

**REFLECTION****The Little Book****By Guillermo de Carndonagh**

The man looked around the room and a smile flirted across his mouth. Years before as he was embarking on his job as a sales representative, he had heard an older colleague say, "all motel rooms look alike". At the time all he could envision was the challenge of seeing new places and meeting new people, now he understood very well, and had at times awakened in the night and not known what city he was in.

Before going out to supper he had planned his calls for the next day, set up his sample cases, and written himself a note now propped against the bedside lamp with the time and place of the first call. He had learned long ago to give himself some down time at the end of each day and seldom worked after supper. After a brief shower and a phone call home to his wife he settled in the single chair by the lamp and window and picked up the little book.

The first copy he had owned was now falling in tatters, and sat upon a shelf at home. This copy a little larger for aging eyes was relatively new, just beginning to show signs of wear. The first copy had been a gift from a priest confessor to an overly energetic student just a little too full of himself. It had seen sporadic use until those bad times, times when he was sure the alcohol would win and his marriage would dissolve. It had then become a lifeline, and a barrier against his worse inner self. A message each evening of Christ's love, and lessons, sometimes uncomfortable, and always challenging.

With the easy movements of long established patterns, he turned to the page marked by a holy card and read the suggested reflections. Then he opened his Bible and slowly and reflectively read the passage indicted. After a few moments of meditation, he turned to the lesson in the little book. Not a terrible time consuming exercise but one filled with life restoring elements. A time apart, an encounter with Christ in the scripture, a lesson from an orthodox and insightful teacher, elements that in those bad times past had helped him walk away from self destruction and into deeper union with his Savior.

The familiarity with the Gospels that came from the nightly readings lead to a deeper life of prayer. Now he sat quietly and relaxed, and with a clear mind was able to begin a fruitful meditation on the mysteries of the rosary. It had taken him almost a lifetime to come this far, and he probably would not have made it if that confessor long ago had not given him a copy of the little book.

Patience is a key virtue for the evangelist. The Christian who is in love with Christ, should share with others those good things which have helped them experience that love, but should not expect dramatic and immediate results. How many copies of that little book did that priest give away? How many souls have been won for Christ because he did? We will never know, all we do know is that at least one time the gift of the little book led a man back to Christ.

Excerpt From: "My Meditation on the Gospel"

The lesson on John 3: 22-36 concludes with the prayer.

"Dear Master, so much of my trouble comes from forgetting my place-from not accepting to be human. I get despondent with my faults, I resent temptations, I get annoyed at criticism and correction and fight strongly against opposition! And all because I don't accept to be human-for all these are the common lot of all human beings. In my pride I want to be above all these things. And so, instead of taking them all in stride with joy and contentment, I resent them and they get me down.

Teach me Lord, the Humility of this very great man, St. John! Let his shining character and manliness in this scene so thrill me that it will form a burning ideal in my soul."

My Meditation on the Gospel; Rev. James E. Sullivan, Confraternity of the Precious Blood, 5300 Ft. Hamilton Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11219