

- 1 Hitler's scientists set out to develop weapons that might bring the Second World War to a successful conclusion for Germany. "Intelligence" reports confirmed that a new terror weapon (later called the "V-1 flying bomb") was being produced at a weapons' base on the Baltic coast called Peenemünde. The night of 17th/18th August 1943 saw the bombing of Peenemünde by the Royal Air Force, which set back production of those terror weapons by several months.
- 2 The "V-1" was a pilotless flying bomb in the shape of an aeroplane. It needed a long ramp from which to be launched, and then flew at 370 miles per hour. The V-1 used the first jet engines, and carried a calculated amount of fuel such that they would fall and explode on London. They were called "*doodlebugs*" or "*buzz-bombs*" by Londoners. People felt safe as long as they could still hear the distinctive noise of the plane. When the noise suddenly stopped, everyone knew that the plane with its explosives would quickly hit the ground.
- 3 Films of the time show some of the V-1s being destroyed by anti-aircraft guns from the ground, or by bullets from aeroplanes, or even by having their wings tipped over by the RAF planes, causing them to crash and explode in unpopulated areas.
- 4 The V-weapons were named after the German word for "vengeance". The "V-2" was even more deadly than the "V-1", and did not need ramps to launch it. It was a long-range 14 metre (47 foot) long rocket, with a one-tonne warhead, hitting its target at 3,000 m.p.h (5,000 k.p.h.). Travelling faster than sound, the rockets were not heard before landing.

5 *Let us pray:*

**God our Father,  
we read of the commandment  
"do not kill"  
and think it doesn't apply to us  
because we don't take anyone's life.**  
**Yet there are times  
when we take life from others  
by cruel words, sarcasm,  
doing people down,  
and gossiping.**  
**Lead us to choose to bring life to others  
- and not death.**  
**Inspire us to break the cycle  
of whatever is negative  
or violent or evil  
whenever we encounter them.**  
**Let us not look for vengeance  
- to get our own back -  
but lead us to be generous  
and ready to conquer evil  
with goodness. Amen.**

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)