

was executed.
On May 4 1997, he was beatified by Pope John Paul II, the first gypsy to be so honoured.

The example and sacrifice of the Blessed Ceferino should encourage us to build an empathy with all contemporary travelling peoples.

**Tom Reilly,
Edinburgh**

Photographs taken through an electron microscope reveal voids (holes) that occur naturally in the latex rubber used to manufacture condoms, 50 times larger than the AIDS virus. Human sperm is 500 times larger than the AIDS virus. So, this ratio of 500 (sperm); 50 (latex holes); 1 (AIDS virus) clearly illus-

needs to be reprimanded.
Totti is reported as asking for forgiveness from Our Lady and saying that she alone can forgive him. Surely forgiveness of sins comes only from God. Our Lady can and does intercede for us but has not the power to forgive. This should have been pointed

Christian conscience, nor can we demand that it does, but this new approach of involving ourselves with the political process seem to be far more constructive and sensible than simply attacking any social change.

**Simon Jarvis
Leicester**

be to prepare our youngsters for marriage from childhood making a very careful choice. This used to be done in schools in our day but now, perhaps, it must be done at home.

**S Johnson
Blackpool**

Off on holiday? Don't leave Jesus behind!

YOU'VE packed your sunscreen, shorts, swimming costume and/or trunks, and in your hand luggage lies a carefully chosen book with which to pass away long hot holiday afternoons in the sun.

The kids, or even grandkids, are neatly belted up in the car and you're ready for the off. But as you shut the front door for the final time, you ask yourself: "Now did I forget anything?" Or perhaps worse still: "Did I leave someone behind?"

Holidays are an important way through which we all relax, recharge our batteries and take stock of life. Whether we are sun-seekers or sun-shirkers, holidays are necessary and (more importantly) fun. Most of us work hard all year round and we deserve a break. St Augustine said: "The charity of truth seeks holy leisure." (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2185).

Psychologists tell us that for our all-round health, we need to have times when we switch off. As Catholics, there is nothing at odds with what the medical professionals advise us, and the norms of our Christian way of life. Holidays are a perfect way through which we engender that sense of well-being. What can happen however, is that we neglect the spiritual aspect of our holiday time and leave a very important person behind.

What so marks out the saints is



Continuing our monthly series under the auspices of the Catholic Agency to Support Evangelisation, CASE team member **Clare Ward** urges each one of us to go out and share the Good News



that Jesus was barred from no aspect of their lives. They proclaimed him everywhere and at all times, in a variety of different ways, sometimes preaching, sometimes silent, sometimes through actions. As each of us prepares to go on our "jollies", that same challenge to witness to our Lord and Saviour, in each and every moment, faces us in these times.

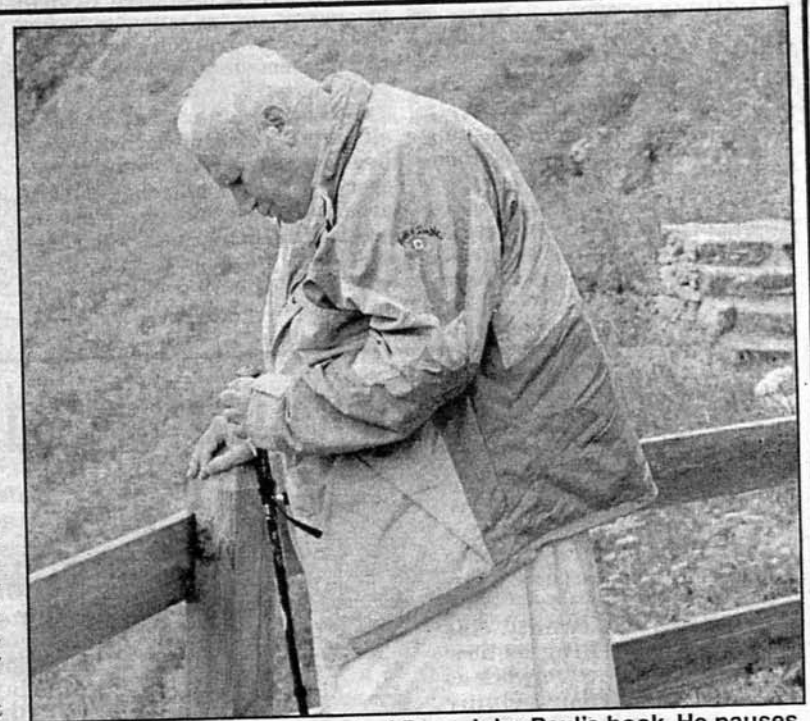
We must ask ourselves if, holidays or no holidays, our Catholic faith is something we are ready to proclaim wherever we find ourselves in life? Perhaps in the past we have been content to say: "Oh, we didn't manage to get to Mass on holiday, we didn't like to ask" or "I didn't bother packing my Bible. It was too much of a load."

Being a Catholic isn't something, come our annual holidays, we can leave behind. Unlike work, it is something we don't get time off from, however well we might have behaved the year round. In most holiday destinations, it is possible to find a quiet church to pray in and attend Mass. Whatever the holiday rep might think about us, we must

have the courage and faith to ask him or her to find out service times. It is a powerful and courageous way through which we can give witness to them and other holiday makers about the pearl of great price in our lives - Jesus Christ.

The beach, too, is not a place out of bounds to Gospel proclamation. Beaches are places where we can give witness to Christ; for example through the modesty of our swimming attire, through our reading material and conversation. Even if I was at the time slightly embarrassed, I remember going on holiday with my mother to the South of France some years back and the positive impact she made on others by her choice of beach reading - the biography of Mother Teresa!

Our behaviour on holiday can speak powerfully to others of the presence of Christ in our lives. Of course, enjoy a bottle of wine, a few beers, a night cap. Go for a dance, a walk or a meal out. As Christians however, we have a moral code that follows us on holiday. As Catholics, we are called to set an example to others. We are called to celebrate,



Play and pray: Take a leaf out of Pope John Paul's book. He pauses to reflect by a waterfall during his summer break in the Italian Alps

have a good time, but not if it leads us to sin.

Sending a piece of our holiday happiness to another is an important way through which we can witness to others of the love of Christ. I heard it once said that we should send postcards to people on holiday, especially to the sick, the housebound and the elderly. It is a simple and beautiful way through which we can tell them they are in our thoughts and prayers across the miles.

The point is that even during the holiday period, our faith can't be compartmentalised. Being a Catholic and a follower of Jesus is as much part of our holiday experience as our normal everyday lives. Going

on holiday does mean that we leave concerns, worries and responsibilities behind, to some extent. But, it doesn't mean that we leave behind a person - Jesus Christ.

This summer be bold and courageous, take and be ready to give witness to the person of Jesus while you are away from home. However bright the sunshine might or might not be, whether you choose to go to the beach, mountains, rivers, or stay at home, let your inner tan, your inner light shine.

Together may we echo the prayer of Cardinal John Henry Newman: "May I shine, Lord, as you shine, so that I may be a light to others." Happy holidays from all the team at CASE.