



The Raoul Follereau Foundation (Malta) - The Order of Charity
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RAOUL FOLLEREAU FOUNDATION (MALTA): NGO NO. VO/0980

Order of Charity Newsletter

EDITORIAL

“Għaliex somna u int ma ħaristx, għakkisna ruġna u int ma ntbaħtx?”
 Araw, f’jum is-sawm tagħkom tagħmlu li tridu, u tgħakksu lill-ħaddiem tagħkom.
 Araw, issumu bil-kustjonijiet u l-ġlied u tidorbu bil-ponn bla ħaqq.
 Jekk issumu kif qegħdin issumu issa, leħinkom ma jinstamax fl-għoli.
 Jaqaw jien jogħġobni sawm bħal dan, jum biex bniedem jgħakkes lilu nnifsu?
 Biex ibaxxi rasu bħas-simar, u jimtedd fuq ix-xkora u r-rmied?
 Tgħidlu int dan sawm, jum jogħġob lill-Mulej?
 Jaqaw mhux dan is-sawm li jiena rrid, jigifieri, li tħoll l-irbit tal-ħażen, u tqaçcat ix-xkiel tal-madmad, li tibgħat ħielsa l-maħqurin, u tkisser kull madmad?
 Mhux li taqşam ħobżok ma’ min hu bil-ġuġ, u ddaħħal f’darek lill-imsejken bla saqaf?
 Mhux li tlibbes lil min tara għarwien, u n-nies ta’ darek ma tinsihomx?
 Imbagħad ifiġġ bħaż-żerniq id-dawl tiegħek, u malajr tagħlaqlek il-ġerħa tiegħek.
 Quddiemek timxi l-ġustizzja tiegħek, u l-glorja tal-Mulej timxi warajk.
 Jekk biss issejjaħlu, iwieġeb il-Mulej; jekk tgħajjatlu, jgħidlek: “Hawn jien”.

Qari (waqt il-quddies ta’ 28 ta’ Frar) mill-ktieb ta Izaija 58, 1-9a

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Dan il-qari fil-bidu tar-Randan japplika hafna għall-hajja tal-llum fejn azzjonijiet isiru bi skop materjali minnflok għal skopijiet spiritwali li jmxexxna lejn ix-xewqa ta’ Gesu Kristu fejn jitlobna biex inharsu lejn il-proxxmu mingħajr interessi u semplicitment b’ideja li naghmlu gid. Il-vittmi tal-lebbra huma komunita li vera ghandha bzonn ghajjnuna. Ejjew li flus li nifrankaw mis-sagrificcji materjali (nuqqas ta helu, sigaretti, xorb u pjaciri) naghdduhom lil dawk li huma fil-bzonn

L-Editur



Kindly note that the issues were delayed as a result of the Covid-19 lockdown

MISSJUNARJU QALB IL-LEBBRUŽI

John Bradburne kien missjunarju Inġliż li ġie maqtul f'Zimbabwe 40 sena ilu u għandu mnejn ikun l-ewwel qaddis tal-pajjiż. Huwa kien maħbub ħafna mill-komunità f'dan il-pajjiż fin-Nofsinhar tal-Afrika. Huwa kien ġie maħtuf u miet wara li sparawlu f'dahru.

Huwa twieled fl-1921 minn ġenituri Anglikani f'Cumbria, l-Ingilterra. Huwa kkonverta fl-1947 waqt li kien qed jgħix mal-patrijiet Benedittini wara

pellegrin fqir fil-vjaġġi tiegħu bejn pajjiżi, il-Lvant Nofsani u l-Italja.

Bradburne daħal mat-tielet Ordni Franġiskana sekulari fl-1956. Huwa kiteb lil wieħed Ġezwita li kien jgħix f'Zimbabwe u staqsieh jekk kienx hemm xi "għar" fl-Afrika fejn sata' jitlob. Dak stiednu jiltaqa' miegħu u huwa telaq fl-1962. Meta kien hemm, huwa qal lil wieħed qassis Franġiskan li fil-ħajja kellu tliet xewqat – "li naħdem mal-lebbużi, li mmut martri u li nindifen bis-suttana Franġiskana." Erba' snin wara li wasal fil-

tagħhom. Kien iqatta' s-sigħat magħhom. Kien iqum fit-tlieta kull filgħodu, jaħsel il-morda, jinfaxxalhom i-feriti, jiekol magħhom u joqgħod ikellimhom. Kien anke jgħorr lil xi wħud minnhom għall-quddies. Iżda ma damx ma kellu xi jgħid ma' min kien imexxi ċ-ċentru fejn kienu jiltaqgħu l-lebbużi minħabba l-kondizzjonijiet ħżiena li dawn kienu jgħixu fihom. Ftit wara, huwa ġie mkeċċi miċ-ċentru u ngħata l-permess biex jgħix f'kamra magħmula mil-landi f'it 'il bogħod li la kellha l-ilma u l-ebda kumdità. Huwa xorta baqa' jgħin lil-lebbużi kull



esperjenza reliġjuża fit-tieni gwerra dinjija. Minbarra li kien poeta, huwa għex bħala

pajjiż, Bradburne qabad jaħdem billi jassisti l-lebbużi fil-bżonnijiet

fejn sata'.

Mill-1964 sal-1979, Zimbabwe kienet fi gwerra ċivili u matul dan iż-żmien Bradburne ip-

proteġa lil-lebbri mill-ijgħu sfruttati. B'hekk huwa ġibed is-suspetti fuqu min-nies tal-lokal minħabba li kien barrani. Huwa ġie mitlub imur jaħdem ma' Nsara oħra biex jevita xi periklu iżda huwa rrifjuta. Bradburne ġie maqgħul ta' 58 sena u ndifen bis-suttana Franġiskana kif xtaq. Għall-ħniena li wera lejn il-lebbri, Bradburne huwa msejjaħ bħala "Damjan tas-seklu 20" għal San Damjan ta' Molokai li għex fil-Hawaii.

"Il-lebbri jhobbuh għax is-sagrifiċċji li għamel għalihom ma jistgħux jinsewhom," qalet Kate McPherson li ħadmet miegħu fl-istess missjoni. F'intervista li saret mal-BBC, Fr Fidelis Mukonori li wkoll ħadem miegħu qal li Bradburne kien qallu, "Mill-ewwel ġurnata li rajt lil dawn in-nies indunajt li jien ukoll kont lebbri qalb il-poplu tiegħi. Ġejt apprezzat minnhom u bdew isejjuli Baba John."

Waħda mill-lebbri Colleta Mafuta, ta' 78 sena qalet lill-BBC, "Ma kellu xejn tiegħu ħlief l-imħabba. Aħna konna ngħixu fil-ħmieġ, ma kellna l-ebda medikazzjoni, la ħwejjeġ u lanqas x'nieklu. Iżda huwa kien jieħu ħsieb kulħadd, jitmagna, jaħsilna u jinfaxxalna l-feriti."

Skont l-Independent Catholic News, tnejn min-nies fiequ b'mod mirakuluż bl-interessjoni ta' Bradburne: mara mill-Afrika ta' Isfel li reġgħet bdiet timxi u raġel mill-Iskozja li kellu tumur f'moħħu. Il-Kongregazzjoni għall-Kawzi tal-Qaddisin tal-Vatikan approvat il-kawża ta' John Bradburne biex

isir qaddis.

Kelmtejn minn għand l-Amministratur

Gheziez Benefatturi

Di hi l-ewwel darba li qed inkellimkhem imma nistgħu ngħidu li kull darba li tibgħtu donazzjoni jkolli dak il-ftit hin magħkhem meta nibgħat l-ircevuta. Dawk li jibgħatu regolarment donni drajthom, u forsi nkun aktar qribhom. Hafna anzjani jitolbuna biex nitolbu għalihom. Ohrajn juru l-preokkupazzjonijiet tagħhom jew id-dwejjaq tagħhom. Hemm min jidhol aktar fil-fond u jiftah qalbu sforz li jhossu wahdu. Jien meta naqra n-noti (għax huwa verament noti qosra) ngib quddiem għajnejja dik il-persuna li ddecidiet li tibgħat offerta għal dawk il-povri morda bil-lebbra. Dawk li jagħtu donazzjoni jistgħu jkunu rġiel, nisa, professjonisti, negozjanti, haddiema, sacerdoti u ohrajn, gejjien minn kull parti ta' Malta u Ghawdex b'ghan wieged li jgħinu l-lebbri. Ma kull ittra li nircievi nipprova nimmagina l-persuna li bagħatitha billi nifli l-envelop, il-kitba u xi

nformazzjoni li tista tghini niffirma l-wicc jew karattru. Kull darba li mmur il-Furjana biex nigbor l-ittri mill-Istitut Kattoliku nħoss certa ecitament għax nisthajjel li ser nerga niltaqgħa mal-hbieb! U fil-fatt hekk hu għax issa xi whud minnkhem drajthom sew. Il-process biex nibgħat l-ircevuti xi kultant johodli l-hin speċjalment meta l-ittri jkunu hafna. Imma jiena niehu gost nagħmel dan ix-xogħol volontarju. Certi kummenti jew ilment ngħadidhom lid-direzzjoni. Jiddispjacini meta xi hadd jgħidli li xi membru tal-familja m'għadux magħna u għalhekk nipprova nik-kunslah b'kelmtejn qosra.

Nixtieq li tiehdu pacenzja meta forsi ddumu xi ftit biex tiehdu l-ircevuta, jien mhux dejjem inkun nista nkun l-Istitut Kattoliku. Jekk tistgħu tibgħatux postal orders jew bolol għax dan jirrikjedi process hafna iżjed kumplikat u jaf inaqqas l-ammont ta' donazzjoni minħabba charges mill-posta .

Nahseb għal illum daqshekk, inselli għalikhem u grazzi tal-generozita tagħkhem.

Lino Pace Taliana
Amministratur

Scarred Lives: The Lasting Hurt of China's Leprosy Villages

YUNNAN, Southwest China — Seventy-three-year-old Tao Linxian tries not to think about the life she could have had. What's the point, she asks, of dwelling on the disease that robbed her of a blissful marriage, drove her from her home,

and slowly, inexorably, corroded her health?

But it's hard not to reflect on the past in Luoxianguan,

the quiet, isolated mountain village where Tao has lived for nearly half a century. Nearly all of Luoxianguan's dozen or so elderly residents were quarantined here to receive treatment for leprosy — a chronic, infectious, and incapacitating disease that can cause extensive nerve damage, muscle weakness, and skin ulcers. Although they are now cured, many villagers, including Tao, have been left permanently disfigured or disabled.

Luoxianguan, which lies off a dusty track about an hour from

the town of Xiangyun, is one of an archipelago of so-called leprosy villages established by the Chinese government in the 1950s to treat an estimated 380,000 people with the disease. From a high of some 1,200 villages, hospitals, and dispensaries in 1980, there were 657 such settlements left in China in 2012. And with the World Health Organization considering the disease elimi-



nated as a public health issue in the country, the Chinese government has been trying to further close and consolidate leprosy villages, but ineffective governance, combined with enduring social discrimination, mean that many remain.

China's leprosy villages have a complicated legacy. Officials credit them with helping to check the spread of the disease and laying the foundation for its eventual eradication. The country's leprosy

rates fell from 5.6 cases per 100,000 people in 1958 to just 0.1 cases per 100,000 people in 2009, according to medical journal *The Lancet*, which estimated there were just 6,600 people with the disease as of 2012. Most onetime leprosy village residents have reintegrated into society.

But the impressive statistics mask the tremendous human cost that government responses to leprosy have exacted over several decades.

To prevent the disease from spread-

ing, most settlements were placed in remote, sparsely populated areas, cutting residents off from the outside world.

And to speak with many older residents of leprosy villages is to hear tales of lives ruptured by state-sanctioned separation, youngsters spurned by communities deeply fearful of the disease, and futures ruined by ill

-advised government bans on getting married and having children.

The latter policy doomed the young Tao's marriage to the man she loved, Li Xiao. When she was diagnosed with leprosy at 18, Tao had recently wed Li and moved into his family home in rural Yunnan. The young couple was looking forward to a happy future together.

But Tao's diagnosis shattered those dreams. Unable to bear the thought of a childless union, they divorced in 1963. "We were both still so young — like two just-risen suns," Tao says. "I couldn't ruin his prospects. I

divorced him so he could have a different life with someone else.”

In 1960s China, there were few effective treatments for leprosy. Many people, including Chinese officials, mistakenly thought the disease was fast-spreading, incurable, and transmissible from mother to child during pregnancy. These beliefs shaped a powerful social stigma against people with leprosy and implicitly coerced them into moving to leprosy villages — also often the only places in the region where the government made spe-

cialist care easily accessible. peak, the village housed between 300 and 400 residents. Tao and her neighbors lived off the land, growing rice, corn, and potatoes. Men and women lived separately and were not allowed to marry or have children. Tao was put on a course of the anti-leprosy drug dapsone, the standard treatment in Luoxianguan at the time. The medicine worked slowly, but by 1985, she was ready to be discharged.



cialist care easily accessible.

In fact, leprosy isn't highly contagious. Though it's not known exactly how the disease spreads — scientists think it is transmitted by inhaling particles from an infected person's coughs or sneezes — it takes months of close contact with untreated individuals to do so. Transmission does not take place through sexual contact or from a mother to her unborn child. Anti-leprosy medications have been available since the 1940s, and today most patients treat the disease through multidrug therapy.

But Tao didn't know any of that back then. In the following years, her disease slowly took hold, and in 1972, she was admitted to Luoxianguan for treatment. At its

Tao could leave and go back home, but for various reasons, she didn't. Li had remarried; discrimination meant life outside Luoxianguan would be difficult. And so she lingered — as have many other former patients in the remaining settlements. Economically unviable, these villages mean leprosy's hardships continue, even though the disease is no longer the threat it once seemed.

<http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1004106/scarred-lives-the-lasting-hurt-of-chinas-leprosy-villages>

The Leprosy Outbreak on Robben Island

From Prison to Infirmary

Robben Island was an ideal place to send the more undesirable citizens of South Africa who struggled to fit into society physically, mentally and socially. Sticking these unfortunate souls on the island, far away from the eyes and conscience of the populace, seemed to be an ideal solution and, from 1846 to 1931, Robben Island was predominantly used as an isolation tank for the socially undesirable.

them as unclean and hazardous. Even today, the common-knowledge of leprosy suggests a fatal and highly contagious disease that makes your fingers fall off and your skin rot. The reality, however, is far less fearsome.

On Robben Island, the custodians of the General Infirmary cared for the lepers as best they could. In addition to giving them powerful and unnecessary laxatives, it was thought that sea water was beneficial for those living with the disease, and a tidal pool was constructed at the far-end of the island where they could bathe. The remains of this pool, called the Baths of Bethesda, are still visible today and the stagnant, black water that lies within



In the Mid-1800's, leprosy broke out. The lepers were a particularly unfortunate group. Firstly, they were victims of a horrible disease (which then had no known cure) and, secondly, they were victims of an ignorant and unforgiving society which shunned

the crumbling stone retaining-wall is an evocative echo of an unhappy community.

The lepers of the Cape were thus torn away from any family and friends that they might have had, and dumped on the island.

Living Conditions on the Island

Living conditions on the island were dire. The water supply was brackish, the climate was unforgiving, the loneliness was overwhelming and diseases such as dysentery were prevalent.

In the 1850s, however, a number of scandals broke regarding the conditions on the island and the authorities were forced to dismiss the Superintendent. In the 1860s, a new superintendent tried to reform the treatment of lunatics, replacing chains and beatings with occupational therapy and humane supervision. Facilities were still woefully inadequate, however, and the status of the inmates did not really justify the cost of building new structures. The first major renovations of the General Infirmary were only undertaken in the 1890s.

In 1931, the League of Nations Health Organisation stated that compulsory segregation of lepers was no longer necessary and should be replaced with a more lenient 'isolation' policy that made allowance for infectious and non-infectious cases of the disease. The leper asylum on Robben Island was closed that same year. The remaining patients were sent to Westfort Hospital, near Pretoria.

By David Fleminger <http://southafrica.co.za/leprosy-outbreak-on-robben-island.html>

Il-bank tiegħek fil-qalb tal-komunità

L-HSBC huwa l-bank li jinsab fil-qalba tal-komunità tiegħek. B'għarfien internazzjonali u esperjenza lokali, aħna nistgħu nghinuk tiegħu hsieb aħjar il-finanzi tiegħek. Il-fergħat tagħna huma miftuħin kuljum f'diversi lokalitajiet madwar Malta u Ghawdex, b'xi whud mill-fergħat joffru wkoll servizz ta' filgħaxija.

Għalhekk ejja żurna u flimkien niddiskutu l-bżonnijiet bankarji tiegħek. L-impjegati tagħna, kollha mharrġa fil-*customer service* u mmexxija minn *branch manager* b'esperjenza kbira fil-qasam bankarju jinsabu herqana biex ikunu ta' servizz għalik.

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Approvat u mahruġ mill-HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c. 116, Triq l-Arcisqof, Valletta VLT1444. 101009 – 02/2018

Nirnexxu flimkien

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The Raoul Follereau Foundation [Malta] - Order of Charity is a non-profit organisation set up in Malta in 1967 with the goal of collecting monetary support for the assistance of lepers throughout the World. It forms part of the international Raoul Follereau Foundation established in 1946 by the world famous anthropologist who died in 1977. The main aims of the Foundation are:

- to encourage social help to those suffering from leprosy;
- to ascertain that these people are treated as they should;
- to help lepers find their place in society;
- to give financial help to leprosaria and missions working with them.

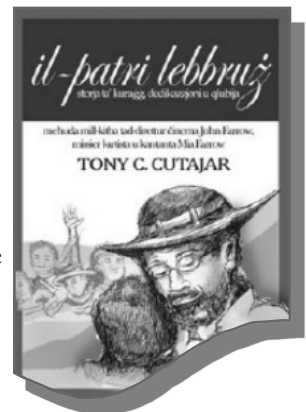


Raoul Follereau

Help us help fight the scourge of leprosy

Kif tista int tghin ix-xoghol tal-Ordni tal-Karità

- Billi issir membru tal-għaqda—dan jiswa biss is-somma ta' €10 fis-sena. Li tkun membru jfisser li tircevi in-newsletter regolari b'mogħod elektroniku jew pubblikata.
- Billi tagħti donazzjoni b'kull ammont li tixtieq int. Sintendi kull donazzjoni tigi rikonnexuta b'rcevuta
- Billi tixtri il-ktieb *Il-Patri Lebbruz* li jipprezenta storja ta' kuragg, dedikazzjoni u qlubija tal-qaddis li gie ddikjarat il-patron tal-presuni morda bil-lebbra. Il-Patri Lebbruz Damjan ta' Molokai kien mar jahdem f'kolonja tal-lebbuzzi abbandunati minn kulhadd. Għalihom kien sacerdot, tabib, bennej, mexxej, habib, missier. Fi ftit kliem kien l-għajn tas-salvazzjoni u t-tama tagħhom. Jum fost l-oħrajn, beda l-omelija tiegħu bil-kliem: "Għez iez huti lebbuzzi..." biex hekk qasam mal-kompatrijotti tiegħu fuq il-Ġz ira ta' Molokaj, l-aħbar li hu wkoll kien ittiehed mill-marda. Miet ta' 49 sena. Huwa u gie ddikjarat qaddis sitt snin ilu mill-Papa Benedittu XVI. Il-Ktieb jinbiegħ €6.50 biss inkluss il-posta. Ibghat cekk ta' €6.50 pagabbli lill-Ordni tal-Karita.



Offerta mill-qalb

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⇒ Nixtieq insir membru ta' l'Ordni tal-Karità u nibdha nircevi in-newsletter regolarment....€10

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