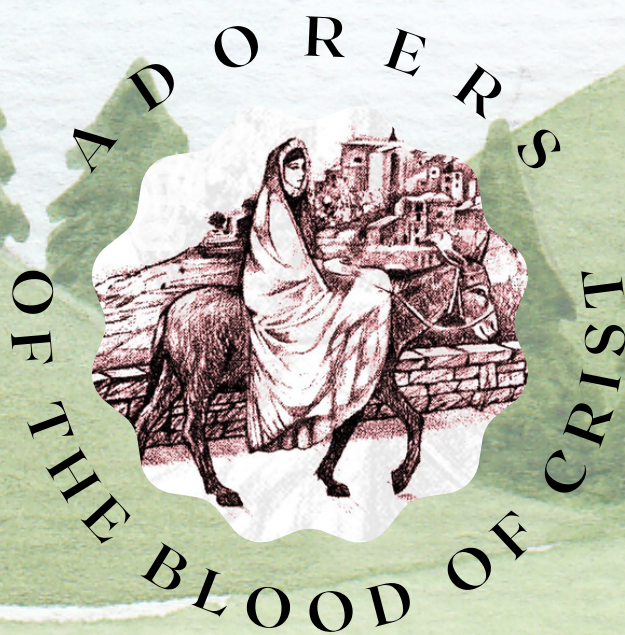


SR. M. VIVIAN MILLER ESQ.



THE LAMB

*Saint Maria De Mattias
Foundress of the
Adorers of the Blood of
Christ
Stories for the Young and
Old*



Well! Well! Well! What does "Hello" mean? I feel very honored to speak to you. It's not every day that a lamb speaks to people like you. I've been asked to tell you about a great missionary: GASPAR DEL BUFALO.

There's a problem... being a city boy, he knows little about us. He was born in Rome, as you know, on January 6, 1786, and grew up right in front of the Church of the Gesù. This is a solution to the problem mentioned above: every time Gaspar entered the church, he saw the figure of a lamb on the ceiling of the apse.

The figure of a lamb is found in many churches in Italy. I am very proud of this fact. It is a great honor to have one of my race symbolize the great SON OF GOD. I don't understand everything about this symbol, but it is something related to

Meekness,
Obedience,
Death,
Resurrection.



We lambs are taught never to run away from the flock. It's dangerous. When Gaspar was little, he also learned this. After hearing how St. Francis Savior, his favorite saint, went to the distant East to win the pagans for Christ, Gaspar prepared a snack, wrapped up some clothes, and followed the direction of the sun. He didn't go very far... he wasn't even outside Rome yet when he was found and brought home. Although he didn't run away, Furthermore, St. Francis Xavier always remained his model and the inspiration for his vocation. He elected him patron of his congregation, the Missionaries of the Holy Blood.

Gaspar grew up with the idea of being a priest. I asked what it meant... and he replied: "It's like a shepherd, or something like that." He didn't pasture lambs... but he gathered many people in the Church. I saw him welcoming many men into his night oratory. So I came to the conclusion: that priests are truly shepherds. Gaspar was good, believe me.





When he was a seminarian, he used to come to the Forum to speak with the men who cared for us, the flock. After a day in the hills near Rome, our shepherds would take us near the city walls, away from the wolves. I liked Gaspar, and I always tried to see him.

And do you know? After listening to him, our shepherds were kinder to us... and to each other.

Today is July 31, 1808... a hot Roman day. I was lying in the shade of this column, dozing... And why not? I don't like this rush of people coming and going. Opening one eye, I saw my friend, Gaspar. He was dressed in a long white cassock, with a kind of cloak over it. Very handsome. People congratulated him, kissed his hands, and he blessed them. I heard his mother and father praying that he would be a good priest forever.



Things have changed in Italy.

*There are many soldiers
(Napoleonic troops) on the
streets. Their leaders are cruel,
like the WOLVES. People flee
from them. Some are killed.
I'm sure Gaspar was among
the people to protect them. But
some say he and many other
priests were put in prison.*

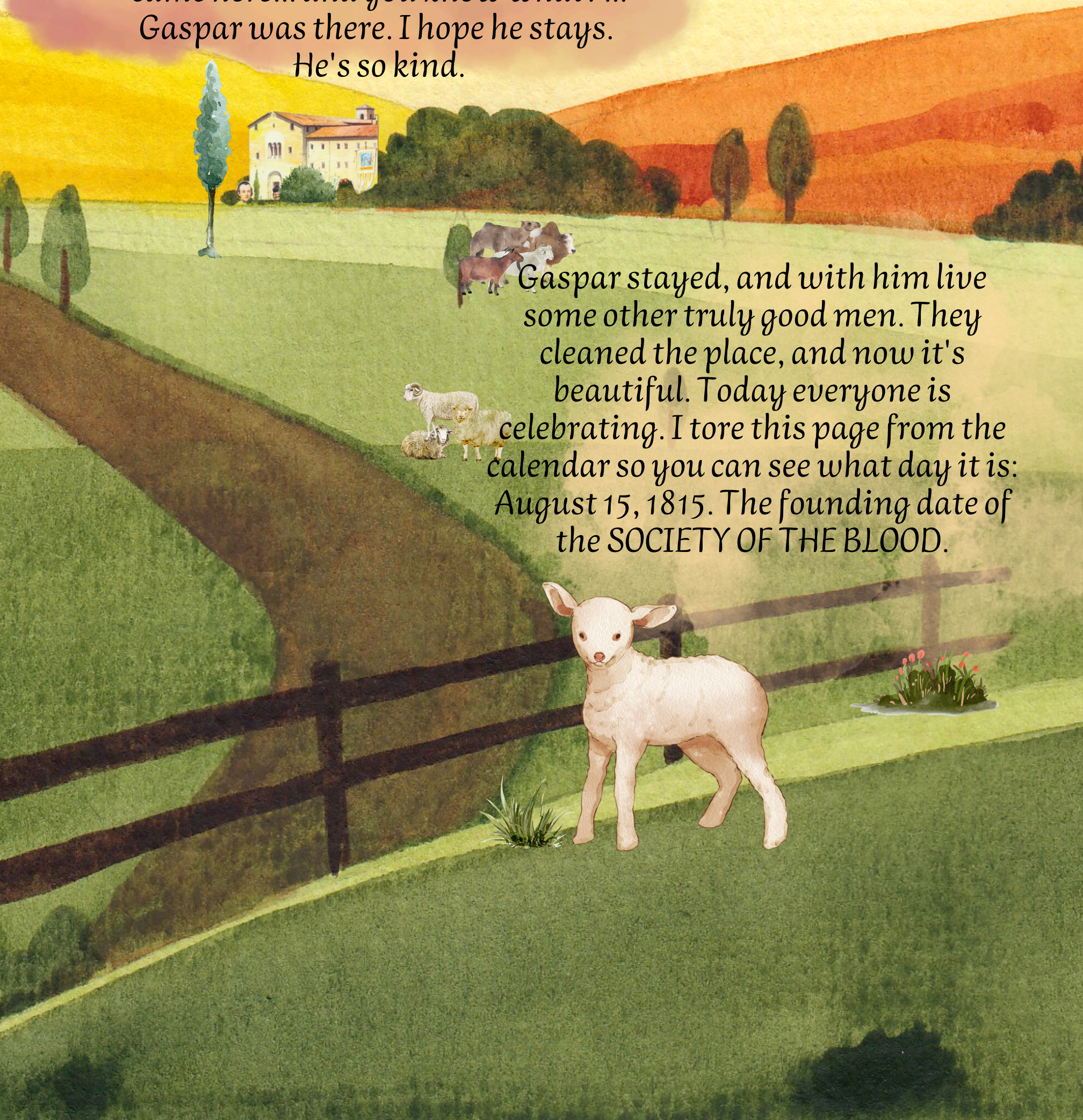
*Now the WOLVES are
occupying Rome, and our
shepherds are hiding us in
caves in the fields.*

*I listened to our shepherds and
discovered that Gaspar had
already been in prison for four
years. I hope he doesn't get sick
and die.*

*The only advantage I can
think of about prison life is
that lamb chops are never
served.*

This is San Felice, and it's almost dilapidated. We used to take shelter here during the winter because... there was an old abandoned monastery that we used as a sheepfold. This morning some men came here... and you know what? ... Gaspar was there. I hope he stays. He's so kind.

Gaspar stayed, and with him live some other truly good men. They cleaned the place, and now it's beautiful. Today everyone is celebrating. I tore this page from the calendar so you can see what day it is: August 15, 1815. The founding date of the SOCIETY OF THE BLOOD.



What does Re-form mean?

I hear these men talk so much about the reform of society and the Church. It can't mean re-building because they talk about re-forming the clergy, and they themselves are priests. These words that begin with "re" confuse a little lamb like me. However, they seem very familiar to the common people:

re-search

re-produce

re-born.

13. Gaspar is called: THE APOSTLE OF THE BLOOD. I wonder why he loves this title so much. There is so much violence everywhere: so much blood flows from the victims. It comes to mind: Even Jesus was a victim of violence: a voluntary victim. He shed His Blood to prove His love. Yes, the Precious Blood is a good sign today: a sign of consolation to the suffering, a promise of Eternal Life. Now if a lamb can understand this, everyone must understand.

14. Gaspar likes to talk about the LAMB SLAUGHTERED FOR SINS.

(I've seen images of Him: His blood falling into a chalice...) I don't like to think about death; and therefore I don't like bandits. They love lamb chops... They always steal from our flock.



Gaspar is afraid of no one.
He walks through the fields and across
the hills alone. Then he stops and talks
to the bandits for hours. There's
always a difference after Gaspar
visits them.

Many of them leave their hiding place
and return home to lead a better life.

Gaspar always makes me think
of the Good Shepherd: always
looking for the poor, the weak,
and the sick. He has healed many
people. I have seen him. He also
seeks out the lost sheep... and
those in need. Many of the
shepherds attend his missions...
and I follow him as much as I
can. One time, when I was
listening to Gaspar, quietly
among the shepherds' children,
lightning and thunder began...
and then it rained! (I wanted my
umbrella.) Gaspar continued to
speak about how much God loves
us and cares for us. The people
were fascinated. Some ran away
(leaving the sermon) and got
wet. Everyone who stayed there...
(you won't believe it) stayed dry!
What do you think of this?

Another time, I pretended to be sick because he wanted to be carried (you can't leave a sick lamb in the fields). My shepherd took me and we went. Gaspar spoke for a long time, and I took a nap. Then, all of a sudden, I woke up and saw a huge bonfire. People were throwing away books (I think the bad ones), knives and sticks... and whiskey bottles... and many other things (used for superstitious rites; what do I know?!) I'm sorry I slept, because now I can't tell you how it all started.

But I can say that the people, before scattering, exchanged many kisses and hugs. There was laughter and singing; as if it were an epidemic of love. It was beautiful!

Once, Gaspar went to the village of Acuto to give a mission. I think everyone in the village went to one function or another. There were processions and singing... sermons and masses.

Gaspar helped the men of the village make a large wooden cross. On the last day, they placed it in the square.

That day, Gaspar promised the people that God had a wonderful plan for Acuto and that one day He would send them SOMEONE SPECIAL. After 12 years, in 1834, SOMEONE SPECIAL arrived, and you know WHO SHE IS.



That same year—1822—
Gaspar went to VALLECORSA,
another mountain village, to
preach a mission.

You are smarter than me, and
you know about the meeting
with MARIA DE MATTIAS. I
am sincerely glad they met,
otherwise she would have
gone to some cloistered
monastery. It would have
been a shame for the women
of Italy... as well as for you...
and for all of God's people
throughout the world.

Now...Maria understood us lambs,
and she loved us since she was a
child. I'd love to tell you her story...
but the chief ram told me to stick
with GASPAR.

In any case, this missionary had
always wanted to find someone to
start a group of ADORERS-
APOSTLES. (I like to think of them
as Shepherds.) He, that is, Gaspar,
was very happy to meet Maria,
and immediately sensed that SHE
was the person chosen by God for
this work. Gaspar was too busy to
care for her, so he asked Giovanni
Merlini to direct Maria and her
congregation.





Wait... I haven't talked about Merlini yet. He must have been involved in this story a long time ago... (at least 9 pages back) because he was one of the first men to join Gaspar in San Felice. He helped with the missions... he built churches and houses for the missionaries, he guided Maria De Mattias and the first Adorers, and did many other things. Without him, Gaspar would not have been able to do what he did.

While we're talking about Gaspar's companions, it's also good to say a word about Francesco ALBERTINI. He was Gaspar's friend, director, and inspiration since he was a seminarian. Albertini founded the CONFRATERNITY OF THE FATHERS OF THE BLOOD... and encouraged Gaspar to found a pious society of Brothers and Fathers OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD... and, with Maria, also the SISTERS ADORERS. Imagine, the fundamental articles for these nuns were written while Gaspar and Albertini were in prison.

One thing Gaspar loved as much as the missions was caring for his seminarians. It reminds me of the Mother Sheep with her little lambs. He spent hours preparing them for their consecration to God and service to the Church. He strengthened them... He taught them how to avoid dangers and overcome difficulties. Yes, Gaspar was... if not a Mother Sheep, certainly a very good Father Ram.

One thing I find difficult to understand was the misunderstanding Gaspar encountered with three Supreme Pastors. Pius VII and Leo XII didn't like the title of his congregation. But Gaspar explained and convinced them. Pius VII had heard some gossip about Gaspar and was stern with him...

But later he learned the truth and loved him. It's awful to be neglected, ignored, and mistreated by a pastor... especially if you love him and don't know why he's mistreating you. I'm glad these Popes appreciated him later. I also think he's the best... even though he was a city boy.

Another pope had a brilliant idea: Pope Gregory XVI. He wanted to honor Gaspar, and thought of sending him as Nuncio to Brazil. Although he never went, Brazil felt honored by him. There have been priests, brothers, and nuns of the Family of the Blessed Sacrament there since the 1930s. They truly count on Gaspar's protection.





Gaspar had a secret love (or at least it was secret for a time), and it was a beautiful woman.

Sometimes she's painted alone... More often with her son. Once, Gaspar asked an artist to place a chalice in the child's hand. He's very small, but he holds that chalice tightly.

Gaspar placed this painting in almost every church he visited, and it has a special place in all the missionaries' homes. I think they called her Our Lady of the Chalice... or Our Lady of the Most Precious Blood. She is beautiful.



Did you know about that epidemic in Rome in 1837? It was terrible. People were dying in the streets. While many Romans were abandoning the city, Gaspar went there to care for the sick and bury the dead. He was the kind of shepherd... who felt compelled to stay where the flock was most in need.

After hearing all about this great missionary, I bet you'd like to meet him in person. Well... that would be nice... but there's a problem: He is in heaven, beyond the pearly gate... in the eternal pastures... so you'll have to wait a bit. Gaspar spent his entire life bringing as many sheep, that is, souls, as he could to Jesus Crucified.

He died in Rome on December 28, 1837... 7 days before celebrating his 52nd birthday.



Well, folks, I've bleated
enough for now. Perhaps
someday, I'll come back to
tell you about that girl
who knows so much
about us lambs, and who
led her own flock,
(naturally, under the
inspiration of that city
boy).
Well! Well! That means:
Bye.

