

The Day My Wife Died

by J.M.Haffert

My wife died unexpectedly on Thursday, March 6th.

I awoke at three o'clock that morning with no idea whatever that my wife was about to die. Although it was still night, I decided to write to Bishop John Venancio of Fatima about one of the most urgent and important projects in our quarter of a century of Blue Army Apostolate.

CONSECRATION OF RUSSIA

It had been decided at a meeting of our International Council in Spain last December 10th to ask a Cardinal to petition the Holy Father for the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary together with all Bishops of the world. A few weeks later Cardinal Slipyj agreed to make this petition for the sixth and seventh of June, Feasts of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Now time was flying by. We had only two months, to the day, to obtain the consecration. Bishop Venancio had indicated that it might be too late for a personal letter from him to go out to all pastors of the world.

So I decided, as I woke up that March 6th during the night, to reassure His Excellency. I wrote:

"Sometimes it is better to have a close deadline...which forces us to pray and act immediately. The cooperation of our Apostolate throughout the world has been excellent, especially in the United States, India, England, Ireland, Australia, and Africa. Cardinal Slipyj has already begun to receive letters of support. There will be hundreds of thousands by April 15th from all over the world." And the letter ended:

"Despite the shortness of time, we can pray as though all depended on the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and we can work as though all had to be accomplished through our own poor and limited efforts. *We freely offer to God whatever He may wish to send us in order that this consecration, so long delayed, may now be accomplished.*"

I little dreamed as I wrote the above words that a few hours later I would be told that my wife was dying.

If we ourselves were now called to lay down our lives, *we would gladly do so for the success of this consecration* to which Our Lady has attached the solemn assurance that Russia will be converted.

LETTER TO ALL PASTORS

Meanwhile Bishop Venancio had written a second letter...which crossed mine in the mail...in which His Excellency said he had rethought the matter of writing to all the pastors of the world and the letters could go out over his personal signature. I was just communicating this information to our centers when we received word that the Lisbon airport had been bombed (March 11th)...and I remembered what Bishop Venancio had said to me as I went to Rome last December to speak to Cardinal Slipyj about the petition:

We accept whatever God may send us, even if it may be death."

Are we willing to accept whatever God will send us in order that the world crisis may be reversed? If not...are we at least willing to say a Rosary, write a letter...?

at FATIMA

John Haffert and his wife Anne, with their daughter Betty (center), cut cake at family reception at Fatima as Bishop Venancio looks on. Over a hundred members of families joined Family Visit to Fatima October 13th to 27th.

The above notice and this picture appeared in the Jan. Feb. issue of SOUL Magazine. After this meeting at Fatima the Hafferts continued to Rome where John Haffert had the mission of contacting Cardinal Slipyj. (See continuation of this article on next page: HER REWARD).

