faith, Science and the Future at M.I.T. in the summer of 1979, addressed himself to both the positive potentials and the dangers of science and technology:

"A Christian faith that ignores or disregards the marvels of scientific technology in agriculture, medicine, and energy is unworthy of the name of religion, and even more unworthy of the mystery of the Incarnation. A technology that ignores or disregards the question of Christian ethics, especially the value it places on man, will quickly reduce the earth to a desert, the person to an automaton, brotherhood to planned collectivization, and introduce death where God wishes life."

However, the application of morality and ethics in concrete, everyday situations is often not a clear-cut matter, and here is where ^{we} ~~there~~ will have to ^{have} ~~to~~ increasing recourse to sacramental means, purification and prayer ~~as a means~~ for making decisions and elections on the basis of grace, Spirit, and providence, as well as morality and ethics [^] in faith and hope that God and Our Lady will guide us on the way to Salvation, Kingdom and Renewal and to the peace that surpasses understanding.

As we turn, thus, to spiritual resources, it behooves us - especially in ¹⁹⁸² this Centennial year of St. Joseph's and ^{the} Golden Jubilee of the Garden of Our Lady - to offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the wisdom, spiritual genius and munificence of Mrs. Lillie in bequeathing to us the Woods Hole Tower and Garden. John S. Staker Jr.