

(See also 22 January)

- 1 Queen Victoria, after the death of her husband (Prince Albert), spent a good part of her time at Balmoral Castle in the Scottish Highlands. Walking one day by herself, it started to rain. Queen Victoria stopped for shelter at a nearby cottage, and knocked on the door, hoping to be able to borrow an umbrella.
- 2 The woman inside did not recognise the Queen, and the Queen didn't say who she was. The woman showed her annoyance at being disturbed. She closed her door, with the Queen still standing outside, and then chose a broken umbrella to lend her. "Here", she said in a nasty way, as she thrust it into the hands of the Queen, quickly closing the door on her again. Having thanked her, Queen Victoria returned to Balmoral Castle.
- 3 The following morning, several of the Queen's men drove to the cottage in full uniform. "Madam, the Queen thanks you and returns the umbrella that you lent to her." The woman was annoyed and ashamed when she realised it was the Queen to whom she had been nasty and short-tempered to. The men heard her mutter:

*"If only I'd known,  
I'd have given her my best umbrella."*

- 4 *Let us pray:*

**Lord,  
inspire me to live in such a way  
that I always give of my best  
and be welcoming and generous  
towards others. Amen.**

- 5 *"If only I'd known, I'd have given my best."*

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in  
*'Praying Each Day of the Year'*  
a 3-volume book  
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine  
to research this topic further.

This material is part of  
the prayer and education website  
of the De La Salle Brothers  
in Great Britain:  
[www.prayingeachday.org](http://www.prayingeachday.org)