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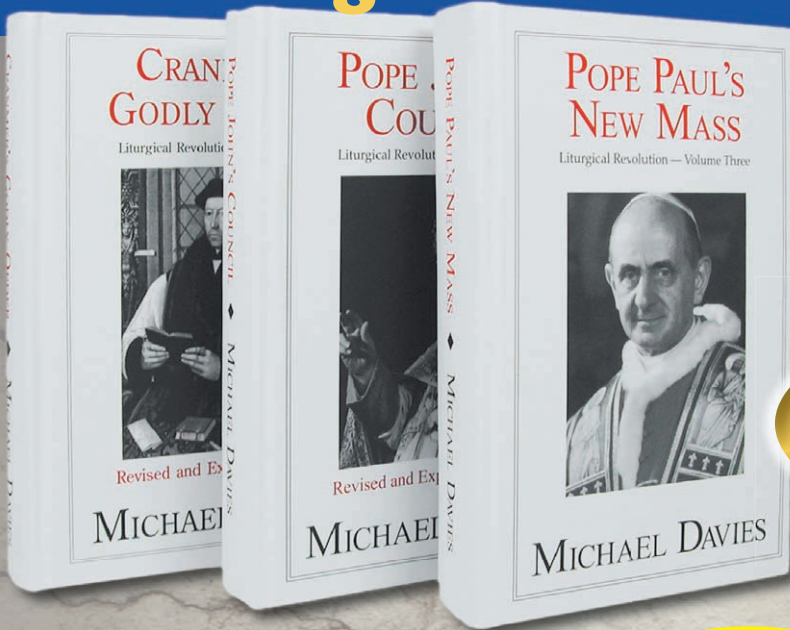
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to the Immaculate Heart of Mary*

March 21, 2010

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—Pope St. Pius X

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Motto of Pope St. Pius X

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ON OUR COVER: The three children of Fatima; Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta.

# Letter from the Editor

What makes Fatima so interesting for traditional Catholics is its relation to the history of the 20th century, especially Church history.

Our attention is immediately drawn to the year of the first apparition: 1917. It was the year in which was proclaimed the most recent revolution in the West: the Russian Revolution with its atheism. In the message of Fatima the “errors of Russia” are clearly mentioned. This seems to be a codeword for atheistic communism. That communism would spread its errors if the world would not convert was prophesied. The applications are manifold.

It was not only individual persons who sympathized with the atheistic ideology of the communists; there were groups and movements who supported it. This happened outside the Church (governments) and inside of it. Is the experiment of the “worker-priests” imaginable without the influence of communist ideology? (Worker-priests were mainly an initiative of the Catholic Church in France, subsequently imitated by the Church in Belgium and Italy, for priests to take up work in such places as car factories “to experience the everyday life of the working class”; a worker-priest was any priest who was “freed from parochial work by his bishop, lived only by full-time labor in a factory or other place of work, and was indistinguishable in appearance from an ordinary workingman.”)

We should not forget at this point that the Russian Revolution of 1917 introduced or continued the revolutionary principle of internal war in society; its transformation became a legitimate means to the end of a “better future.” Hard times and even death were defended as a “sacrifice” for this “better future.” In this sense rulers like Stalin could produce an incredible number of deaths, a number which was claimed by Alexander Solzhenitsyn to be as high as 60 million, without counting war casualties.

It is one of the great paradoxes of history that a movement which denied any supernatural end of human life, and limited the purpose of social activities to a function and end in this world, produced more misery and a higher death toll than any other movement before.

The second reason for the importance of 1917 is the link to the crisis in the Church. Many would say that communism has lost its power in the world. But there are two things to consider here:

1) First, the statement that communism has lost its power is more of a political observation and not so much a military one. “The wish is father to the thought” might apply here; some do not want to see a reality which might be uncomfortable for them.

2) “The errors of Russia” seem not to refer to a military victory, but rather to an ideology, in particular to an ideology against religion and the Catholic Church. This understanding seems perfectly in tune with the introduction of socialist and communist principles in Western societies and also in the Church. Example: the West has a problem with its reproduction rate and with its attitude towards marriage and family. We see destructive elements introduced for the family, like divorce and abortion. The Catholic Church unhappily is not clear in its attitude concerning those issues. An abusive practice of reducing the criteria for receiving sacraments, and bishops who support—directly or indirectly—abortion are witnesses to these errors and to the crisis in the Church as well.

This is precisely what makes Fatima so relevant for our situation and our times. The prophecy contains a warning which is similar to the prophecies of the Old Testament: “Convert me, and I shall be converted, for thou art the Lord my God” (Jer. 31:18) or of the New Testament: “...God, raising up his Son, hath sent him to bless you, that every one may convert himself from his wickedness” (Acts 3:26). It is a call for conversion, which is so typical for any true Christian prophecy: a call for repentance and change of life. Revolution is about changing this world, changing circumstances of life and changing others, whereas the Christian knows that the essential work is to change his own heart, to convert, rather than to change others...

Fatima is not only in the tradition of the Biblical prophecies; it is also in the tradition of the action of the Blessed Virgin Mary on the modern world and in the tradition of the piety of the saints (for example, St. Alphonsus and St. Louis de Montfort) as well. Although there seems to be some confusion about false apparitions, it is safe for a Catholic to believe in the important apparitions of La Salette, Lourdes, and Fatima.

Instaurare Omnia in Christo,  
**FR. MARKUS HEGGENBERGER**

Dear Faithful,

On March 21, 2010, the United States District of the Society of Saint Pius X will renew in a most solemn manner, its consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

We might wonder, “Why do we need a consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary? Why is it so important for our souls, our families, our whole District, even our country?”

The first answer to this question is that Our Lady herself, at Fatima, requested it. She asked not only that the Pope consecrate Russia to her Immaculate Heart, but also that *all* souls should come to her.

She gave us a last and supreme means of salvation—the devotion to her Immaculate Heart. By consecrating the District of the United States of America to her, the Society of Saint Pius X, its Superior, its priests and faithful, come to her with great confidence, to beg her intercession. We intend to offer ourselves wholly; we give our lives, our merits, our prayers, and sacrifices to her so that she may use them for our own salvation and for the salvation of many souls.

Our Lady calls upon us to consecrate ourselves to her in order that we might convert. It is, in fact, an invitation to change our way of living, for she wants us to lead holier lives. She not only implores us, but will also help us to stop sinning and to obey God’s commandments. She never ceases to remind us that sins lead souls to hell, for the direct consequence of sins is the perversion of souls which results in the eternal damnation of many.

She reminds us also that the slavery of perverted societies, which sadly we see so much in our times across the world, is also a consequence of sin. The sins of mankind have led society to enter into a general apostasy; an organization of nations and a world without God—against God. A practical atheism has led people to believe that their happiness can only be found here below on earth, as if God does not exist and as if there were no life after this one. The whole of modern society, with its “Godless” program, leads souls away from God, even wishing to abort all possible reaction. It leads not only to a certain spiritual death, but also to a spiritual apathy or indifference, a spiritual sleepiness to which is joined a deep blindness—with no counterreaction. It is indeed a new form of slavery—barely discernible, but enslavement none the less, for man without God always results in enslavement. A society without God engenders the enslavement of self to one’s base passions and sins. Thus apostasy—the abandonment of Faith—makes us slaves.

“The truth shall make you free,” said Our Lord (Jn. 8:32). Thus, the first and main answer to the situation in which we find the world today is spiritual. It is a question of conversion, of holiness; a search for spiritual perfection, working, as Our Lord said, to “be perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt. 5:48). There is no other way for us than to continually strive for sanctity.

It is here and now that we absolutely need the prayers and protection of our heavenly Mother—the Mother of all men. She is the only one who can obtain this conversion for us from Our Lord. We are in need of the intercession of the Mediatrix of all graces, the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Her prayer is all powerful against the spirit of evil, which today pervades everywhere. She can bring to our souls that interior peace which comes from the reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ; and it is only when Our Lord reigns in our souls that we can hope and trust that this peace may return to the world.

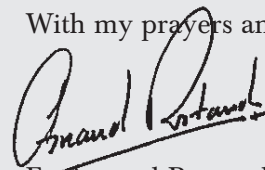
Our conversion is the first grace we ask for in our Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. We hope to renew our devotion to the Immaculate Heart, especially in the practice of the First Saturdays and in a spirit of reparation. We wish to console the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, to make reparation for the numerous offenses which she receives from so many who despise her and refuse her maternal intercession.

The end of the Rosary Crusade for the consecration of Russia is a good occasion for us to renew our dedication to Our Lady. It will help strengthen our devotion to her. In addition to the efforts of praying and sacrificing for that intention, it behooves us to offer ourselves to her. These efforts, indeed, must not end here; we must keep up our devotion without discouragement, calling for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart.

With great confidence, we come to Our Blessed Mother, who is “the hope of the hopeless.” Here are we—hopeless without her—full of hope while in her hands.

May the Immaculate Heart of Mary protect and sanctify all the priests and faithful of the District of the United States of the Society of Saint Pius X.

With my prayers and blessing,



Fr. Arnaud Rostand



Introductory  
Letter from  
US District  
Superior  
Fr. Arnaud  
Rostand  
about the  
Consecration  
to the  
Immaculate  
Heart of  
Mary and  
the Rosary  
Crusade of  
the Society  
of St. Pius X.



# *Interview with Bishop Fellay on the Rosary Crusade*

**Your Excellency, you called for a Rosary Crusade from May 1, 2009, until May 31, 2010. What was the reason for such an important effort?**

It is obvious that we are not in normal times. We are still in the time covered by the message of Fatima. In 1917, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to three little children and promised that, in the end, her Immaculate Heart would triumph. In 2000, apparently something of what was called the “Third Secret of Fatima” was released by the Vatican, to the dissatisfaction of almost everybody.

Frankly, it is not over. The triumph of the Immaculate Heart in whatever form has not been realized. That means that it is still to come. We expect that with such a triumph, a part or all of the present crisis of the Church will also be over. So we implore heaven to do both at the same time by begging and longing for the magnificent



triumph of our heavenly Mother, the Mother of God.

**What were the historical examples which prompted your decision for a “Rosary Crusade”?**

Yes, indeed, there are several examples in history of divine intervention, a true intervention of God or His saints in human history. This is specifically the case after the prayer of the Rosary.

One of the most famous is the battle of Lepanto. Pope St. Pius

V, seeing the perils encountered by Christendom, defending itself against the threatening Turks, called all of Europe to a spiritual crusade of Rosaries. To this spiritual fight was united the Christian fleet who met the naval forces of Islam by Lepanto. Although smaller in numbers, by the end of the day the victory was so significant that for many years, Christians were left in peace.

The great battle of Vienna, led by Sobieski, again against the Turks, is also attributed to the prayer of the Rosary. Also in Austria, the freedom from the occupation of Communist Russia in 1955 is considered as a victory due to the prayer of the holy Rosary.

**Certain people would say that the Catholic Church is so violently under attack by her enemies that prayer does not seem sufficient to support the Church. What do you think of such doubts?**

When we pray, we count on the help of Almighty God and His saints. This power cannot be compared to any human force, as strong as they might be. God is the only infinite, infinite in power—thus we call Him the almighty God—and this word has to be taken as meaning “without diminution.” God can really do whatever He wants. Prayer, especially the prayers He Himself has given us, can in all truth obtain what human resources could never have achieved.

It is true that one of the conditions of efficient prayer is the trust we put in it to be heard. If we ourselves do not see it as realistic that God might listen to us and do what we ask for, we shall get nothing. We have to remember these words always: “If your faith would be as big as a mustard seed, you would tell that mountain to move and it would happen.” We should rather say that prayer is the only proportionate means to resolve the problem the Church is facing. This also includes all other necessary actions on our side, of course.

### **It is evidently difficult to speak of the Rosary Crusade without speaking of Fatima and especially the Third Secret. What is the importance of the “third secret”?**

We might say that this secret is as proportionally important as the way some try to avoid its full publication. We most likely must accept that the Third Secret speaks about the present trials and maybe some future events of the Church. It does not only include the description of disasters, but the promise of the victory of our Lady. This part we already know. We may say that we could find in it the key to getting out of the present crisis and some precision about it.

### **Do you think that the Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary has been done?**

We might say that some consecration to the Immaculate Heart has been done, even some conse-

cration of Russia, though imperfectly and not respecting all the requirements indicated by the most blessed Virgin Mary. Pope Pius XII already consecrated the world and Pope John Paul II mentioned the country where the Icon of Mary is venerated. But all of the bishops were not united to the consecration of Russia.

### **Why do you think Pius XII did a “Consecration of the World” to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and not the Consecration of Russia—about which he certainly knew?**

There are at least two explanations. The first is that there was under Pope Pius XII much opposition to such a consecration and the second is that another revelation came from Spain at about the same time asking for the consecration of the world (to the Sacred Heart?). Pius XII might have tried to combine both in one consecration. Anyway, when he did, some of the miracles of Fatima were repeated for him in the Vatican: a rain of roses and the dance of the sun.

### **How do you think the consecration of Russia could affect the situation of the Church?**

In the history of mankind, things are much more linked than what we think. Very often, however, we do not see or grasp it. And so the consecration of Russia would free that country from its errors, and it will convert, as Mary says. How can this affect the crisis in the Church? In many ways, but here we are really speculating. I prefer to let the Mother of God have free hands to do what she wants. She speaks of triumph, and that certainly means a great victory against the forces of evil. Such a spiritual victory would not be so spectacular if not accompanied by a real rise of the Church. Do not ask me how, though.

### **Do you think the results of the consecration of Russia will be entirely supernatural? Some seem to imagine immediate political or natural effects.**

There is no need to reduce the power of God or Mary. It can easily be both. Would a conversion of Russia be only supernatural or not include some human parts? The present crisis also has a human side, for example the empty churches and convents. God could fill them again with people of good faith converting.

### **What is the importance of the Rosary Crusade for the influence of Tradition in the Catholic Church?**

Very simply, how could we pretend to do any good to the Church if not through supernatural means? If we make use of supernatural means, such as prayer and the prayer of the Rosary, the importance of the Rosary Crusade can easily be crucial.

### **Do you think that only the faithful of the SSPX should have been involved in the Rosary Crusade or other Catholics as well?**

There is absolutely no limitation to our Crusade. Any praying soul is welcome! We have no pretension to the exclusivity of a prayer which has been given to the whole Church. It is true that there are few who continue to use it in comparison with what it should be. But due to the circumstances, it was somehow difficult to go over our borders for this call to prayer.

### **Have you had any positive reactions to this Crusade from outside the Society over the past year?**

Very few. I remember an Italian priest present at the ordinations in Ecône who promised to join one million Rosaries with us. Besides that, Fr. Gruner also launched something similar. It is not much. Of the last crusades, Cardinal Castillon Hoyos was impressed by the number of Rosaries. He told me he was certain they had their role in obtaining what we got up to now. ☪



# *Consecration of the United States of America District of the Society of St. Pius X to the Immaculate Heart of Mary*

## **Novena Prayer**

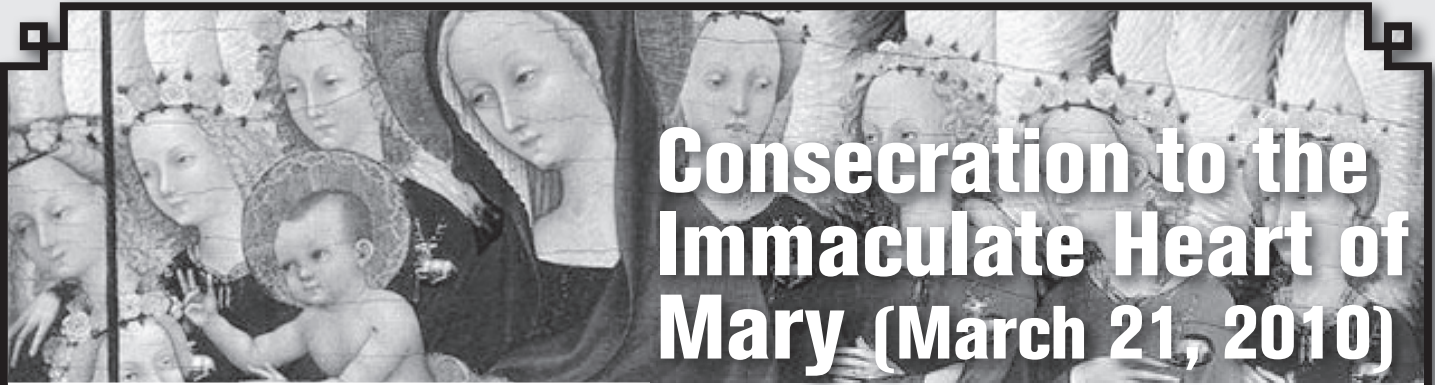
This novena will take place from March 12–20 in preparation for the SSPX's USA District's Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on Sunday, March 21, 2010.

### *Prayer of Saint Pius X to the Immaculate Virgin*

O most holy Virgin, who didst find favor in God's sight and hast become His Mother; O Virgin, immaculate in body and soul, in thy faith and in thy love, look down with pity on the wretched who in our need seek thy powerful protection.

The evil serpent on whom was cast the primal curse continues, alas, to attack and ensnare the poor children of Eve. But thou, our Mother Blessed, our Queen and our Advocate, thou who from the first instant of thy conception didst crush the head of this cruel enemy, receive our prayers. United to thee with one heart, we beseech thee to present them before the throne of God. May we never be caught in the snares around us, but rather may we all reach the harbor of salvation. Despite the awesome perils which threaten, may God's Church and all Christian society sing out once again the hymn of deliverance, of victory, and of peace. Amen.





# Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary (March 21, 2010)

**TO THEE, O IMMACULATE MOTHER OF GOD,** do we have recourse in this supreme hour of mankind's need, amidst such storms indeed as have never been known, shaking Mother Church to her very foundations. Thou who, standing by the foot of the Cross, didst once share so closely in the sufferings of thy Divine Son, with what compassion art thou not moved today for the suffering of His Mystical Body, the Church!

**WHILST OUTSIDE THE CHURCH,** Communism has so spread its errors in all directions that the Church herself is infected by them; at the same time, within her very bosom, the virus of a false ecumenism poisons souls without number, either tearing them away or keeping them outside of the unity of the true Faith and the one and only Ark of Salvation.

**AMIDST SO MANY RUINS AND SO MANY BETRAYALS,** may it please Almighty God, following an ancient example, to prepare this priestly society of ours, a small band of rebuilders, who, being truly aware of our own frailty, turn to thee today, O Virgin most Powerful, Help of Christians. Recognizing that our own strength is so little compared to the magnitude of the task entrusted to us, we wish to place ourselves under thy motherly and powerful protection, O Virgin who are terrible as an army in battle array, and to whom it was promised from the beginning that thou wouldst tread upon the head of the serpent. Amidst these dangers hanging over our heads, we beseech God, Who has deigned to call us to the service of His Church, that He vouchsafe to seal and confirm our calling through thee, O Ark of the Covenant.

**THEREFORE, O VIRGIN IMMACULATE,** before thy throne of grace, we prostrate ourselves today, desiring to increase thy praise and glory. And to the filial love which Christ thy Son has for thee, we may add our humble contribution, here and now beneath the most special title of thy Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart, we irrevocably consecrate our United States of America District of the Society of St. Pius X, with its priests, seminarians and brothers, sisters, oblates and tertiaries, and all its spiritual family.

**IN ORDER THAT THOU SHOULDST BE NOW THE LADY AND QUEEN OF OUR DISTRICT** by a perpetual donation into thy hands, we offer and entrust our bodies and our souls, our possessions and our homes,

our priories and schools, our churches and missions, that they may truly belong to thee, that thou mayest ever have us ready at thy command.

**WE HAND OVER AND CONSECRATE ALSO THE SOULS ENTRUSTED TO US,** especially our families and our students, that thou mayest guard them beneath thy motherly care; finally, we commend to thee our apostolate with all our projects, and we relinquish it that it may be wholly thine, O Queen of Apostles! Thus, our District is now wholly thy domain!

**HOLD IT SO FIRMLY, O TOWER OF DAVID,** that it may never turn from the right path. O Virgin most Faithful, keep every member most unshakably attached to it. Guard our Faith virginally intact, O Virgin most Pure, thou who has received the power to crush all heresies throughout the entire world. Keep for the Church, O thou who art Full of Grace, her Sacrifice of the Mass according to the ancient and venerable Roman Rite; and keep us most faithful to this sure conveyor of grace. Cause to flourish within us, O Queen of All Saints, the holiness of the priesthood, of religion, and of the family. Guard, O Mother of Divine Grace, our District as a fruitful and ever-living branch of the Holy Roman Catholic Church. Obtain for us the grace, O Mother of the Church, whereby we may from day to day become, in the hands of God, instruments more docile and more apt for the saving of the greatest number of souls.

**THAT WE MAY KNOW THAT THOU HAST HEARD OUR PRAYERS, O VIRGIN MOST CLEMENT,** send us those many workers whom the Divine Lord of the Harvest calls into His mission fields. Grant to us, finally, O Mother of the Sovereign High Priest, the grace by which we may work for the restoration of the Catholic priesthood and thereby for the splendor of the priestly soul of Christ, illuminated by Whose rays, may the persons and families of our nation at length obtain the establishing of His kingdom.

**RELYING ON OUR TITLE OF THE APOSTLES OF JESUS AND MARY,** we promise Thee, O Queen of Martyrs and Confessors, that we shall labor until our last breath for the restoring of all things in Christ, for the spreading of His Kingdom, and to prepare for the glorious triumph of thy Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart, O Mary. Amen.

This prayer is an adaptation of the original text written for the Consecration of the Society of St. Pius X to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as recited by Archbishop Lefebvre and all the members of the Society on December 8, 1984.

By this act we renew the District's consecration originally performed on March 13, 2002.



# Fatima, Benedict XVI, and the Crisis in the Church

On October 13, 1917, the greatest miracle in the history of the Church took place, at least as measured by the number of people who witnessed it. You would have to go back to the Exodus from Egypt and the grandiose manifestation of Mt. Sinai 15 centuries before our era to find something comparable.

If God wanted to give such “publicity” to the message of Fatima, it was not without reasons. These reasons, however, only became clear later. To be sure, the Blessed Virgin had told the children of Fatima: “Russia will spread its errors throughout the world, provoking wars and persecution against the Church.” But this part of the message was kept

secret until 1941. From then on, the importance of the message of Fatima began to become visible to all: it was understood that the Blessed Virgin had come to warn us of the danger of Communism and to give us the means to vanquish it.

But it was not only about Communism. The message of Fatima contained a third part that was supposed to be revealed in 1960 at the latest “because in 1960 it would become clearer.”<sup>1</sup> The year 1960 was, in effect, the beginning of a new era, a “new age,” in the Church: *Gaudium et Spes*, the joy and hope of Vatican II, began to sweep through the Holy Spouse of our Lord Jesus Christ, producing devastation infinitely more serious than that of



atheistic Communism. Since 1960, the Church has been engaged in a crisis that is certainly the gravest of its entire history and of which there is no end in sight.

At Fatima, the Blessed Virgin did not ask extraordinary things. Essentially, what she asks is: 1) the daily recitation of the Rosary; 2) devotion to her Immaculate Heart; 3) the practice of the devotion of the Five First Saturdays; and 4) the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart.

Heaven has sent some strong "signs" to the popes to prompt them to comply with her requests. Let us recall a few of them: Pope Pius XII was consecrated bishop the day of the first apparition of our Lady at Fatima, May 13, 1917; during his pontificate, from October 30 to November 8, 1950, in the Vatican gardens, he was the beneficiary of a miracle like the "dance" of the sun on October 13, 1917. Pope John Paul II, who had come from a country under Communist rule, suffered the attempt against his life on May 13, 1981. The pope readily understood that there was a link with Fatima, but he did not draw from it any practical conclusions.

The Church's hierarchy, especially since 1960, has not acted to advance the fulfillment of these requests:

- Devotion to the Rosary has regressed considerably. (Pope John Paul II, by adding the five "Luminous Mysteries," has even made the Blessed Virgin's request to the young shepherds incomprehensible: she had asked them to recite "o terzo," a third of the rosary, as the Portuguese say. (How do you say a third of the "new Rosary" of 20 mysteries?)
- Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary has dropped significantly since 1960: the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary has been reduced to the rank of a simple commemoration. The Roman authorities ignore this devotion, and what they do say about it manifests their complete incomprehension, not to say their contempt.
- The practice of the five first Saturdays of the month has never been encouraged by Rome, nor even officially recognized, yet it is something so simple. How can such an omission be explained?
- The consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart by the pope has never been made as the Blessed Virgin asked.

Thus, far from obeying the demands of Heaven, the Church authorities, especially since 1960, have been engaged in a diametrically opposite course: instead of devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, they have propagated "the cult of man"; and even, instead of honoring the Blessed Virgin, they showed contempt for her during the Council; instead of resisting Communism and encouraging witness to the Faith unto martyrdom, they launched into the diplomacy of Ostpolitik and compromise with the Church's enemies; instead of seeking to convert the nations (notably Russia), they buried the doctrine of Christ the King and invented a new doctrine of "religious liberty"; instead of seeking to bring back the schismatic Orthodox into the bosom of the Church, they have



## History

The story of Fatima began in the spring of 1916 when the Angel of Peace appeared to the Seers of Fatima: Lucy (10), and her cousins Francisco (9) and Jacinta (7). The Angel of Peace will visit them twice more that year.

On May 13, 1917, Our Lady appeared to the children as they were tending sheep in a place known as the *Cova da Iria*. She requests their presence at the same place at the same time on the 13th day of each month for six more months. She asks them to recite the Rosary daily.

News begins to spread; on June 13, with about 50 people present, Our Lady asks the children to learn how to read. Lucy is told that she will remain on earth for awhile "to establish devotion to my Immaculate Heart."

On July 13, five thousand people attend. Our Lady announces that she will perform a miracle during the final, October apparition. The children are given a vision of hell. Our Lady requests that Russia be consecrated to her Immaculate Heart, gives the First Saturday promise, the Fatima Prayer for the Rosary, and the Third Secret.

In August, over 10,000 people gather. The Freemasonic provincial administrator, however, jailed the children since they were considered politically disruptive. That month, due to their imprisonment, they saw the Virgin Mary on August 19, nearby.

In September, 30,000 people attend. Our Lady re-emphasizes her requests.

On October 13, 1917, a cold rain was falling. In spite of the weather, 70,000 show up to witness the promised miracle. It has come to be known as the Miracle of the Sun.

renounced “proselytism” on their behalf and have *de facto* rejected Uniatism.<sup>2</sup>

The new pope, Benedict XVI, was confronted with Fatima at least 20 years before: as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, he was in charge of the Fatima dossier. He was the official guardian of the “Third Secret”—which he read and which later he was tasked with publishing; he was the one who authorized visits to Sister Lucy; it was he that had her cell sealed a few months before being elected pope, *etc.* Like his predecessors, he seems ill-disposed to obey the requests of Our Lady of the Rosary. While still cardinal, he stated that Fatima was a private revelation, “which one is not obliged to use”; he seems not to understand what devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is, and he shares the “religiously correct” version of the consecration of Russia already made by John Paul II.

Without doubt, Fatima remains a private revelation. No doubt, it does not share the same authority as the Faith. But it still enjoys a very great authority. To not obey what God asked at Fatima (He “wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart”) is not necessarily a fault against faith, but it is a grave imprudence, and even a serious act of disobedience.

Providence has its ways and its plans. All good French Catholics know that the Revolution of 1789 was, among other things, a punishment for the refusal to consecrate France to the Sacred Heart which had been requested in 1689 in a private revelation to St. Margaret Mary. The King of France was supposed to make this consecration and he did not do it. The popes were supposed to obey the request of Heaven at Fatima, and they have not done it: “Like the King of France they will repent, and do so, but it will be late.”<sup>3</sup>

Today, the crisis has reached such a degree of gravity that there is no longer any hope except in a special intervention of Divine Providence. There is every reason to believe that this intervention will be linked to the Immaculate Heart of Mary: on the one hand, because, according to Fatima, “God wishes to spread this devotion”; and on the other hand, because in the last times the triumph of the Blessed Virgin Mary is supposed to happen. We are assured that one day the pope will perform the consecration of Russia requested at Fatima (“they will do so”), and so he will at last comply with Heaven’s request.

The current pope, formed in the new theology, does not seem to understand the reasons for the crisis in the Church and consequently does not take the measures needed to escape it. But Providence wished to give him a simple means, within his reach, to resolve this crisis: obey the demands of Fatima. Such an act would already constitute a first step in the return to Tradition: the act of consecration of


Russia is an act that must be prescribed by the pope personally (against collegiality), that affirms his authority over Russia (against the Orthodox schism), that highlights the mediation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (against false ecumenism with the Protestants), to which is attached the conversion of a nation *qua* nation (against religious liberty); the devotion of reparation of the Five First Saturdays recalls that sin offends God and that we must pray and offer sacrifices to prevent souls from falling into hell (against the new theology).

In his book *Fatima, Rome, Moscow*, Fr. Mura, SSPX, remarks that the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary contrasts with purely human attempts to bring about world peace and presupposes a theology of a true return to the Faith of the Church, for, by the return of the schismatics to unity with Rome that it will cause, it is essentially anti-ecumenical and is the antidote to the conciliar reform as a whole. Let us also remark that this step should not be humiliating for Rome, for, insofar as the Roman authorities think they have already made this consecration, they need only “renew” it, this time respecting all the conditions set by the Blessed Virgin at Fatima.

Bishop Fellay, in an interview with *The Latin Mass* magazine, declared what would be the first thing he would advise the Roman hierarchy if the opportunity presented itself:

TLM: If you were able to offer advice to the hierarchy in the Vatican, what would you counsel as the most critical issues that need to be addressed in order to ease the crisis in the Church?

BF: First of all, the Catholic Church is essentially supernatural and not human—though the human plays an important part—and so this supernatural vision on things needs to be restored. It is a matter of faith applied to concrete situations; it is counting on God’s help to solve huge problems. At such a level, the consecration required by Our Lady at Fatima would be of great importance.<sup>4</sup>

Without doubt, the key to the solution of the crisis in the Church is in the hands of the pope. But each of us must prepare and hasten the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary by knowing and making known the message of Fatima and by obeying, as much as each of us can, the requests of the Queen of the Holy Rosary. 

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<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Ottaviani, *Documentation Catholique*, March 19, 1967, col. 542.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Balamand Declaration.

<sup>3</sup> Sister Lucy reported this statement of our Lord in a letter to Fr. Goncalvez in 1936. The letter was quoted by Fr. Alonso in *Marie sous le symbole du coeur* (Paris: Tequi, 1973), p. 42.

<sup>4</sup> *DICI*, No. 101, September 24, 2004, online at [www.DICI.org/en](http://www.DICI.org/en).



SSPX  
Rosary  
Crusade

# The Origin of the Rosary



The most holy Virgin in these last times in which we live has given a new efficacy to the recitation of the Rosary to such an extent that there is no problem, no matter how difficult it is, whether temporal or, above all, spiritual, in the personal life of each one of us, of our families, of the families of the world, or of the religious communities, or even of the life of peoples and nations, that cannot be solved by the Rosary. There is no problem, I tell you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot resolve by the prayer of the holy Rosary. With the holy Rosary, we will save ourselves; we will sanctify ourselves; we will console our Lord, and obtain the salvation of many souls.<sup>1</sup>—Conversation between Sr. Lucy of Fatima and Fr. Fuentes, Dec. 26, 1957

These statements of Sr. Lucy certainly form the most beautiful apologia that can be made for the Rosary. Certainly, the prayer most effective for touching the heart of God is without a doubt liturgical prayer: the holy Mass and the Divine Office (the breviary recited by priests and monks and nuns). The Rosary has never claimed to replace the liturgy. “But inversely, the liturgy does not eclipse the Rosary, which has its own irreducible character.”<sup>2</sup> Taking up the

mysteries of the Lord's life celebrated by the liturgy in the Christmas and Easter cycles, the Rosary considers them in a particular way: "by focusing attention on the place that our Lady holds in each one."<sup>2</sup>

## An Epic: From Marian Salutations to the *Ave Maria*

In history, rarely does a devotion appear suddenly. The divine pedagogy often takes centuries to prepare souls to receive it. The Rosary, one can say, stemmed from the habit of the early Christians of thanking the Virgin Mary for all the benefits she had brought mankind; such are the lines of verse by Sedulius in the fifth century inserted in the liturgy: *Gaudia Matris habens cum virginitatis honore/Nec primam similem visa est, nec habere sequentem.*<sup>4</sup> The *Ave Maris Stella* and the *Salve Regina*, among others, sprang from a similar inspiration. All sorts of salutations flourished in the piety of the clergy and the laity, more or less developed according to the inspiration.<sup>5</sup> This form of piety developed especially during the Middle Ages following the great Marian devotion inspired by St. Bernard.<sup>6</sup>

The contemplation of the Virgin Mary, her privileges, and the favors she bestows on her children was considered a joy exceeding all other joys. It was this joyful piety of the "Hail, Our Lady" that gave the name of the Rosary. In the Middle Ages, the symbol of joy was the rose. To crown one's head with a garland of roses (a chaplet) was a sign of joy. The Virgin Mary was even called "a garden of roses." In medieval Latin, a garden of roses is *rosarium*.<sup>7</sup>

It was felt that at each salutation, the Virgin Mary herself experienced an echo of the joy of the Annunciation. It was not merely a matter of cheering oneself at the thought of our Lady; the purpose was also to rejoice the heart of Mary. The salutations were conceived of as so many spiritual roses presented to the Virgin Mary by fashioning for her a crown, a chaplet. In return, our Lady would place upon the heads of her children an invincible diadem of roses, of spiritual graces.

## How the *Ave Maria* Came About

In this fervor to greet our Lady, it is not surprising that the most popular salutation was taken directly from the Gospel, from the episodes of the Annunciation and the Visitation, which everyone knows: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women" (Lk. 1:28). "Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb" (Lk. 1:42). These two salutations formed the first part of the *Ave Maria*. According to common opinion, they were joined around the 11th century. At the beginning of the 17th century, the second part

of the *Ave Maria* was not yet in general usage, and the *Ave* often remained incomplete, comprising only the first part.

## The Institution of the Rosary by St. Dominic

In vain would one expect to find in the literature of the 13th and 14th centuries a detailed account of the institution of the Rosary by St. Dominic. That was not the literary genre of the time. These writers were more anxious to edify their readers—which is the most important thing—than to write history. The origins of the Rosary are thus as if covered by a mysterious shadow. Providence wanted it thus, with all due respect to modern rationalists. It is a secret between the Virgin Mary and her servant Dominic. But it would be a great impiety and an astounding lack of common sense and reason to use this shadow to deny to St. Dominic the invention of this prayer as the moderns do: It would be great impiety because the institution of the Rosary by St. Dominic belongs to the most assured tradition, not only of the Dominican Order, but also of the Roman Church. That is the major argument. It would be a lack of good sense and reason, because the documents of the 13th and 14th centuries offer indication of it so numerous and so evident that they suffice to situate the institution of the Rosary in a time neither before nor after St. Dominic. We shall develop these two points about which modern criticism is completely silent.

## The Tradition of the Roman Church

First of all, let us cite the Bull *Consueverunt Romani Pontifices* (1569) of St. Pius V. There he very clearly writes that St. Dominic

invented and then propagated in the entire holy Roman Church a mode of prayer, called the Rosary or Psalter of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which consists in honoring the Blessed Virgin by the recitation of 150 *Ave Marias*, in conformity with the number of David's psalms, adding to each decade of *Aves* the Lord's Prayer and the meditation of the mysteries of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Bull *Monet Apostolus* (1573), which instituted the solemnity of the holy Rosary, Pope Gregory XIII recalls that St. Dominic

in order to deflect God's wrath and obtain the help of the Blessed Virgin, instituted this practice so pious that it is called the Rosary or Mary's Psalter.

In 1724, contradictors having called into question the attribution of the Rosary to St. Dominic, Benedict XIII asked the Congregation for Rites to study the question. The promoter of the faith, Prospero Lambertini, the future Benedict XIV, establishing himself on the firm ground of Roman tradition, annihilated the objections. On March 26,

## The Miracle of the Sun

The crowd was diverse: although predominantly believers who came to behold Our Lady's promise, the circumstances naturally drew skeptics as well. Reporters were on hand to record whatever events would befall. As the rain ceased, the clouds began to dissipate. Lucy pointed to the sun and encouraged everyone to look heavenward.

The sun danced. It could be beheld without hurting the eyes. It changed colors and spun like a wheel of fire. It appeared to fall from the sky, then retreat. It was even witnessed miles away. Some contemporary historical accounts:

"Before the astonished eyes of the crowd, whose aspect was biblical as they stood bare-headed, eagerly searching the sky, the sun trembled, made sudden incredible movements outside all cosmic laws—the sun 'danced' according to the typical expression of the people." Avelino de Almeida, *O Século* (The most influential paper in Portugal; very anti-clerical.)



"The sun, at one moment surrounded with scarlet flame, at another aureoled in yellow and deep purple, seemed to be in an exceeding fast and whirling movement, at times appearing to be loosened from the sky and to be approaching the earth, strongly radiating heat."—Dr. Domingos Pinto Coelho, an eye specialist, in *Ordem*

1726, Benedict XIII made obligatory the lessons of the Roman breviary for the Matins of the Feast of October 7th, teaching that

Mary recommended to St. Dominic the preaching of the Rosary to the people, giving him to understand that this prayer would be an exceptionally efficacious succor against heresies and vices.<sup>8</sup>

Benedict XIV, having learned of objections to the attribution of the Rosary to St. Dominic, declared that the Roman tradition was founded on the most solid bases—*validissimo fundamento*—and he responded to the adversaries:

You ask us if St. Dominic instituted the Rosary. You declare that you are perplexed and full of doubts about this matter. But then what do you make of so many oracles of the Sovereign Pontiffs, of Leo X, of Pius V, of Gregory XIII, of Sixtus V, of Clement VIII, of Alexander VII, of Innocent XI, of Clement XI, of Innocent XIII, of Benedict XIII, and of still others, all unanimous in attributing to St. Dominic the institution of the Rosary?<sup>9</sup>

## The Evidence of 13th- and 14th-Century Documents

The contemporary documents give evidence of the appearance of a new custom. We have seen in the early Marian salutations the remote origin of the Rosary. Nevertheless, it is easy to demonstrate that the custom of reciting a specific number of *Ave Marias* was not practiced; in a word, it did not constitute an institution before St. Dominic's epoch simply because no document and no tradition make mention of it. But it is astonishing—and convincing—to observe that from St. Dominic's time, the signs of this devotion, which

has been adopted by all, from the cultivated classes to the humble folk, from the cloister to the world, abound in the archives of the time.

The number of 50 and of 150 *Ave Marias* appears in the archives in a significant way.

The documents are numerous to prove that, in the convents and monasteries of the Dominican Order, from the 13th century, they recited groups of *Ave Marias*, whether 50 or 150 or 1000.... Who gave this devotion to the Dominican friars and nuns of the 13th and 14th centuries? Would it not be the founder of the Order, Dominic de Guzman?<sup>10</sup>

Let us cite this beautiful testimony about King St. Louis:

Every evening the king would kneel fifty times, each time rising and then rekneeling, and each time he knelt he would slowly recite an *Ave Maria*.<sup>11</sup>

The usage of beads invaded every rank of society at that time also. In Paris, there were no fewer than three companies making this item.<sup>12</sup> Another interesting and revealing fact concerns Romée de Livia, a direct disciple of St. Dominic. In the ancient chronicles we read that the Blessed Romée, apparently a very lettered clerk because he was successively prior of the convent at Lyons, then provincial of Provence, and finally prior of Bourges, died while squeezing tightly in his hands the knotted cord on which he counted his *Ave Marias*, meditating and instructing the friars in this devotion to the holy Virgin and the Child Jesus.<sup>13</sup>

This fact shows that, from the beginning, the first preachers proved to be very zealous in spreading the devotion of St. Dominic to the Rosary. The Dominicans, dispersed to the four corners of Christendom, were to have a decisive influence in the

expansion of the Rosary and its implantation in every class of society. The Reverend Father Mortier, O. P., eminent historian of the Dominican Order wrote:

The Order founded by St. Dominic developed from its beginning, in an extraordinary way, the practical devotion to the *Ave Maria*. This is incontestable.<sup>14</sup>

But the Rosary was not only a new and beautiful custom honoring our Lady by the repetition of the angelic salutation. From St. Dominic's time, the Rosary appeared as a weapon against the Church's enemies.

An historical document shows St. Dominic victoriously employing this prayer in a famous battle against heretics.<sup>15</sup> It is about the first victory of the Rosary, gained at Muret, near Toulouse, on the 12th of September in 1213 by St. Dominic. Eight hundred Catholic knights, summoned by Pope Innocent III, found themselves confronted by roughly 34,000 enemy troops (the Cathars were reinforced by troops from Spain led by Peter II of Aragon). Dominic with the clergy and the people entered the church at Muret, and he made them pray one Rosary after the other. Five months after the event, a notary of Languedoc wrote:

*Dominicus afferre  
Dum incipit tam humilis  
Dominicus coronas conferre  
Statim apparet agilis.*<sup>16</sup>

The notary observes the humility of Dominic, who does not hesitate to pray the Rosary (a very humble prayer, a prayer of the people); and he remarks his agility at completing the crowns, that is to say, offering them one after the other.<sup>17</sup> The victory of the Catholic knights, led by Simon de Montfort was brilliant and miraculous.<sup>18</sup> The chronicles relate that the enemies of religion fell upon each other as the trees of a forest under the axes of an army of lumberjacks.

If the crusade of which the Battle of Muret was one of the most glorious episodes restored political peace, it was especially the preaching of the Rosary which converted and definitively pacified the region. Here we come to an essential point. Before being a praise to Mary, before being a providential arm for defending Christendom, the Rosary was above all for St. Dominic a method of preaching.

At our Lady's recommendation,<sup>20</sup> St. Dominic preached the mysteries of the faith, and at the same time made his audiences pray *Paters* and *Aves*. He acted this way because speech, however brilliant, does not suffice to convert. Only God's grace can break the soul's secret resistances, and this grace can only be obtained by prayer. It is the prayer of the apostle first of all, and St. Dominic would spend his nights in prayer. But, says St. Thomas, "it happens that prayers made for another are not answered...because of an obstacle placed by the one for whom one prays."

However, if the sinner himself begins to pray, by praying he removes the obstacle to his conversion. There are, indeed "four conditions the fulfilling of which assure that one obtain what he asks: it is necessary to ask for what is necessary for one's eternal salvation, and do it with piety and perseverance." It is thus the work of an apostle particularly inspired and supernatural to ally his preaching with the prayer of the one being instructed.<sup>23</sup>

This method was particularly appropriate for destroying the Cathar heresy. For the Cathars, the physical world is the work of the Evil One, the devil. Therefore God could not have assumed a human body in the womb of a Virgin and died upon a cross to save us. They thus denied the mysteries of the Incarnation and the Redemption, blaspheming against the Blessed Virgin, and they only acknowledged one prayer, the Our Father, to which they had a superstitious attachment. If the absence of Catholic preaching had favored the implantation of Catharism, the popular preaching of the mysteries of the Rosary joined to the praying of the *Pater* and the *Ave* was the radical remedy to this scourge. A multitude of friars crisscrossed the land, joining to their words the example of a life of poverty. During the 13th century, there were no fewer than 118 convents of religious mendicants (Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelites, Augustinians, Sachers<sup>24</sup>) founded in Languedoc. Between 1216 and 1295, one counts 1,100 Dominicans who lived in the region.<sup>25</sup>

This union of vocal prayer with the meditation of the mysteries of Christ and our Lady influenced pious practice, and so quickly that in 1236, for example, it was already mentioned in the Psalter placed in the hands of the Beguines of Gand.<sup>26</sup> Again, nothing similar is found before St. Dominic.

To the number of documents we have been commenting on we would like to add one more of astonishing precision in which, in 1221, the name of the Rosary is linked to St. Dominic during his lifetime. In it are indicated the conditions of a perfectly constituted confraternity. This document is a will conserved in the archives of St. James College at Palencia, in Spain. One Antonin Sers makes incumbent the carrying out of his intentions on "the honorable lord Dom Peter Gonzales Tellme, rector of the Nicolates, and first administrator of the confraternity founded in honor of the holy Rosary, with the consent of the Lord Bishop Telle, by the respectable Dominic de Guzman, confraternity," says the testator, "to which I belong." He adds: "I desire that the members be gathered to pray for me, and in compensation, as well as to defray the cost of the candles of the confraternity which they will carry in their hands, that they receive 38 maravedis and 3 measures of wheat."

"What could be clearer?" exclaims Mamachi,<sup>26</sup>

not only as to the name, but as to the confraternity of the Rosary, and that from the time of St. Dominic, more than




two centuries before Alain de la Roche. And this will and testament of Antonin Sers is drawn from authentic archives—*monumenta ex archivis authenticis extracta*; it is clearly dated—*notis chronologicis distincta*; it is offered with the authority of irrecusable witnesses—*et fide dignis testimoniis roborata*, that is to say, on the affirmation of notaries public—*publicanorum scribarum*, of the auditor of the apostolic nunciature and of counselors of the crown. If you cannot defer to such authorities, whom can you believe?<sup>28</sup>

Among the documents in evidence of the volume published in the *Annales Ordinis Praedicatorum*, the illustrious scholar is careful to publish, with the will of Antonin Sers, all the attestations in favor of this act delivered, at the Dominicans' request, by Dom Francisco Antonino de Angulo, of the Council of His Catholic Majesty, his secretary and first official of the secretariat of the Chamber and of the Royal Patronage.<sup>29</sup>

How is it possible not to ascribe to St. Dominic the institution of the Rosary when the Sovereign Pontiffs attribute it to him with unbroken unanimity, and when documents abound to prove the appearance of the devotion at the time of the saint and in the order he founded?

As to the manner in which the Rosary was given to this great saint, was it by the ordinary ways of grace, that is, by a simple inspiration? Or was it rather under the form of a heavenly vision of which the saint kept the secret and during which the Virgin Mary would have instructed and consoled her disciple? The last solution cannot be rejected. It must even have our favor, because it is from a venerable tradition, too favored by the Church and too ingrained in the memory of the faithful to be just a pious legend.

Where did the revelation take place? The citizens of Toulouse place it in the forest of Bouconne, not far from their city, where St. Dominic founded his first convent.<sup>30</sup> The Church of Puy says that it was in its cathedral.<sup>31</sup> Fr. Petitot speaks of a tradition situating the event in the sanctuary of Prouille in Languedoc, at the foot of the village of Fanjeaux, the place where St. Dominic founded the contemplative Dominican nuns, and whence he sent forth his first preaching friars into all of Europe on August 15, 1217.<sup>32</sup> 

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<sup>1</sup> Bro. Michael of the Blessed Trinity, *The Whole Truth About Fatima*, vol. 3 (Buffalo, NY: Immaculate Heart Publications, 1990).

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Roger Calmeil, O. P., "Dignité du Rosaire," *Itinéraires*, April 1962, p.142.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.142-143.

<sup>4</sup> Having both the joy of motherhood and the honor of virginity. No one else has been seen to possess a like privilege, neither before her nor after.

<sup>5</sup> Let us note St. Hermann-Joseph (1161-1241), a German Premonstratensian and priest, who wrote in honor of our Lady a long prayer of 80 stanzas which are salutations to the Madonna. He asks her to rejoice for all the gifts she has received and for all that she is. For him, she is "the Rose of love." (Fr. Joseph André, *Le chapelain de Notre-Dame*, [Abbaye St-Michel de Frigolet, Tarascon-sur-Rhône, 1955], pp.128-137.)

<sup>6</sup> On this topic of the relation between joy, the rose, and the rosary, see the article "Rosaire," by Fr. Gorce, O. P., in the *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*.

<sup>7</sup> *A qua [Maria] cum monitus esset ut Rosarium populis praedicaret, velut singulare adversus haereses et vitia praesidium.*

<sup>8</sup> Cited by Fr. Antonin Danzas, O. P., in his work *Études sur les temps primitifs de l'Ordre de Saint-Dominique* (Paris: Oudin Frères, 1877), vol. 4, p. 59.

<sup>9</sup> Fr. Mortier, O. P., *Histoire abrégée de l'Ordre dominicain en France* (Tours: Mame, 1920), vol. 4, p.8.

<sup>10</sup> Danzas, *Études*, p.402.

<sup>11</sup> Mentioned by Fr. Danzas, *ibid.*, p.406.

<sup>12</sup> Bernard Gui, cited by Fr. Petitot, O. P., *Vie de saint Dominique* (Saint-Maximin: Éditions de la Vie Spirituelle, 1925), p.185. This book was republished in 1996 under the title *Dominique Guzman, un saint pour le XXIe siècle*. Bernard Gui, of whom Fr. Petitot speaks, is one of the first and most conscientious Dominican historians. He wrote at the beginning of the 14th century.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.8.

<sup>14</sup> Fr. Petitot mentions it in his work *Vie de saint Dominique* in chapter 9, p.187. The fact is equally reported by Fr. Danzas on p.449 in the work cited.

<sup>15</sup> Dominic brings roses [to our Lady], he seems so humble when he begins [to pray]; Dominic makes crowns, he seems so agile [at praying].

<sup>16</sup> Petitot, *Vie*, pp.186-87.

<sup>17</sup> The Catholics suffered only 8 deaths, and their enemies, 10,000, among whom was the King of Aragon himself.

<sup>18</sup> An excellent book on this subject is unquestionably the work by Dominic Paladilhe, *Simon de Montfort et le drame cathare* (Paris: Librairie Académique Perrin, 1988). Delving into the best sources, the author shows us the true face of Simon de Montfort, one of the fairest examples of Christian knighthood at the Church's service.

<sup>19</sup> See Matins for October 7th in the Roman breviary.

<sup>20</sup> *Summa Theologica*, II II, Q. 83, Art. 7.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, II II, Q. 83, Art. 15, ad 2 in fine. In article 16, St. Thomas adds: "... God hears the sinner's prayer if it proceed from a good natural desire, not out of justice, because the sinner does not merit to be heard, but out of pure mercy, provided however he fulfill the four conditions given above."

<sup>22</sup> It is interesting to note that St. Francis Xavier, the great apostle of Asia, was to use a similar method. His popular catechism lessons were exercises in prayer as much as in doctrine: "I said the *Credo* article by article....I told them that being a Christian is just simply believing firmly, without hesitation, these twelve points....Then I said the *Pater Noster* and the *Ave Maria*....We recited twelve *Paters* and twelve *Aves* in honor of the twelve articles of the Faith." (A. Brou, *Saint François Xavier* [Paris: Beauchesne, 1912], pp.204-5).

<sup>23</sup> Mendicant order founded by a Franciscan c. 1240.

<sup>24</sup> These facts are detailed in the work of Fr. Vicaire, O. P., *Les Prêcheurs et la vie religieuse des pays d'Occident au XIIIe siècle* (Toulouse: Privat, 1998), in the chapter entitled *L'action de l'enseignement et de la prédication des Mendicants vis-à-vis des cathares*, especially pp.374, 375.

<sup>25</sup> Mentioned by Fr. Danzas, O. P., *Études*, p.433.

<sup>26</sup> Dominican, deceased in 1792. He was the secretary of the Congregation of the Index and Master of the Holy Palace under Pope Pius VI. "The works of Fr. Mamachi suppose a very great erudition" (*Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, vol. 9, col. 1807).

<sup>27</sup> *Annales Ord. Praed.*, I, 324.

<sup>28</sup> What we report here has been taken from the book by Fr. Antonin Danzas, O. P., *Études sur les temps primitifs de l'ordre de saint Dominique*, vol. 4 *Blessed Jourdain de Saxe*, pp.428-29.

<sup>29</sup> This is the account reported by St. Louis-Marie Grignon de Monfort in *Le secret admirable du Très Saint Rosaire*.

<sup>30</sup> Proper of the breviary of Puy, on the day of the Dedication of the cathedral (July 11). Moreover, all the chroniclers and historians of the Velay, especially in the 17th century, mention the passage of St. Dominic and his apparition from the Blessed Virgin about the Rosary.

<sup>31</sup> Petitot, *Vie de Saint Dominique*, p.189. The several traditions relating apparitions of our Lady to St. Dominic in different places in order to give him the Rosary are not contradictory. It is known that the Blessed Virgin appeared numerous times to St. Dominic during his lifetime. Our Lady, who had the habit of speaking to St. Dominic, might well have spoken to him about the Rosary several times, as this devotion was to be of such importance in the Church's history.

FR. MARIE-DOMINIQUE, O.P.

# Great Historical Victories of the Rosary

SSPX  
Rosary  
Crusade

## Victory over the Albigensians

In the 13th century in the southern part of France called Languedoc, shortly after the Blessed Virgin Mary revealed it to St. Dominic,<sup>1</sup> the Rosary proved to be an invincible weapon against the enemies of the Church (for instance, at the Battle of Muret on September 12, 1213), as well as an extremely effective aid in preaching against heresy and in the conversion of souls. Thus was vanquished “that social war of such ill-omen for the Church”<sup>2</sup> for “they suppressed at least the outward dominance of the Albigensian doctrine; but it continued secretly as the seed of all the errors that were to erupt in the 16th century.”<sup>3</sup>

## Victories over Islam

When, later on, the Christian nations of the east had lost the faith which they themselves had transmitted to the western world; when they had disfigured the sacred symbol of faith by their blasphemous heresies; the anger of God sent upon them from Arabia, the deluge of Mahometanism. It swept away the Christian Churches that had existed from the very times of the apostles.... And we, the western nations, if we return not to the Lord our God, shall we be spared?<sup>4</sup>

Throughout the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, Christian Europe was threatened by invasion. But it still had enough faith to repel the would-be invaders by taking up the strong arm of the Rosary, especially at Lepanto (October 7, 1571), Vienna (September 12, 1683), and Peterwardein (July 26, 1716). These



The Battle of Lepanto in 1571, Don Juan of Austria and Cardinals, Ain Karim, Israel (Fresco in the Franciscan church of the Visitation).

victories were at the origin of the liturgical feasts of the Holy Name of Mary (September 12) and of the Solemnity of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary (the first Sunday of October).

## Victories over Protestantism

The Protestant revolution of 1517, the ground for which was laid by the Renaissance, was the first great stage of the apostasy of the nations.<sup>5</sup>

La Rochelle, France. In the 17th century when Protestantism dangerously threatened the kingdom of France, once again, it was the Rosary that delivered it.<sup>6</sup> At the head of a powerful army, King Louis XIII tried to subdue the city of La Rochelle, which was supported by the English and constituted the principal avenue of Protestantism into France. At the king's order, the Rosary was first solemnly recited at the Dominican convent of Faubourg St-Honoré at Paris in the presence of the entire court. Then the king called upon Fr. Louvet, O.P., a celebrated preacher of that era, to preach a mission to the army with several other friars. They distributed 15,000 rosaries among the troops, and every evening the besieged Protestants would see the Catholic troops carry a statue of the Madonna in triumphal, torchlight procession around the city to the cadenced sound of Ave Marias and the singing of canticles. The city fell. The king had the Dominicans enter the city first. They carried an immense white banner with a blue border on which was written "*Gaude, Maria Virgo, cunctas haereses sola interemisti in universo mundo*—Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, who alone has crushed all the heresies in the world."

In thanksgiving, King Louis XIII had the Church of Our Lady of Victories built in Paris, and a few years later, persuaded that the birth of the dauphin (the future Louis XIV) was due to the intercession of our Lady, he had him enrolled in the Rosary Confraternity in presence of the entire court on November 6, 1638. Moreover, on February 10, 1638, the king had consecrated France to Mary.

## In the Philippines

### Our Lady of the Rosary of La Naval.<sup>7</sup>

This victory was important because it saved Catholicism in all of Asia.

While elsewhere in the rest of the Asian continent the false religions violently opposed, in general, the implantation of Catholicism and caused to flow in abundance the blood of the martyrs, the conversion of the Philippines was an event without parallel in history<sup>8</sup>: in 40 years (from 1555<sup>9</sup> to 1605), without a single drop of blood being shed, the

country became a model Christendom thanks to the Spanish. For the Church it became a providential base from which legions of missionaries set out to evangelize the other lands of Asia.

On March 15, 1646, a flotilla of Dutch Protestant ships, a formidable army, arrived at the large port of Manila.<sup>10</sup> The Spanish and the Filipinos were unnerved, having nothing at their disposition but two merchant ships—*The Incarnation* and *The Rosary*—which they hastily armed as best they could. It was then that the venerable Fr. Jean de Conca, O.P., began to preach the Rosary to the sailors and had them recite it in alternating choruses on the bridges of the two ships. The sailors vowed that if they should win, they would go on pilgrimage bare foot to the Virgin of the Rosary statue at the Dominican convent in Manila. From March to October, five violent encounters issued in five humanly impossible victories. The Protestant ships were demolished, while in the heavens a voice was heard saying, "Long live the Faith of Christ and the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary." Out of 200 men, the Catholics lost just 15. The Philippines remained within the Church.

An extraordinary propagation of the Rosary then occurred throughout the country, which became "The Kingdom of the Holy Rosary," according to the expression of Pope Pius XII.<sup>11</sup> Every year, and even today, an immense procession wends through Manila, in thanksgiving, behind the miraculous statue of the Virgin of the Rosary preceded by 21 decorated floats bearing Dominican saints. Two hundred thousand people carrying candles follow the Madonna, and the Philippines are consecrated to Our Lady at the end of the ceremony.<sup>12</sup>

## The Triumph of the Rosary in Japan

The history of Japan shows us two important fruits of devotion to the Rosary: it upholds the courage of martyrs, and it enables the faithful to keep the true Catholic Faith. Here we see Catholicism assaulted by false oriental religions.

The Martyrs. It was August 15, 1549, when St. Francis Xavier (1506-1552) landed at Kagoshima, in the south of Japan. Despite the obstacle of militant, immoral Buddhism, the first evangelization was relatively easy. The feudal system had weakened the emperor's central power, allowing the missionaries to rely on the support of lords favorable to them. Also, St. Francis was dealing with a religious, intelligent people.

The Jesuits were the ones to introduce the Rosary into Japan, especially by diffusing a work on the 15 mysteries in Japanese. Unfortunately, in

1582, a new emperor came to power, hostile to Christianity, who reconstituted the political unity of the country. Supported and encouraged by the bonzes, he unleashed a violent persecution. On February 5, 1597, 26 Christians, among whom were six Franciscan missionaries and three Jesuit brothers, were crucified at Nagasaki. This did not prevent the Dominicans who came from the Philippines from landing in Japan in 1607, taking advantage of a lull in the persecution. Despite the difficulties, they founded confraternities of the Rosary everywhere, under the leadership of Blessed Alphonsus Navarrette, O.P. (1571-1617), Provincial Vicar in Japan.<sup>13</sup> The missionaries put leaders or major-domos in charge of the confraternities, whose duties consisted in regularly assembling the faithful to recite the Rosary, to announce the mysteries, to read them the exposition of the mysteries that had been written by the Venerable Louis de Grenada, O.P., and to communicate the counsels and advice the Fathers of the mission had given them.

But the Englishman William Adams, captain of a Dutch ship, denounced the Catholic missionaries to the new emperor, accusing them of spying on behalf of the Spanish for the invasion of Japan. An edict of 1614 expanded the persecution. The religious were massacred, the churches destroyed, and Christianity was forbidden under pain of death. But nothing could shake the brethren of the Rosary confraternities. They went to torture as to a feast, most of them donning the white robe and black cloak of the confraternity, and wearing their rosary around their neck or carrying it in their hand. When Japan shut itself off from the outside world in 1638, Rome was convinced that there were no more Catholics left in the country.

**Catholics Without Priests.** It was in 1858 that Japan opened its ports once again to foreigners. A new Catholic mission was inaugurated at Nagasaki on January 10, 1865. But what was the surprise of Fr. Petitjean, M.E.P.,<sup>14</sup> on March 17, 1865, when he saw a group of some 15 Japanese enter his newly built church and announce that they were Catholics. They learned that there were thousands of them throughout the country. Deprived of priests by the persecution, they had continued to meet under the leadership of the major-domos of the Rosary confraternities. They had transmitted the Faith by means of the Rosary and the two sacraments that laymen can administer: baptism and marriage.<sup>15</sup> They showed the priests rosary beads that had been kept for 200 years, as well as the works on the mysteries of the Rosary in ancient Japanese. Two years before, the Protestants had built a temple at Nagasaki, but finding there neither crucifix nor saint's image to venerate, the Japanese Catholics

understood that it was not the true religion. They recognized the Catholic missionaries by three signs: devotion to our Lady, obedience to the Pope, and celibacy. "They are virgins, thank God, thank God," they cried out as they bowed low before Fr. Petitjean, who told them that Catholic priests are not married.

In memory of this discovery of Catholics, a liturgical feast is celebrated annually in Japan on March 17, the feast of *Beata Maria Virgo de inventione christianorum*.<sup>16</sup> The Mass celebrated is the one of the common of the feasts of the Blessed Virgin.<sup>17</sup>

## The Wars of the Vendée

It is undeniable that the Rosary upheld the Vendean resistance of 1793-95, which led the Vendéans to the glory of martyrdom and which saved Catholicism in France, and this was thanks to the preaching of St. Louis de Montfort and his Montfortians. Some deny this.<sup>18</sup> Professor Jean de Viguierie rebuts this assertion with his usual exactitude:

The real cause of the uprising was religious. The songs, prayers, the insignia, the name of the army—Catholic and Royal—conferred on it from its inception a religious character...Throughout the whole of the 18th century, this region benefited from an intense evangelization thanks to the parish missions conducted by the Montfortian Fathers, disciples of St. Louis Grignon de Montfort. A map of the Montfortian missions would show that during that century a great number of the insurgent parishes had received at least one visit of the missionaries. They instilled three devotions in the people's hearts: the Cross, the Blessed Sacrament, and the Rosary...Without this missionary apostolate, and without the spirit of sacrifice that it fostered, the Vendée cannot be understood.<sup>19</sup>

In his description of the Vendée between 1793 and 1795, written in 1818, Jean Alexander Cavoleau wrote: "On the march and in the encampments, they devoted themselves to all the practices of devotion. I came across a large group as they knelt and very devoutly recited the Rosary; then I saw them march off singing hymns."<sup>20</sup> In her *Memoirs*, the Marchioness de la Rochejaquelein remarks that after the fall of Bressuire (May 2, 1793):

In the evening, we were surprised and edified to see in every room soldiers kneeling, reciting the Rosary led by one of them, and we learned that they never failed to do so three times a day.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, they would recite the entire Rosary daily.

## Victories over Communism

The October Revolution of 1917 in Russia was not a simple *coup d'état* perpetrated to effect a regime change; above all it aimed at "spreading throughout

the world the institutions and morals of atheism.”<sup>22</sup> It occurred, moreover, during the great conflict of 1914-18, which was the first of the wars aiming at the establishment of a world government. It was the supreme assault against the social reign of Christ.<sup>23</sup>

“The devil has engaged in a decisive battle, the final battle, where one of the two will emerge victor,” the Virgin Mary told Sr. Lucy of Fatima.<sup>24</sup> “In this battle, the Virgin Mary, who calls herself Our Lady of the Rosary,<sup>25</sup> comes to say that the ultimate remedies given to the world are the holy Rosary and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. ‘Ultimate’ means that there will be no more given.”<sup>26</sup>

Our Lady’s triumph which she promised in her apparition of October 13, 1917, at Fatima, will result from the widespread practice of the Communion of reparation of the five first Saturdays, and by the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by the Pope and the bishops united to him.

As for the Rosary, an integral part of devotion to our Lady’s heart, “in these latter days in which we are living, the most holy Virgin, has given it a greater efficacy,” proportioned to the gravity of the hour. We shall look at two characteristic examples.

Austria (1955). At the end of WWII, Austria had been partitioned into four zones occupied by the Allies: American, English, French, and Russian.<sup>27</sup> The Russians were in control of the part that included the capital, Vienna, and the part richest in natural resources and industry; thus it was very interesting to Moscow, which garrisoned an extremely large number of troops there.

On November 25, 1945, the elections that were held in the whole country spelled a resounding defeat for the Communists, who only won 4 seats out of 165. Nevertheless, the *Voice of the People*, the party newspaper, reported: “We have lost a battle, but we are just at the beginning of the war in Austria, and that war we shall win.” Indeed, pressure increased steadily in the occupied zone, accompanied by murders and looting, confirming Moscow’s intention to definitively annex the country.

It was then that a Franciscan priest intervened, one Fr. Petrus Pavlicek (1901-82). Returning from captivity in 1946, he made a pilgrimage in thanksgiving to Mariazell, the *Magna Mater Austriae*, the loving Mother of Austria. In his prayers, while asking our Lady what he could do to deliver his country, he heard a voice within tell him: “Do what I tell you: pray the Rosary every day, and there will be peace.”

After a year of reflection, on February 2, 1947, he launched a Rosary crusade of reparation in the spirit of Fatima, with the following goals: reparation for the offenses given to God, the conversion of sinners, peace and salvation for the world, and especially for

Austria. A year later, in 1948, 10,000 persons had enlisted in the prayer crusade, including Chancellor Figl, the leading politician of the country.<sup>28</sup> The faithful promised to recite the Rosary at home for the liberation of the country, public recitations were organized in the churches, and processions of several hundreds and sometimes thousands of people reciting the Rosary wended their way through towns and villages.

In 1949, the situation became more and more critical, and the anxiety grew when it was learned what had happened in the adjoining countries: Czechoslovakia and Hungary had fallen into the hands of the Communists, and the Church was being persecuted; Cardinal Mindszenty had been judged and condemned. As new elections were coming up in Austria, Fr. Petrus decided to intensify the crusade: five days of public prayer were organized. At Vienna, confessions were heard day and night, and 50,000 people visited the Franciscan convent. The result was that the Communists only won five seats in the elections. But they did not intend to let it go at that, and everyone expected a *coup d’état*.

Pius XII said to another Austrian priest at that time during a private audience: “Vienna is the last rampart of Europe. If Vienna falls, Europe will fall. If Vienna stands fast, Europe will stand fast. The Catholics of Vienna do not have the right to be mediocre. Tell the Viennese again and again. And tell them that the Pope is praying a great deal, yes, that he is praying very much for Austria.”

Then Fr. Petrus organized a new public prayer rally of three days at Vienna, which was to conclude on September 12, feast of the Holy Name of Mary, a great day of rejoicing in Austria because it commemorates the victory of Sobieski over Islam. Then Fr. Petrus decided to organize a great Rosary procession in the city center. The Archbishop of Vienna was reticent. He feared that the Catholics would not mobilize, so much had been asked of them already. But the federal Chancellor Figl replied: “Even if there are only two, I’ll be there. For our country, it is worth it.” There were 35,000 people, with Chancellor Figl at the head, rosary and candle in hand.

It was just in time, for by the end of the month the Communists attempted a military *coup d’état*. They proclaimed a general strike; the General Chancellery suffered an initial occupation. But the anti-Communist unions launched their members, armed with sticks, to the counter-attack. The strike was broken and the revolutionary *coup d’état* failed. The Rosary crusade at the time numbered 200,000 members.

Nonetheless, at Berlin, Molotov, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, taunted Chancellor Figl: “Have no hope. What we Russians once possess, we

never let go.” Chancellor Figl communicated to Fr. Petrus: “Have them pray now more than ever.”

Fr. Petrus continued to crisscross the country to recruit members for the crusade. In April 1955, it comprised 500,000 members. Then the new Chancellor, Raab, was summoned to Moscow. He wondered what was going to happen. He was received on a 13th of the month. On the evening of the interview he jotted in his agenda: “Today, a day of Fatima. The Russians are still hardened. Prayer to the Mother of God that she aid the Austrian people.”

Humanly speaking, all was lost. But it is exactly at such moments that God intervenes if one has kept the faith and if one has persevered in prayer. And in fact, in May 1955, there was a miracle. Contrary to all previsions, Molotov suddenly granted independence to Austria. After ten years of fights and struggles without issue, the Red menace disappeared as if by the stroke of a magic wand. The last Russian soldier left Austria on October 26, 1955, the month of the Rosary. Thereafter, that date became a national holiday in Austria.

A grandiose thanksgiving ceremony was organized in Vienna at the Heroes Square in the presence of political and religious personages. All the speeches proclaimed the Virgin of the Rosary as the cause of the victory.

Brazil (1964). In 1964, President Joao Goulart attempted to organize the selling-out of his country to Communism following the Cuban model. He had succeeded in infiltrating key governmental posts as well as the schools and universities in most of the country. But for almost all the preceding year, Fr. Patrick Peyton, of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, had preached a Rosary crusade, crisscrossing the country in order to convince the faithful to turn to our Lady. In the moment of danger, the people remembered. It was the Brazilian women who mobilized first, parading by the millions in the streets of the cities while reciting the Rosary. Once, in the city of Belo Horizonte, they prevented a conference of Lionel Brizola, the Cuban ambassador, from being held when 3,000 of them surged into the hall where he was to speak as they recited the Rosary. On leaving, Brizola found the streets equally full, as far as the eye could see, with women praying. He departed the city with one of the most incendiary speeches of his career still in his pocket, undelivered.

On March 13, 1964, Goulart decreed the amendment of the Constitution, the abolition of Congress, and the confiscation of industries and farms.

That unleashed the women’s riposte. The following text was passed throughout Brazil:

This immense and marvelous land which God has given us, is in extreme peril. We have allowed men with unlimited ambition, devoid of all Christian faith and scruples, to bring misery to our people, to destroy our economy, to perturb our social peace, to sow hatred and despair. They have infiltrated our nation, our administrations, our army, and even our Church, with servants of a totalitarianism which is foreign to us and which would destroy all that we hold dear....Holy Mother of God, protect us from the fate that threatens us, and spare us the sufferings inflicted on the martyred women of Cuba, Poland, Hungary, and the other nations reduced to slavery.

New, grandiose “Rosary marches” were organized in all the country, in which men, women and young people participated, while Luiz Carlos Prestes, head of the Brazilian Communist party, crowed, “We’ve already seized the power.”

But little by little, the president found himself abandoned on all sides. The governors of the states, the deputies, and army generals left him one after the other. On March 26, to save the country, the military took power without any blood being shed. Goulart and the Communist leaders of the unions fled.

On April 2, the entire population of Rio and the surrounding cities took to the streets for a gigantic prayer march which ended in a grand finale of thanksgiving to our Lord and our Lady.

In July, Fr. Valerio Alberton, Promoter of the Marian confraternities of Brazil, traveled to Fatima to thank the most holy Virgin for the liberation of his country. “We have vanquished thanks to Our Lady of the Rosary,” he declared.


It is the message of Fatima lived in Brazil which has saved us....The repeated calls to prayer and penance according to the spirit of Fatima revived faith, a faith that moves mountains, and the impossible happened: the miracle of a great war won without bloodshed. The counter-revolutionary high command anticipated at least three months of heavy fighting. Then a force humanly speaking inexplicable caused, as if by enchantment, the entire military operation, which had been diabolically and patiently erected over the course of several years, to collapse like a house of cards. The evidence of a signal grace at work was so strong that all were convinced that the unfolding of events did not have a human explanation. The civil and military leaders of the counter-revolution were almost unanimous in attributing this victory to a special grace of the most blessed Virgin. Several declared that the Rosary had been the decisive weapon.<sup>29</sup>

## Conclusion

The scope of this article does not allow us to give other details or more examples of the power of the Rosary. We have evoked the most characteristic. Of course, the victories of the Rosary are not

limited to this impressive litany of victories which stand as milestones in the history of Christianity. Even more numerous are the personal, family, and community victories obtained by Mary's Rosary. In *The Admirable Secret of the Most Holy Rosary*, St. Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort, for example, recounts numerous conversions of sinners obtained by the Rosary. Every reader of this article could or will recount the graces which praying the Rosary has gained for him.

"The Virgin of the Rosary has not ceased winning victories. For that, she only awaits on our part redoubled fervor, more filial trust, and unflinching courage."<sup>30</sup> The triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary announced at Fatima will be a victory of the Rosary, and not the least. Having already been victorious—each time it was employed—

over Albigensianism (or Catharism), Islam, Protestantism, Jansenism, Freemasonry, Revolution, Communism, and all the enemies of the Church, the Rosary will deliver the Church from modernism, "the synthesis of all heresies";<sup>31</sup> it will deliver the temporal city from the errors spawned by the French Revolution. "My dear children," wrote Msgr. Sarto, the future St. Pius X, on September 21, 1885, "because in our time a deplorable intellectual pride, which refuses all submission, corrupts hearts, and saps Christian morality, holds sway, there is no surer means of securing the triumph of the Faith than meditation of the mysteries of the Rosary." 

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<sup>1</sup> See "The Origin of the Rosary" (*The Angelus*, Feb. 2003) marshalling convincing arguments in favor of the traditional belief that the form of the Rosary as we know it was revealed to St. Dominic by the Blessed Virgin.

<sup>2</sup> Dom Guéranger, "Feast of the Most Holy Rosary," *The Liturgical Year, Time After Pentecost* (Powers Lake, N.D.: Marian House, 1983), p.296.

<sup>3</sup> Dom Guéranger, *Liturgical Institutions* (Paris: Fleuriot & Débécourt, 1840), I, 411-12.

<sup>4</sup> Dom Guéranger, "Thursday of Sexagesima," *The Liturgical Year*, Vol. IV: *Septuagesima*, p.168.

<sup>5</sup> The second stage was the establishment of Freemasonry in 1717, which unleashed the Revolution of 1789. The third stage was the Communist Revolution of October 1917 in Moscow. Protestantism rejected the Church, the French Revolution dethroned our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Communist Revolution rejected the action of God in the world.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *L'Année dominicaine* (Lyons: Jevain) Jan. 25, 1883, "The Venerable Fr. Jean-Baptiste Carré, O.P., prior of the convent of Faubourg St-Honoré," pp.781-82; Feb. 14, 1884, "The Venerable Fr. Pierre Louvet, O.P.," pp.480-81; May 31, 1891, "The Venerable Fr. Timothy Ricci," pp.832-34.

<sup>7</sup> This is the title by which the miraculous statue of the Virgin of the Rosary is venerated; it is located at St. Dominic's Convent in Quezon City (New Manila).

<sup>8</sup> It should be remarked that the Philippines were then peopled with savage, pagan, idolatrous tribes, but the Gnostic, oriental false religions had not yet penetrated the islands.

<sup>9</sup> The Philippines were discovered by Ferdinand de Magellan on March 31, 1521, but he was massacred with his companions by a savage tribe for political reasons. The evangelization thus was not able to begin until the Spanish returned with Augustinian monks in 1565.

<sup>10</sup> The danger was not small. In 1657, in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), the Dutch Protestants were to destroy the Christendom founded there by St. Francis Xavier. Churches were demolished, and priests and the faithful were massacred. Fifty thousand Catholics had to flee into the jungle, where Catholicism was able to survive in secret for 150 years. In order to annihilate it even more completely, the Protestants had some bonzes from Siam come in order to reimplant Buddhism in Ceylon, where it was moribund. The Dutch Protestants built for them temples and golden Buddhas. For more information, one can turn to the magnificent work of Fr. Duchaussois, O.M.I., *Sous les feux de Ceylan* (Paris: Grasset, 1929).

<sup>11</sup> Message of December 5, 1954, to the Marian Congress of the Philippines.

<sup>12</sup> For the history, one can consult *Maria: Studies on the Blessed Virgin*, under the direction of Hubert du Manoir, S.J. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1958); the article "Le culte de la sainte Vierge aux Philippines," by Fr. J. Riou, S.J., p.668; *L'Année dominicaine* (Lyons: Jevain, 1906) for Nov. 27, "The Ven. Fr. Jean de Conca, O.P.," pp.811-12.

<sup>13</sup> He was beatified on July 7, 1867, by Blessed Pope Pius IX, who placed him at the head of the 205 Japanese martyrs. See *Les 205 martyrs japonais* (Paris: Albanel, 1868).

<sup>14</sup> "Missions Étrangères de Paris": Foreign Missions of Paris.

<sup>15</sup> Our Lord had arranged things so that the two sacraments most necessary for the survival of the Church can be administered in the absence of priests:

baptism, which gives the Church members, and marriage, which conserves the life of the Christian community by renewing its sons (*Summa Theologica*, III, Q.65, Art.4).

<sup>16</sup> Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Finding of Christians.

<sup>17</sup> For further information, one can refer to the following works: Henri Mora, M.E.P., "La dévotion mariale au Japon," *Maria*, IV, 981-99; Fr. André Pradel, O.P., *Manuel du très saint rosaire* (Mazères: Procures des dominicains, 1884) pp.334-337; *Année dominicaine*, June 1, 1893, "Le bienheureux Alphonse Navarrette, O.P.," pp.1-14.

<sup>18</sup> For instance, Louis Perouas, in a bad book published by Cerf Publishing in 1989, *Grignion de Montfort et la Vendée*. The author denies the Montfortian influence in the Vendean rising on the pretext that "The *Mulotins* [Montfortians] took no part in the troops' operations, nor in the generals' councils.... The Daughters of Wisdom did not play the role of secret agents.... nor were they attached as nurses to the troops" (p.110). That proves nothing.

<sup>19</sup> Jean de Viguier, *Christianisme et Révolution, Cinq leçons d'histoire de la Révolution française* (Paris: Nouvelles Editions Latines, 1986) pp.149, 151.

<sup>20</sup> Cited by the aforementioned Louis Perouas (n. 18 above), who was obliged to acknowledge certain facts.

<sup>21</sup> Marchioness de la Rochejaquelein, *Mémoires* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1984), p.155.

<sup>22</sup> Fr. Calmel, O.P., "The Immaculate Heart of Mary and Peace in the World," (French), *Itinéraires*, No. 38 (December, 1959), p.24.

<sup>23</sup> We will not expound upon it here, but it is clear that the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 was not the death knell of Communism. It might change tactics and methods according to circumstances, but today it is far from dead, in the east as well as in the rest of the world, and the "institutions and morals of atheism" which it inaugurated in 1917 advance unchecked. One might consult the essay of the Reverend Delestre, "Russia Will Spread Her Errors Throughout the World... in the End, My Immaculate Heart Will Triumph" (French), *Sel de la Terre*, No. 39, pp.254-58.

<sup>24</sup> Interview with Fr. Fuentes in 1959, *Messagero del Cuore di Maria*, No. 8-9, August-September, 1961.

<sup>25</sup> Apparition of October 13, 1917, at Fatima.

<sup>26</sup> Interview of Sr. Lucy of Fatima with Fr. Fuentes, *op. cit.*

<sup>27</sup> We found the details of these events in two brochures published in Austria: Philipp Mayer, *Wie es zur Freiheit Österreichs kam, Rosenkranz-Sühnekreuzzug um den Frieden der Welt* (Vienna: Franziskanerplatz 4, 1995); Fr. Benno Mikocki, O.F.M., *Gebet in der Not eines Volkes* (Mödling: Missionsdruckerei Sankt Gabriel, 1985).

<sup>28</sup> Let us note also that another priest, Fr. Franz Tauber, had had the same inspiration, and had founded a similar movement in Upper Austria. The two movements merged in June 1949.

<sup>29</sup> *Voz de Fatima*, October 1964. This information was collected in a special supplement of *Défense du Foyer*, special issue, Spring, 1965.

<sup>30</sup> Fr. Roger Calmel, O.P., *Le Rosaire de Notre Dame*, 1sted. (Grez-en-Bouère: DMM, 1971).

<sup>31</sup> St. Pius X, encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, on the Doctrine of the Modernists, Sept. 8, 1907, §39.

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# Consecration to Mary

Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange explains the doctrine, meaning, and importance of the Consecration to Mary as taught by St. Louis de Montfort.

In his *Treatise of True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*, St. Louis de Montfort distinguished a number of different degrees of true devotion to the Mother of God. He speaks only briefly of the forms of false devotion—that which is altogether exterior, or presumptuous, or inconstant, or hypocritical, or self-interested—since his main concern is true devotion.

Like the other Christian virtues, true devotion grows in us with charity, advancing from the stage of the beginner to that of the more proficient, and continuing up to the stage of the perfect. The first degree or stage is to pray devoutly to Mary from time to time, for example, by saying the Angelus when the bell rings. The second degree is one of more perfect sentiments of veneration, confidence and love; it may manifest itself by the daily recitation of the Rosary—five decades or all fifteen. In the third degree, the soul gives itself fully to Our Lady by an act of consecration so as to belong altogether to Jesus through her.<sup>1</sup>

## What does this Consecration mean?

This act of consecration consists in promising Mary to have constant filial recourse to her and to live in habitual dependence on her, so as to attain to more intimate union with Our Blessed Lord and through Him with the Blessed Trinity present in our souls. The reason for making it lies, St. Louis de Montfort says, in the fact that God has willed to make use of Mary for the sanctification of souls, having already made use of her to bring about the Incarnation (*Treatise on True Devotion*, ch. I, a. I, no. 44).

St. Louis continues:

I do not think that anyone can attain to great union with Our Blessed Lord or perfect fidelity to the Holy Ghost without being closely united to Our Lady and depending very much on her help....She was full of grace when she was saluted by the Archangel Gabriel, she was superabundantly filled with grace by the Holy Ghost when He overshadowed her, she so advanced in grace from day to day and from moment to moment as to arrive at an inconceivable summit of grace; on which account the Most High has made her His unique treasurer and the unique dispenser of His graces, so that she may ennoble, enrich

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and elevate whom she wills, and make whom she wills enter the narrow gate of Heaven...Jesus is everywhere and always the Son and the fruit of Mary; Mary is everywhere the true tree which bears the fruit of life and the true mother who produces it.

In the same chapter, a little earlier, we read:

We may apply to Mary with even more truth than St. Paul applies them to himself the words: "My little children, of whom I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you. I am in labor daily with God's children till Jesus be formed in them in the fulness of His age." St. Augustine says that the predestined are in this world hidden in the womb of Mary in order to become conformed to the image of the Son of God; and there she guards, nourishes, and supports them and brings them forth to glory after death, which is the true day of their birth—the term by which the Church always speaks of the death of the just. O mystery of grace unknown to the reprobate and little understood by the predestined! Mary is truly the mother of the just, conceiving them spiritually and bringing them forth after death by their entry into glory, which is their definitive spiritual birth. It is clear then that it would be a falling short in humility to neglect to have frequent recourse to the Universal Mediatrix whom Divine Providence has given us as our true spiritual mother to form Christ in us. It is clear also that theology cannot but recognise that it is lawful and more than lawful to consecrate oneself to Mary, Mother and Queen of all men.<sup>2</sup>

Consecration to Our Lady is a practical form of recognition of her universal mediation and a guarantee of her special protection. It helps us to have continual childlike recourse to her and to contemplate and imitate her virtues and her perfect union with Christ. In the practice of this complete dependence on Mary, there may be included—and St. Louis de Montfort invites us to it—the resignation into Mary's hands of everything in our good works that is communicable to other souls, so that she may make use of it in accordance with the will of her Divine Son and for His glory.

I choose thee this day, O Mary, in the presence of the whole court of Heaven, as my Mother and Queen. I give and consecrate to you as your slave my body and my soul, my interior and exterior possessions, and even the value of my past, present and future good actions, allowing you the full right to dispose of me and of all that belongs to me, without any exception whatever, according to your good pleasure, for the greater glory of God, in time and in eternity.

This offering is really the practice of the so-called heroic act, there being a question here not of a vow but of a promise made to the Blessed Virgin.<sup>3</sup>

We are recommended to offer our exterior possessions to Mary, that she may preserve us from inordinate attachment to the things of this world and inspire us to make better use of them. It is good also to consecrate to her our bodies and our senses that she may keep them pure.

The act of consecration gives over to Mary also our soul and its faculties, our spiritual possessions, virtues and merits, all our good works past, present and future. It is necessary, however, to explain how this can be done. Theology gives us the answer by distinguishing what is communicable to others in our good works from what is incommunicable.

## What in our good works is communicable to others?

To begin at the other end of the problem, our merits *de condigno*, which constitute a right in justice to an increase of grace and to eternal glory, are incommunicable. Our merits *de condigno* differ in that from those of Our Blessed Lord. He was Head of the human race and could in justice communicate His merits to us. If, therefore, we offer our merits *de condigno* to Mary, it is not in order that she may give them to others but that she may keep them for us, that she may help us to make them bear fruit, and, if we have the misfortune to lose them by mortal sin, that she may obtain for us the grace of truly fervent contrition.

There is, however, something in our good works which we can communicate to others whether on earth or in purgatory.<sup>4</sup> There is in the first place the merits *de congruo proprie*, founded on the rights of friendship with God by grace. God gives grace to some because of the good intentions and good works of others who are His friends. There are, in the second place, our prayers; we can and should pray for our neighbor, for his conversion and his spiritual progress. We should pray also for the dying and for the souls in Purgatory.

There are finally our acts of satisfaction. We can make satisfaction *de congruo* for others, for example, by accepting our daily crosses to help expiate their sins. We may even, if God moves us to do so by His grace, accept the penalty due to their sins as Mary did at the foot of the Cross, and thereby draw down the Divine Mercy on them.<sup>5</sup> This the saints did frequently. An example is found in the life of St. Catherine of Siena. To a young Siennese whose heart was full of hate of his political enemies she said: "Peter, I take on myself all your sins. I shall do penance in your place; but do me one favour; confess your sins." "I have been frequently to Confession," answered Peter. "That is not true," replied the saint. "It is seven years since you were at Confession," and she proceeded to enumerate



all the sins of his life. Confounded, he repented and pardoned his enemies. Even without having all of St. Catherine's generosity, we can accept our daily crosses to help other souls to pay the debt they owe to the Divine justice.

We can also gain indulgences for the souls in purgatory, opening to them the treasury of the merits and satisfactions of Christ and the saints and hastening the day of their liberation.

There are, therefore, three things which we can share with others: our merits *de congruo*, our prayers, and our satisfaction. And if we put these in Mary's hands for others, we ought not to be surprised if she sends us crosses—proportionate, of course, to our strength—to make us really work for the salvation of souls.

Who are those who may be advised to make this act of consecration? It certainly should not be recommended to people who would make it for merely sentimental reasons or through spiritual pride, and would not understand its true meaning. But those who are truly spiritual may be recommended to make it for a few days at first and then for some longer time; when finally they are prepared they may make it for their whole lives.

Someone may say that to give everything to Our Lady is to strip oneself, to leave one's own debts unpaid, and so to add to one's term in purgatory. This is in fact the difficulty the devil suggested to St. Brigid of Sweden when she thought of making the act of donation to Mary. Our Blessed Lord, however, explained to the saint that the objection sprang from self-love and made no allowance for Mary's goodness. Mary will not be outdone in generosity: her help to us will far exceed what we give her. The very act of love which prompts our donation will itself obtain remission of part of our purgatory.

Others wonder if making the act of donation to Mary leaves them free to pray for relatives and friends afterwards. They forget that Mary knows the obligations of charity better than we do: she would be the first to remind us of them. There may even be some among our relatives and friends on earth and in purgatory who have urgent need of prayers and satisfactions without our knowing who they are. Mary, however, knows who they are, and she can help them out of our good works if we have put them at her disposal.

Thus understood, consecration and donation make us enter more fully, under Mary's guidance, into the mystery of the Communion of Saints. It is a perfect renewal of the baptismal promises.<sup>6</sup>

## Fruits of this Consecration

"This devotion," St. Louis de Montfort tells us, gives us up altogether to the service of God, and makes us imitate the example of Our Blessed Lord, Who willed to

be "subject" in regard to His Blessed Mother (Lk. 2:51). It obtains for us the special protection of Mary, who purifies our good works and adorns them when she offers them to her Divine Son. It leads us to union with Our Blessed Lord; it is an easy, short, perfect and safe way. It confers great interior freedom, procures great benefits for our neighbor, and is an excellent means of assuring our perseverance.<sup>7</sup>

The Saint develops each of these points in a most practical way. He speaks of the easiness of the way in Ch. 5, A. 5:

It is an easy way, one followed and prepared for us by Our Blessed Lord in His own coming, one where there are no obstacles in reaching Him. It is true that one can arrive at union with God by following other roads; but there will be many more crosses and trials, and many more difficulties which it will not be easy to surmount—there will be combats and strange agonies, steep mountains, sharp thorns, fearful deserts. But the way of Mary is sweeter and more peaceful.

Even along the way of Mary there are stern battles and great difficulties; but our good Mother makes herself so near and present to her faithful servants to enlighten them in their doubts, to strengthen them in their fears, and to sustain them in their battles, that in truth the Virgin's way to Jesus is a way of roses and honey compared with all others.

The Saint adds that the truth of this can be seen from the lives of the Saints who have followed this way most particularly: St. Ephrem, St. John Damascene, St. Bernard, St. Bonaventure, St. Bernardine of Siena, and St. Francis de Sales.

A little further on in the same chapter, the Saint states that Mary's servants "receive from her Heaven's greatest graces and favors which are crosses; but it is the servants of Mary who bear the crosses with most ease, merit and glory; and what would hold back another makes them advance," for they are more aided by the Mother of God, who obtains for them the unction of love in their trials. It is wonderful how Mary makes the cross at the same time easier to bear and more meritorious: easier to bear because she helps us, and more meritorious because she obtains for us greater charity, which is the principle of greater merit.

It is a short way...one advances more in a little while of submission to and dependence on Mary than in many years of self-will and self-reliance....We can advance with giant strides along the path by which Jesus came to us....In a few years we shall arrive at the fulness of the perfect age.<sup>8</sup>

It is a perfect way, chosen by God Himself...The Most High descended to us by way of the humble Mary without losing anything of His Divinity; it is by Mary that little ones can rise perfectly and divinely to the Most High without fear.

It is finally a safe way, for the Blessed Virgin preserves us from the illusions of the devil and our imagination. She preserves us from sentiment as

well, calming and ruling our sensibility, giving it a pure and holy object, and subordinating it to the rule of the will vivified by charity.

In consecration to Mary, we find great interior liberty: this is the reward of putting ourselves in such complete dependence on Mary. Scruples are banished; the heart dilates with confidence and love. The Saint confirms this point by referring to what he read in the life of the Dominican, Mother Agnes de Langeac,

who, suffering great anguish of soul, heard a voice which said to her that if she wished to be delivered and to be protected from her enemies, she should make herself at once the slave of Jesus and His Holy Mother....When she had done so all her anguish and scruples ceased, and she found herself in a state of great peace, as a result of which she determined to teach the devotion to others...among whom was M. Olier, the founder of the seminary of Saint-Sulpice, and many other priests of the same seminary.

It was in the same seminary that St. Louis de Montfort received his priestly formation.

Finally, this devotion is one which procures the good of our neighbor and it is for those who live by it an admirable means of persevering in grace...for by it one gives to Mary, who is faithful, all that one has....It is on her fidelity that reliance is placed...that she may preserve and increase our merits in spite of all that could make us lose them....Do not commit the gold of your charity, the silver of your purity, the waters of heavenly graces, or the wine of your merits and virtues...to broken vessels such as you yourselves are; else you will be despoiled by robbers, that is by the demons, who watch day and night for a favorable opportunity. Put all your treasures, all your graces and virtues, in the womb and in the heart of Mary: she is a spiritual vessel, a vessel of honor, a singular vessel of devotion.

Souls who are not born of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God and of Mary, understand and relish what I say; and it is for them that I write....If a soul gives itself to Mary without reserve, she gives herself to it without reserve and helps it to find the road which leads to the eternal goal.

Such are the fruits of this consecration: Mary loves those who commit themselves to her fully; she guides, directs, defends, protects, supports and intercedes for them. It is good to offer ourselves to her so that she may offer us to her Son according to the fulness of her prudence and her zeal.

There are also fruits of a higher order which this devotion produces, fruits which are strictly mystical.

According to St. Louis de Montfort (ch. I, a. 2, no. 3), devotion to Our Blessed Lady will be more specially necessary in the last ages of the world, when Satan will make an effort such "as to deceive (if possible) even the elect" (Mt. 24:24). "If the predestined," he says, "enter with the grace and light of the Holy Ghost into the interior and perfect practice of this devotion, they will see clearly as far as faith permits this beautiful star of the sea, and




## The Consecration to Russia

Sadly, the consecration of Russia has yet to be done. In 1925, Sr. Lucy stated:

"It was Our Lady of Fátima...with a crown of thorns... and she said to me: 'The moment has come in which God asks the Holy Father in union with all the Bishops of the world to consecrate Russia to My Immaculate Heart, promising to save it by this means.'"

Let us continue to pray that the Rosary Crusade will finally bring this to fruition!

they will arrive safely in harbour, in spite of pirates and tempests. They will learn the greatness of their Queen, and they will consecrate themselves entirely to her service, as her subjects and slaves of love" to combat what St. Paul calls the slavery of sin (cf. Rom. 6:20). They will have experience of her motherly tenderness, and they will love her as her well-beloved children. The expression "holy slavery" used by St. Louis has been sometimes criticized. This is to forget that it is a slavery of love which accentuates rather than diminishes the filial character of our love of Mary. Besides, as Bishop Garnier, Bishop of Luçon, remarked in a pastoral letter of March 11, 1922, if there are in the world slaves of human respect, of ambition, of money, and of shameful passions, there are also, thank God, slaves of conscience and of duty. The holy slavery belongs to this group. The expression "holy slavery" is a striking metaphor, opposed to the slavery of sin. 

This article is taken from Chapter 15, Article III, of the book *The Mother of the Saviour* by Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange. It was granted the nihil obstat in 1941 and the imprimi potest in 1948.

<sup>1</sup> That is why St. Louis de Montfort speaks in his formula of "Consecration of oneself to Jesus by the hands of Mary." In the course of his treatise he usually says it more briefly, "Consecration to Mary," meaning thereby consecration to Jesus through her.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Dict. de Theol. Cath.*, s.v. "Marie," cols. 2470 sqq. Pius X has made his own the teaching of St. Louis de Montfort, and sometimes of his very expressions, in the Encyclical *Ad Diem Illum* on Mary, universal Mediatrix.

<sup>3</sup> Even religious who have taken solemn vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience can make this offering which will introduce them further into the mystery of the Communion of Saints.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Treatise of True Devotion*, ch. iv, a. I.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Summa Theologica*, III, Q. 14, Art. 1; Q. 48, Art. 2; Suppl., Q. 13, Art. 2: "Onus pro alio satisfacere potest, in quantum duo homines sunt unum in caritate."

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Treatise of True Devotion*, ch. iv, a. 2.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. v.

<sup>8</sup> St. Francis of Assisi learned one day in a vision that his sons were endeavoring vainly to reach Our Blessed Lord by a steep ladder which led directly to Him. St. Francis was shown instead a ladder much less steep, at the top of which was Mary, and he heard the words: "Tell your sons to make use of the ladder of My Mother."

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# *The Consecration of the Human Race to the Immaculate Heart of Mary*



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Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange here explains the bigger picture: beyond the personal consecration to Mary, the whole social order depends on Her as well. Although written in 1932, the article even offers a keen analysis of contemporary politics.

Before the great perils of the present hour that no one ignores, one feels the need to have recourse to the redemptive Love of Christ and to have recourse to it through the most powerful intercession, that of Mary Mediatrix.

A good number of the French bishops, meeting together at Lourdes at the Second National Marian Congress, on July 29, 1929, expressed to the Sovereign Pontiff their desire for a consecration of the human race to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This desire had already been formulated some years previously by the pastors of several dioceses in France and Italy.<sup>1</sup>

For the evil from which we are suffering the most, they saw no other efficacious remedy than an appeal full of faith and confidence to the great mediators that God has given us because of our weakness. In the economy of salvation, as in the piety of the faithful, Mary is inseparable from her Son and, more than anyone, she can bring down upon us by her prayer all the graces that the merciful Love of the Saviour wants to give us. It is not surprising, then, that after the consecration of the human race to the Sacred Heart, the idea was formed of making a similar consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.<sup>2</sup>

One of the great dangers of the present hour, obviously, is international Communism, a materialist movement that denies the existence of God, of the future life, that destroys the dignity of the human person, the family, and the country. It seeks to conquer Europe and dreams about a world-wide revolution which would be the end of Christianity and all religion, according to the program of the atheist league of those who deny God which Bolshevism is spreading in several countries.

In order to resist this Communist movement, in various places there is a nationalism arising, which, when it is not merely defensive but offensive, often surpasses just limits; it can elevate certain people who were bogged down in a completely egotistical individualism, but it can also bring down those who were living in a Christian spirit, a higher and more universal notion of the great spiritual needs of every human soul. Here and there exaggerated nationalism tends even to become a pagan adoration of the State, more or less deified. And in order to react against a form of materialist naturalism, some fall into another form of the same error, to the detriment of the life of souls, who can thus become so disorientated that they can no longer find the true path.

Certainly, we must have in our hearts a love for our family and our country that goes to the point of heroism, but one feels also more and more the need to ascend above this human conflict between Communism and nationalism by a deeper contact with the superior sources of life by sincere prayer, inspired by a great spirit of faith and confidence in God.

The more virtuous souls, those who have more faith and zeal, among the peoples that so many conflicts divide, feel the need of a common prayer that unites before God the profoundly Christian souls of different countries in order that the kingdom of the Lord might progressively come in us. Without Him, peace, the tranquillity of order, can not be firmly restored and maintained in the life of individuals, in the family, the State, and among nations.

In order to render this common prayer of all believers more confident and more efficacious, all we have to do is recall and live the doctrine of Christ, head of humanity and of the City of God, as St. Augustine liked to say, the city which begins here below and is consummated in eternal life. It is towards it, under the direction of the Saviour and the Church, that all men, of whatever race they may be, must tend; in it must be united the souls of good will of all the countries of the world as in the Fatherland *par excellence*.

The Saviour came precisely so that men of all races and all peoples might have the life that never ends: "*ut vitam habeant, et abundantius habeant.*"

With this idea, at the beginning of the century, Leo XIII consecrated to the Sacred Heart the whole human race, not just the faithful, but also the non-believers, the Muslims, the Buddhists, even those who call themselves atheists, all men, in order to place them, by this consecration, more fully in the stream of graces that come from Christ, who died for all without exception. As St. Thomas teaches,<sup>3</sup> when a child, even a non-believer, arrives at the age of reason, he must choose between the path of duty, which leads to God, the sovereign good, or the path of disordered pleasure, which leads us to love ourselves above all things and turn away from God. At that moment the soul

of the child, even a non-believer, is solicited by an antecedent grace, by a divine prevention. If he doesn't resist, he takes the straight road, which leads finally, from grace to grace, right up to a good death and salvation. Certainly the consecration of the human race to the Sacred Heart put the souls of non-believers under a more intense influence of graces of light, attraction, and strength.

Today, before the perils that threaten us, several bishops have thought it fitting to ask the Holy Father to renew this consecration by praying Mary Mediatrix, Mother of all men, to present it herself to her Son.

After the prayer that remains always in the Heart of Our Lord, and which is like the soul of the sacrifice of the Mass that is celebrated unceasingly all over the world, the greatest prayer, the one that is strongest against the spirit of evil, against the spirit of pride which divides individuals, classes and peoples, is the prayer of Mary.

God wills not to accord certain benefits except in answer to fervent supplications, except when a certain number of souls will have truly given the first place in themselves to supernatural charity and sanctification, above and beyond natural activity.

The conflict that divides souls at this time is above all spiritual, a conflict between the imprescriptible rights of God and the so-called rights of atheistic reason that does not want to admit the order of grace and the divine gift of Redemption which is proclaimed incessantly by the Church.

This reason, which claims as a right its absolute autonomy or independence, often prefers to deny itself, to deny the validity of its own first principles, rather than admit the existence of God, the author of salvation.

In order to triumph in this battle, we must put above all things the spirit of the three theological virtues, the spirit of faith, of confidence in Providence, and of love of God and of souls. Without this supernatural spirit, what could all the effort of human science do, finally, against the evils of atheism and materialism and against the evils of an even worse false idealism that doesn't conserve of God anything but the name and that turns towards man himself the adoration due to the Creator?

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The gravity of the present evil comes from the reversal of the scale of values: salvation is sought in the solution to economic crises, from which is born the unemployment we see presently, and these crises are insoluble if one turns away from the true last end of human activity and from the help from above without which one cannot attain this end. The pursuit of pleasure and earthly interests makes the great majority of men completely forget the first line of Christian doctrine: "I was created and put in the world in order to know God, love Him, serve Him and by these means obtain eternal life." Little by little this doctrine of our true last end is replaced by another that is formulated without the least allusion to God, to the Sovereign Good: "The end of man is the full development of his personality." And this development is sought by making the secondary, exterior and derivative activity the principal one, and the principal one secondary.

Thus man ends up practically loving himself more than God; the axis of his life has changed. The vivifying principle being no longer at its true place, everything declines. The secondary activity itself that one wanted to place too high, by preferring it to what is primary, ends up being worth nothing. It is like an organism where the overdevelopment of certain organs, at the expense of the principal ones, brings on death. The salt loses its savor and is no longer worth anything, as the Gospel says. That is what happens, little by little, when one prefers natural activity, intellectual and social activity, to the spirit of faith, confidence in God, and charity, when one prefers natural virtues to theological virtues. Even very elevated souls would thus come to lose their savor by neglecting what is primary; such would be the priest who ends up rushing through his Mass in 15 minutes in order to give himself up to activity that he would pursue without any fruit because he would no longer have the true light.

Little by little the scale of values is completely reversed and the full development of the personality to which one aspires makes one think of the personality of him who said: "*Non serviam,*" rather than the personality of the saints who had understood that this full development consists in dying to the self which is made up of pride, self-love,

and unconscious egoism, in order to live truly by God and for God.

This path leads to the destruction of all wisdom. Instead of judging all things by their highest cause and by their last end, one judges what is greater by what is lowest, by the things that are most material. Utility, which has no meaning except in relation to an end, becomes the last end. This reversal of the scale of values or of order obviously banishes all peace, which is defined as the tranquillity of the order established by God.

In the midst of such general confusion, to what superior force must we have recourse?

If we knew where we could find the holiest soul on earth at this time, many would be happier to listen to her rather than the greatest philosopher or the greatest statesman of our time.

No one knows here below where this soul, holier than all others, is found. This soul herself, more than anyone, knows the price of the hidden life like that of St. Alexis, or St. Benedict-Joseph Labre, a holy Curé of Ars, a St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus. Her prayer must certainly be singularly efficacious.

But if we don't know where to find the holiest soul of our generation, we do know where to find the supreme Pastor, who has the infallibility to guide us, and we know also which is, after the holy soul of Christ, the soul that is incontestably the holiest of all human generations, and the soul whose prayer is the most powerful. It is most certainly the soul of Mary.

It is the prayer of Mary, Mother of all men, that will obtain for us from the Saviour the strength we need in the general confusion of the present hour.

The prayer of Mary is universal in the largest sense of the word. The Blessed Virgin prays not only for all individual souls on earth and in Purgatory, but also for families and for all the peoples who must live under the radiance of the light of the Gospel, under the influence of the Church. She prays that the kingdom of God and of Christ Jesus might come everywhere in the world and take the place of the reign of covetousness and pride.

The merciful love of Mary for all men surpasses that of all the saints together. Consequently, her prayer is very powerful against the spirit of division that opposes to each other individuals, classes and peoples. If a formal pact with the devil to which one fully consents can have horrible consequences

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in the life of a soul, what spiritual effect will not be produced by a consecration to Mary that is made with a great spirit of faith and is renewed each day with a greater fidelity? The supplication of the Virgin for us is that of a very clairvoyant, very loving, very powerful Mother who watches continually over her children, over all men who are called to receive the fruits of Redemption. He who consecrates every day to Mary all his labors, all his spiritual works, and all he undertakes experiences this. He finds again faith and confidence when all seems lost.

If our personal consecration to Our Lord by Mary, as explained by St. Louis de Montfort, can, when we live it, bring down upon us great graces of light, love and strength; if she thus makes us enter more deeply into the mystery of the Communion of saints, what would not be the fruits of a consecration of the human race made to the Saviour by Mary herself, at the request of the common Father of the faithful, especially if, in the circumstances we find ourselves in, all the believers of different countries unite in order to live by it, in a fervent prayer often renewed at the moment of the Mass?

Above internationalism, which refuses to recognize the spirits and traditions of different peoples, and nationalism, which often forgets the higher aspirations of humanity, must rise the "supranationalism" of the Catholic, that is universal, Church, which must unite souls of different nations under the same light of the Gospel, in the same supernatural hope and the same love of God. May the Mother of the Saviour deign by her prayer to place the believing souls of different peoples under the radiance of this word of Christ: "And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them; that they may be one, as we also are one" (Jn. 17:22).

In order to obtain this grace, prayerful souls should often do their mental prayer with Mary, uniting themselves very intimately to her dazzling purity and her merciful love for sinners. Prayer done in this way with the Virgin brings peace, even in the most anguished hours when one thinks of the dangers that threaten so many souls who risk damnation. In the great questions of God's

The gravity of the present evil comes from the reversal of the scale of values: salvation is sought in the solution to economic crises, from which is born the unemployment we see presently, and these crises are insoluble if one turns away from the true last end of human activity and from the help from above without which one cannot attain this end.

universal will of salvation and predestination our intelligence could easily go astray, either in the direction of Pelagianism, or in the opposite direction of Calvinism, but when one prays intimately the Mother of God, it isn't rare that, without the noise of any words, and only as a mother can, she makes descend in us, with something of her gentleness and holiness, the light of life that pacifies all things. She reminds us that we are under the governance of God and that His merciful love shines out upon souls, even those of non-believers, in order to "make them desire truth and salvation more than we think."

What is the most precious thing we can offer to Mary for the salvation of souls?

Masses. More than anyone she knows the price of the Precious Blood of her Son. And she continues to unite herself to His oblation while teaching us to do it ourselves as well. Concretely, for some time now, the initiative has been taken to have Masses celebrated every day for each one of the three following great intentions: for Russia, for the conversion of China and Japan, and for that of the Muslims and the other infidels of Africa. It is good as well to have the holy sacrifice celebrated for the countries where persecution rages, as in Spain and in Mexico, while uniting oneself to these Masses with a veritable spirit of prayer and penance or reparation.

The first bulletin of the Eucharistic Union for the Conversion of the Muslims recalls these words of Fr. Charles de Foucauld, who died a victim of his generous love for the infidels:

Every man must appear to us as a brother covered, as with a mantle, with the Blood of Jesus....What must we not give to souls whose price is the blood of Jesus?...He died for each one of them. Every Christian must be an apostle. Do all I can for the salvation of non-believing peoples with a perfect forgetfulness of myself. The good a soul does is completely proportionate to her interior spirit...

Offer your life to God, by the hands of Our Mother, the Most Holy Virgin, in union with the sacrifice of Our Lord Jesus Christ and all the intentions of His Heart.

All your sufferings, all your tears, are souls.

Never lose a communion by your own fault; a communion is worth more than a life, more than all the

goods of the world, more than the whole universe, it is God Himself, it is Me, Jesus.—A Mass glorifies God more than the praise of all the angels and the martyrdom of all men. The martyrdom of all men and the adoration of all the angels is something finite, a Mass is infinite.

The blood sacramentally poured out on the altar at every hour of the day is the blood of the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world. The sacrifice of the Mass, by thus perpetuating in substance the sacrifice of the Cross, applies to us its fruits and permits us to participate in it by the oblation and by Holy Communion.

Thus is fulfilled what is said in the Apocalypse:

Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; because the accuser of our brethren is cast forth, who accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb. (Apoc. 12:10)

The daily celebration of Masses for Russia is not less important at the present hour. Nothing is more pitiful than the state in which this nation finds itself: the situation of children raised in atheism and enthusiasm for a progress that is purely material, the destruction of marriage and the family, the affliction of all those who still want to be faithful to their duties towards God and to strive for their salvation.

The spirit of evil fears nothing so much as a Mass, especially when it is celebrated with great fervor and when many unite themselves to it with a spirit of faith.

When the enemy runs up against some insurmountable obstacle, it's because in a church some weak, poor priest has offered with faith the all-powerful victim and the blood of Redemption.

Let us remember that "Christ always living never ceases to make intercession for us" (Heb. 7:25). He does so especially at Holy Mass. At the precise moment when the words of the double consecration are pronounced, Jesus wills that they


The prayer that is most powerful over the Heart of Christ is that of Mary, universal Mediatrix, Mother of all men, who more than anyone, after her Son, knows the immense spiritual needs of the present hour.

produce what they signify. He wills it at that precise moment and He does it. He wishes to continue thus to offer Himself in order to apply to the different generations of men the merits of His Passion and His death.

Following the example of Mary Mediatrix of all graces, and relying on her very powerful intercession, let us unite ourselves to this interior act of oblation that is always living in the Heart of Christ, and which is like the soul of the sacrifice of the Mass. Let us unite ourselves to it by the supernatural and generous acceptance of our daily sufferings. But let us offer above all the Precious Blood of her Son in a spirit of adoration, reparation, supplication and thanksgiving. The conversion of souls is the work of the Redeeming Blood.

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"It is fitting," wrote Cardinal Mercier, "that children express to their Father their most intimate desires." We can hope that one day, when the providential hour will come, His Holiness Pius XI, called the Pope of the missions, in consideration of the wishes expressed by the bishops and the

faithful, will consecrate the human race to the Holy Heart of Mary, so that she herself might present us more insistently to her Son. Let us turn to her with the greatest confidence, remembering the words that she addresses us in the liturgy: "*Qui me invenerit, inveniet vitam, et hauriet salutem a Domino*: He that shall find me, shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord." 

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<sup>1</sup> Some Italian bishops asked Leo XIII the authorisation to consecrate their dioceses to the Most Pure Heart of Mary; Bishop Dedolle, Bishop Touchet and Cardinal Couiné had proclaimed Mary Queen of the universe.

<sup>2</sup> Father Deschamps, S.J., in 1914, Cardinal Richard, Archbishop of Paris, in 1906, Fr. Le Doré, Superior-General of the Eudists, in 1908 and 1912. Fr. Lintelo, S.J., in 1914, took the initiative of making petitions to the Sovereign Pontiff in order to obtain the universal consecration of the human race to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

By a collective act the bishops of France, at the beginning of the war, in December 1914, consecrated France. Cardinal Mercier, in 1915, in a pastoral letter on Mary Mediatrix, hailed Mary as Mother of the human race, as Sovereign of the world. Reverend Father Lucas, new Superior-General of the Eudists, and the Legion of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, approved by numerous bishops, obtained in a few months more than 300,000 signatures

in order to hasten, by this consecration, the peace of Christ in the reign of Christ.

One must recall also the fact that in December 1836 the venerable Pastor of Notre-Dame des Victoires in Paris, while celebrating Mass at the altar of the Virgin, his heart broken at the thought of the fruitlessness of his ministry, heard these words: "Consecrate your parish to the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary," and, when the consecration was accomplished, the parish was transformed.

<sup>3</sup> I-II, q. 89, a. 6: "*Primum quod tunc homini cogitandum occurrit, est deliberare de seipso. Et si quidem seipsum ordinaverit ad debitum finem, per gratiam consequetur remissionem originalis peccati*: The first thing that a man thinks of at that moment is to deliberate about himself. And if he orientates himself to the due end, by grace he will receive the remission of original sin."



FR. ROGER CALMEL, O.P.

# The Immaculate Heart of Mary and World Peace

A reflection on the message of Fatima, the importance of devotion to our Lady, and the necessity of conversion.

We shall reflect on the words of the Blessed Virgin at Fatima. When it comes to commenting on the words of Our Lord, every Christian who is careful about what he says or writes cannot help feeling a certain reverential fear. Might not what he will say miss the divine truth? Or will he be able to penetrate however slightly into a pre-eminently mysterious word? This apprehension also seizes him when it comes to commenting on the words of Our Lady. Yet it is also as normal to comment on the divine word as to reflect and meditate upon it. While the silence of love may be the most worthy homage (awaiting the eternal morning of vision), it is impossible not to speak, not to employ our discursive faculty before divine truth. Such an attitude has always been encouraged by the Church, who is as profoundly a theologian as she is a mystic. So let confidence outweigh fear, and may our reflection attempt to penetrate into the message the Queen of the Rosary confided to her humble privileged souls: Jacinta and Francesco, and especially Lucy.

## Peace: A Gift of God

One of the first ideas that occur to us upon reading this message is that world peace, political peace, is a gift of God and of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. "Say [the rosary] with the intention of obtaining the end of the war."<sup>1</sup> Peace is thus suspended from the intercession of Our Lady and the omnipotence of Him whom we hail in Christmas Matins as *Princeps Pacis*. There is no doubt that this is true of supernatural

peace, the peace that abides within the secret of the heart, which proceeds from the love of God, within the holy Church, which is the *Beata Pacis visio*. For how could peace of this order, of its nature heavenly, a peace of this quality, properly divine and supernatural, not be a gift of God and a fruit of the intercession of the Virgin redemptrix? On the other hand, a certain political naturalism would lead us to think that the peace "of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues," since it is a reality of a natural, perishable order, lies within the scope of nature abandoned to itself. There is no doubt but that some Christians have slipped on this slope. It is a slope of error. And this for two reasons: first of all, by virtue of the quite general principle that no good thing begins, continues, and comes to completion without the benevolence of the Almighty and unless God grants it His blessing; and secondly, for a very specific reason having to do with the essence of political peace.

It is, in effect, a fruit of justice—*opus justitiae pax*; now, there is no solid, integral justice without conversion of heart and thus without supernatural grace, that is, without a divine favor. Peace is the tranquility of a just order; but this just order cannot happen without the will of men. If the leaders and the people ordinarily abandon themselves to injustice, how can the tranquility of order be obtained? One may say perhaps: but isn't it enough to have just institutions to be preserved from injustice, whatever form this may take: as, for example, to fail to recognize or to oppose the authority of the Church; to develop an



SSPX  
Rosary  
Crusade

unbridled economic imperialism; to oppress weaker nations? Certainly, appropriate institutions can and should remedy these crimes. But good institutions, while helping people to be good, are first of all created and supported by the justice of individuals. Now, this justice is quite weak and short-lived without God's grace, in such a way that, without grace, the best of institutions are not enough to ensure peace.

To be sure, it would be grotesque to interpret the message of Fatima in the sense of a supernaturalism and to fail to recognize that world peace is a political effect partly linked to political causes. On the other hand, it is normal to interpret the message of Fatima as a reminder of the fundamental truth that politics is not enough, for the resulting political order is dependent on fallen and redeemed human beings. If individuals do not let themselves be healed by divine grace, the desired political effects will not follow. It is because the Church is deeply aware of this that she counts on the Lord first and foremost to obtain peace. Let us think rather of the commentary on the "*Libera nos a malo*" that the liturgy develops at the end of the *Pater Noster* before Communion; let us also think of the Good Friday prayers and the *Exsultet* of the Paschal Vigil. Peace is always presented to us as a gift of divine mercy. This lesson from the liturgy is also the first lesson of Fatima.

The second lesson is complementary: world peace is impossible without the conversion of Christians. This gift of God is not automatic, not only because it requires and fosters just politics, but at the same time because God cannot grant this gift without the conversion of wills: "Do penance," said the Blessed Virgin. "If my requests are granted, Russia will be converted and there will be peace in the world." Let us not be unrealistic. Let us not imagine that peace among nations and within nations will be obtained if all the Christians are not in the state of grace. But let us also understand that peace cannot be established if Christian people persist in lukewarmness: in other words, if they continue to make the comforts of technological progress the be all and end all of their lives.

The conversion called for by the Blessed Virgin and the peace of which she speaks are not ahistorical. They are specific to an era, to a precise period of human history, the time of the Communist Revolution in Russia and the worldwide expansion of Communist propaganda. World peace is not to be achieved in the state in which the world lay at the time of the Roman Emperors, when the nations as such had not been baptized and when the State had no notion of legislation enlightened by the Church or that took into account the coming on earth of the very Son of God and of His work of Redemption. The peace in question concerns a world in which a certain number of nations were baptized, and so it is of paramount importance that their subjects conduct their lives as baptized persons. Nor can peace in the modern world

be achieved in the conditions prevailing at the time of the 16th century, when, in spite of the heretics and free-thinkers, no one envisaged that the State should be organized on the basis of materialism (and not just a doctrinal materialism to be preached, but dialectical materialism in the revolutionary activity that the State is compelled to adopt by means of perfidious cunning or under the pressure of terror!)

The conjuncture in which Our Lady called for conversion is assuredly very particular. It was at the time when Communism was spreading in one great land at one extremity of Europe that she appeared at the other extremity of the continent to urge our conversion. The war threatening the world was not a war like others, firstly because the methods of destruction have achieved incredible progress, but especially because dialectical materialism had insinuated its poison into the social fabric of the Russian State and was threatening to corrupt other States. "If my demands are not met," our Lady told us, "Russia will spread its errors throughout the world, provoking wars and persecution against the Church."

It would be easy to capitulate at once and say, for example: "After all, does it really matter so much if a part of humanity is destroyed by nuclear weapons? The victims will not find themselves because of that in an absolute impossibility of saving their souls. Should we really fear worldwide domination by communism and the abolition of Christian nations so much? After all, the grace of God has no need of anything nor anyone, and those who desire it will still be able to save their souls." Alas, these statements are not a fictitious objection that I'm addressing. This language of pre-emptive capitulation, which inspires indignation in every noble heart, has unfortunately been made by some Christians.

These are abject proposals that the instinct of natural generosity as well as the instinct of faith reject out of hand. This spontaneous refusal of the Christian heart which precedes its articulate justification might be explained this way: It is true that grace is strong enough and powerful enough to draw good from evil, to bring forth the holiness of the martyrs from the iniquity of tyrants and the cruelty of executioners. It remains that *we ought not to do evil so that good may come of it* and to do so is an abominable sin. It remains that we ought not to cooperate in evil by our complicity. We know that even during the apostasy and the general iniquity of the last times the power of God is still strong enough to save men. But we should do what we can to prevent injustice.

In some respects, it is true that Christian nations are not indispensable to the life of the Church. But since they exist we would be criminal to work towards their disappearance or to cooperate in their disappearance in any way. We ought not commit this injustice. It is very easy to say that the Church has no need of Christian civilization. This proposition is not understood correctly unless it is considered in light of

the two following propositions: from the fact that she is a stranger on earth, the Church cannot avoid having an influence on terrestrial things that are in relation with the Faith; she cannot avoid affecting private and public morals and consequently she tends to form a Christian civilization.

The second truth is that Christian civilization constitutes for the Church a normal aid and support. We know the limits of Christian nations and how much they constantly need to be uplifted, corrected, and returned to the right path and that they are of another order than the Church. But to conclude from this that because these two orders are distinct they must therefore be separate is to fail, under pretext of purity, to take account of the fact that the Church develops on this earth.

The Church cannot be indifferent to the social conditions that foster respect for law, that is, a Christian social order. And it is such an order that God desires as support for His Church. When Christians commit the great injustice of allowing the abolition of this order, *they know not what they are doing* nor with what scandals they burden their consciences—for example, when, without any resistance, they allow private schools to be closed or allow state control of the economy. Although God can save souls through the worst of scandals, and even when the scandal has been codified and institutionalized, the Christians who favor or who at least do not prevent the scandal when they might have, are gravely culpable. Likewise, when Christians fancy that a Christian civilization can continue to exist without their conversion, they no longer understand what a Christian civilization is and the wrong they do to it.

To enable the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ to achieve its full stature and the number of the elect to be filled up, the social order is of no small importance. First, it is necessary for children to come into the world and for the human race not to be destroyed too soon; then it is necessary for men to be able to grow up in a society that accepts the Church at least partially, or, at any rate, accepts it enough so as not to become a perpetual and institutionalized incitement to apostasy, materialism, and the rejection of God.

Thus the spiritual kingdom posits a minimum of Christian social order; it helps such an order to be established, to endure, and to be renewed, but at the same time calls for it as a normal support.

If we consider the Incarnation from the angle where this mystery concerns the social order, we see immediately that the Blessed Virgin holds a unique and unequalled place. Whether it regards the coming of the Word of God in a passible and mortal flesh, or His birth at Bethlehem, or His preservation during the exile in Egypt, the education at Nazareth or the first miracle at the wedding feast of Cana, the Blessed Virgin was involved in the temporal aspects of the Incarnation as only the Mother of the Word Incarnate could be. One begins to comprehend that she now

continues to watch over the social order of mankind in the measure that it is in relation with the Mystical Body of her Son Jesus Christ. One comprehends that she intervenes for the sake of a Christian social order; there is a profound affinity between her current role in the life of the Church<sup>2</sup> and the role she played in the accomplishment and the unfolding of the Mystery of the Incarnation.

To be sure, it is foretold that the social order will culminate in the abomination of widespread apostasy,<sup>3</sup> but until that time, and even at that time, the Blessed Virgin will be maternally watching to insure that the Church has that part of mankind and Christian civilization without which it could no longer exist on earth.

This explains why the heavenly Father wanted the apparition of the Blessed Virgin at Fatima to occur in 1917. While for the first time the nations of the world had just unleashed a war of total extermination, while a totally new revolution was developing that aimed less at regime change than at spreading throughout the world atheistic institutions and morals; in short, while Christian civilization, as imperfect as it may have been, was undergoing the most formidable assaults within and without, it was fitting that the heavenly Father should send to the world, for the purpose of helping it recover a Christian social order, the Immaculate Virgin whose consent had allowed the Incarnation of the Son of God and His temporal life. Now we can understand why the major apparitions of the Blessed Virgin, apparitions of global significance, only began after the unprecedented attack against Christian civilization by the great Revolution, and after the first organized attempt at integral secularism. From that moment the role of the Blessed Virgin for the salvation and renewal of a Christian social order became more urgent and appeared more clearly.

By our Lady's intervention at Fatima to preserve us from communism, if we at least desire to be converted, she showed clearly that the peace she desires for us cannot have anything in common with communist peace, which is the tranquility of disorder maintained by means of technologically organized terror and a propaganda machine that does not shrink from any lie nor any violation of conscience. True peace is the tranquility of an order based on justice both public and personal, a justice moreover that cannot exist without love.

Communism speaks a great deal about peace, just as it speaks a great deal about freedom, liberation, and social justice. But since it has categorically and in principle rejected God and His Church, and since it reduces man to being nothing more than a certain variety of matter, its peace can only be a grimacing counterfeit. A peace that fundamentally contradicts the nature of man and society may indeed present an exterior of tranquility, but it is the tranquility of convicts condemned to the galley: they cannot leave their bench, and they work together because

they live under the empire of terror and the whip. In the Communist galley the convicts still have the questionable privilege over the galley slaves of old of being able to listen to State radio broadcasts exalting the pleasures of their lot and the amenity of their guards while a hail of blows rains down without intermission on their skeletal carcasses.

There can be no communist peace, no more than there can be peace based on a comfortable, natural religion blessed by technological progress,<sup>4</sup> or soft materialism, or revolutionary dialectical materialism, though the latter would otherwise be consistent and tyrannical.

The temptation to gain the whole world without fear of losing their souls threatens poor men more than ever. Technological progress offers them ever increasing opportunities to spend their lives without regard for eternity; to spend their lives without prayer, sacrifice, or love of God; to yield themselves without resistance to the plethora of anesthetics discovered daily by modern science. In the 17th century Racine bemoaned the vain pursuits of worldly people; his lamentation has become even more justified in our day than it was in the age of the stagecoach, the sailing ship, and strolling players. That is why the Blessed Virgin is urging Christians to be converted, that is to say, to awaken from the false peace of tranquil materialism under pain of becoming a prey to dialectical materialism and its intrinsically perverse order.

At Fatima the Blessed Virgin did not simply say that in the end she would triumph. She said: "In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph." So saying, she wanted to remind us that her intervention in our unhappy history would be an additional proof of her love. Just as we need not look for any other cause than the love of the Mother of God in her *Fiat mihi* that allowed the Incarnation, or the silent offering of her co-redemptive Compassion, or her ardent prayer in the Cenacle that obtained the irrevocable effusion of the Holy Spirit, so also her unceasing, unseen supplication in heaven and her manifest intervention at certain desperate hours of the history of the Church and Christian civilization proceed uniquely from her love.

We have seen some Christians sneer when listening to talk about the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart; they justify their discreet mockery by theological reasons. It is enough to speak of Jesus and our Lady without making an explicit mention of their hearts, they explain; moreover, contemporary imagery, far from nourishing faith, encourages a suspect sentimentality. Whatever may be the case as regards often questionable imagery, the infallible Church officially promotes devotion to the Sacred Heart and to the Immaculate Heart, and in the apparitions of Fatima it is question not only of Our Lady or Queen of the Rosary, but also of the Immaculate Heart. If Christians who find fault with

these expressions have really loved their parents or their friends, their spouse or their children, if they have not defiled the language of love, they know full well that there's no speaking of love without speaking of the heart. Ever since there have been human beings who experience affection they invariably adopt the terms and phrases that remain no less valid for having often been profaned: "I give you my heart. I keep you in my heart." Well then, since Mary loves us and since she has no other reason to take care of us than her ineffable love as Co-Redemptrix Mother of God, it is not surprising that she speaks to us of her heart.

Nor is it surprising that she adds, *my Immaculate Heart*. By that, she means us to understand how much she loves us purely, how much her love is attuned to the holiness of God; and it is impossible for her, the Immaculate Mother of her only Son, to desire for us anything else than the accomplishment of God's will. Doubtless, neither can our brothers in heaven, the angels and saints, love us except in all purity nor in desiring for us anything but what God wants. But they do not have with God this absolutely unique bond, both physical and spiritual, which is the property of the Mother of God; consequently, in regard to God and in regard to us they lack the perfection and quality of love that belong to the Mother of God. The love of the angels and saints is certainly pure, but the love of the Immaculate Mother of God outstrips it extraordinarily in purity.

Knowing this, we understand better that she speaks to us of conversion and she makes peace contingent on conversion, that is, on fidelity to her Son and conformity to His Gospel. She cannot, in effect, desire peace for her children, namely, the first of all temporal goods, if it would make them forget conversion, if it would make them shirk the first of spiritual goods, namely, conformity to Jesus Christ by conversion, awaiting conformity to Jesus Christ by the blessed resurrection. Because the Blessed Virgin carries us in her Immaculate Heart, because she loves us with the love of an Immaculate Heart, she cannot obtain for us peace on earth without asking us for the conversion of our souls.

Similarly, she cannot obtain for us an earthly peace that would be tantamount to paradise on earth, one that would exempt us from having to suffer from the evil within us and around us, from having to fight against the devil and against all those who, for a time or for their whole life and with a more or less imperfect docility, do the devil's work and play his game.

The peace that the Immaculate Heart wants to obtain for us does not fulfill the impure aspirations of political messianism: the messianism, abhorred by the true Messiah, that refuses to take account of either the cross or the devil, or participation in the sacrifice of Jesus, or the unleashed malice of Satan. Since the human condition is marked by the Fall and Redemption, earthly peace cannot comprise the

absolute suppression of every injustice because sin continues, and therefore peace cannot avoid being precarious and threatened. A word of the Blessed Virgin at Fatima gently reminds us of this truth without possibility of illusion: "...a time of peace will be given to the world," she says. This restriction wrings our hearts: the peace will not be perpetual. And we may add: it will not be the unqualified triumph of perfect justice.

One might be inclined to be disappointed or to bewail our fate or to become angry. However, what is in conformity with the best aspirations of our nature as well as the divine inclinations of grace is to understand that this good, however imperfect it may be, is nonetheless of inestimable value; it means that we should continue working for peace on earth, everyone at his post and according to his talents, being vigilant especially as regards the conversion of our own heart; in short, working for peace with the Christian dispositions the Blessed Virgin came to remind us of.

The hatred, fury, and vigilant malice of Satan against the Church, of the Dragon against the Spouse, will endure until the glorious return of the Lamb. The revelation of the Apocalypse does not leave us in any doubt about it. Likewise, the Apocalypse teaches us that the assaults of Hell will redouble with violence the closer the end draws near. The counter-Church will perfect its methods, the counter-Church which the Apocalypse reveals to us as nothing else than the political power, temporal society inasmuch as it sets itself up as an absolute power, becoming an idol and demanding everything from men, and by that very fact working unceasingly for the Church's destruction.

For whoever reads the Apocalypse attentively, it seems that history does not repeat itself and that there is a development of the Two Cities. How then should we imagine the progress of the City of Evil? It seems to us to consist in this: progressively the devil will get hold of the fundamental conditions needed by the human will for acting rightly. To be sure, the devil has no direct power over our wills. But as human history develops, he works relentlessly to pervert the basic elements necessary for us to use our will correctly, such as the family, our profession, the work place, civil society, legislation, and morals both public and private. The devil deploys all his rage and cunning so that those things that should help us in doing good become for us a source of scandal, and not just in passing or occasionally, but permanently.

It is a first right of human nature to be helped to go to God by a decent family, an education in truth, an economy organized in accord with justice, and a society in conformity with the natural law. As history progresses, the devil shows himself increasingly stronger and more skillful at violating the true rights of man and arranging for him a life in which apostasy happens almost naturally. A society based on dialectical materialism represents an incontestable progress in his methods. Such a society is possessed by

the devil since its institutions as a whole are organized in violation of natural law: it is institutionalized sin.

## Conversion and the Rosary

At Fatima, even more than at Lourdes, the Blessed Virgin recommended saying the Rosary; she even gave herself the title, Our Lady of the Rosary. Is there a profound link between true conversion of heart, the conversion she asks of us, and this form of prayer that too often remains routine and superficial? The answer is affirmative, and we shall show why. However, at the very least this prayer must be a genuine prayer, that is, it must be made in spirit and in truth instead of being mechanically mumbled. The indignation expressed by Pascal in his ninth *Provinciale* and St. Louis de Montfort in Chapter 3 of his *True Devotion* over false devotees of our Lady still deserve our consideration, and after Fatima at least as much as in the 17th century.

For if the Blessed Virgin calls herself Our Lady of the Rosary and if she urges us to make use of our beads, it is not to authorize inattention, and still less Pharisaism, in prayer. This being said, it seems that the great advantage of the Rosary when it is said "in spirit and in truth," is that it obliges us more than any other devotion (we are not speaking of the liturgy, which is of a different order) to become aware of the entire mystery of our Redemption: the life, passion, and glory of Christ the Savior. This prolonged awareness should obviously lead us to conform our sentiments and our morals to the subject of our meditation. The Rosary is a contemplative prayer; it makes us contemplate the Gospel, and this in the presence and with the aid of her who has penetrated furthest into the heart of the Gospel; how could it fail to be a wonderful source of evangelical life? How then can the Rosary fail to incite us to change our lives and to be converted? This is all the more true in that, if it is said as it should be said, the Rosary should lead us to a better frequentation of the Eucharist, the "mystery of Faith" and the great Eucharistic prayer, which are the privileged means of our transformation in Christ.

The Rosary well-said makes us enter mystically into the Mystery of Christ and makes us desire to participate in this mystery sacramentally so that our mystical participation becomes more continuous and profound. The efficacy of the Rosary for our conversion is better understood if we think of the vital link between the recitation of the mysteries and the sacramental frequentation of the Eucharistic mystery.

No less than being a contemplation, the Rosary is a petition, and a petition assuredly very pleasing in God's eyes and very presentable to His infinite holiness since the suppliant, the poor sinner who implores, hides and loses himself in the prayer of her who prays perfectly, for she addresses the Father perfectly, praying *in the name of her Son Jesus* and in the Holy Spirit; it is with an accent of ineffable

purity that she pronounces the “*per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum*,” being the Immaculate Mother of this *Dominus*.

These few reflections undoubtedly suffice to explain why the Blessed Virgin, not to mention the ordinary teaching of the Church, attaches such an importance to the Rosary. It is because the Rosary, to tell the truth, far from being a closed circle and dispensing with all the rest, is a very sure path to greater goods; far from exempting us from conversion, it prepares it; far from forgetting the liturgy and the sacraments, it leads to them and prolongs them. The poor usage that might be made of the Rosary does not prove anything against its worth any more than too often poor religious art proves something against the splendor of Christ and the Virgin.

It is especially when the fervor of the Christian people wanes, when scandal and sin abound, or when Christian civilization is on the brink of ruin; it is especially in these hours of extreme peril either for the Church or Christian nations that the popes adjure us to have recourse to the Rosary. Let us recall, for example, St. Pius V at the time of the Turkish invasion; of Pius XI during the Spanish revolution and on the eve of the Second World War; and finally of Pius XII while a third of the Church had become the Church of Silence. This confidence placed by the popes and Holy Mother Church in the Rosary for the Church’s triumph over the forces of hell in the hours of their most furious attacks can be explained naturally because the Rosary, being a holy meditation, sets us on the path of conversion; being a supplication through the intermediary of the Immaculate, it is a pure petition; finally, if it implores salvation and the renewal of a Christian social order, it implores it in the sense that God wants, since it is addressed to the Virgin of the Annunciation and of Calvary, who knows perfectly the worth and importance of the temporal order.


### Three Classes of Christians

“Perpetual peace and especially perfect justice are not for here below; persecution will resume at the end of time, and even on the eve of the Second Coming the forces of Satan will be stronger than ever. Let’s confine ourselves to prayer and leave to their fate the deceitful things of civilization and Caesar.” Thus speak the Christians who take refuge in supernaturalism. They are wrong, of course. Even if they are dedicated to contemplation and devote their time to prayer, their prayer should not be indifferent to the justice or injustice of the things of Caesar; rather, it should imitate the great liturgical prayer that admirably translates the contemplation of the Spouse of Jesus Christ and never ceases to implore justice and peace in the kingdoms of this world. But if the Christians stricken with supernaturalism do not live in the cloister, if they are more or less involved in the things

of Caesar, then their attitude of ostensible detachment becomes a kind of hypocrisy because they benefit from the temporal while they make a profession of taking no further interest in it.

“Let us organize the planet in a radically new way. Let us change not only the basic institutions of natural law, but even human nature itself, to see if we can establish perfect happiness and faultless justice here below.” Thus speak the fanatical prophets who reject God and let themselves be possessed by the devils of earthly messianism. By virtue of this proclamation, they apply themselves to “creative destruction,” and when they have yielded to the seduction of dialectical materialism, they make the corruption of consciences, the perversion of minds, and the overthrow of institutions go hand in hand.

True Christians, however, recognize the imperfection and frailty of the social order, even when it has been baptized; they also do not doubt that a just social order and a peace worthy of the name are God’s will. Above all, they know that man is made for God, and that peace and holiness are to be found in God alone in the bosom of Christ’s Church. They try to abide in God. Because of this indwelling in Him who desires justice they find the courage not to be resigned to injustice. Whether in their mental prayer, if they dwell in a monastery, or in their mental prayer and action if they are engaged in active life, they work for justice and for the establishment and renewal of a Christian social order without illusion as without discouragement for the simple reason that God wills it. This attitude, the only balanced one, presupposes that the soul is fixed in God, or at least that it sincerely aspires to this union of love that constitutes true conversion.

This is the attitude that the apparition of the Blessed Virgin at Fatima and consecration to her Immaculate Heart ought to inspire in us. Her Immaculate Heart, in effect, desires to obtain for us both a Christian peace and the conversion of our lives; but, she warns us, a Christian peace will not be granted unless we are resolved to amend our lives. 

Fr. Roger-Thomas Calmel, O.P. (1914-75), was a prominent French Dominican and Thomist philosopher, who made an immense contribution to the fight for Catholic Tradition through his writings and conferences, notably as a regular contributor for 17 years to Jean Madiran’s *Itinéraires*. His most enduring influence is through the traditional Dominican Teaching Sisters of Fanjeaux and Brignole in France who operate 12 girls’ schools in France and the US.

<sup>1</sup> Chanoine C. Barthas and Fr. G. Da Fonseca, S.J., *Our Lady of Light* (Dublin: Clonmore & Reynolds, Ltd., 1947), p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> For what concerns the relation of Mary’s regency with civilization, cf. the articles of Fr. M.-J. Nicolas, O.P., on the Virgin Queen, *Revue Thomiste*, 1939, pp. 1-29, 207-231.

<sup>3</sup> See Fr. M.-E. Boismard, O.P., *Apocalypse* (Paris: Cerf, 1953); see also Fr. Ernest-Bernard Allo, O.P., *St. John: Apocalypse* (Paris: Gabalda, 1921).

<sup>4</sup> On the theme of the philosophy of technology, see the Christmas Message of Pius XII, “On Modern Technology and Peace” published by the National Catholic Welfare Conference (Washington, D.C., 1953).

F R . A N D R E A S M Ä H L M A N N

# The Consecration of Russia

Why Is the Consecration of Russia to the  
Immaculate Heart of Mary the Key to the  
Solution of the Current Crisis in the Church?



SSPX  
Rosary  
Crusade

## Why pray for a consecration of Russia?

### Where did this idea originate?

Bishop Bernard Fellay sees the attainment of the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary as the key to overcome the crisis in the Church. This needs to be explained. He draws this conclusion from the apparition of Mary at Fatima in the year 1917, officially recognized by the Church. On the 13th of July Mary told the seer Lucy:

God is going to punish the world with war, famine, and persecution of the Church, even the Holy Father himself. To avoid this, I come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart....In the end, my Immaculate Heart shall triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia, which will be converted and a time of peace will be given to the world.

## Why is it necessary to consecrate Russia specifically?

Because it is the Will of God! Sister Lucy explained:

Russia will be the instrument of punishment for the world if we do not succeed in converting this poor nation....Our Blessed Mother warns us that if the consecration of Russia to the Will of God is not achieved, then the errors of Russia will spread over the entire world. Wars and persecutions of the Church will be the consequences. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, many nations will be destroyed.

As Sister Lucy revealed in her recently released letters:

The Lord Himself let it be known that Russia will not be converted until the consecration is fully consummated....“While it is my Will that the entire Church acknowledge this consecration as a triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary..., that next to the devotion to my Sacred Heart, the devotion to the Immaculate Heart will find its place.”

## In what particular way will the consecration proceed?

As promised, Mary appeared once more (on June 13, 1929) to Lucy [who had, in the meantime, taken Orders in Tuyl] to give her this message:

The moment has come when God bids the Holy Father to unite all bishops of the world to consecrate Russia to my Immaculate Heart. In this way, it shall be saved.

The words *in this way* are decisive because these words point to the only way the conversion of Russia can be achieved. Mary concluded:

If the consecration is not completely achieved Russia will not convert, and the scourge of punishment for the world will be released culminating in the destruction of many nations.

## Hasn't the consecration of Russia already been achieved?

Actually Pope John Paul II, after the attempt on his life (May 13, 1981, the feast of Our Lady of Fatima), did try twice to initiate this consecration. He did this on May 13, 1982 and March 25, 1984.

From this it is clear that he did take the message from Fatima in earnest. Unfortunately, he called for the consecration of the entire world without naming Russia specifically. The pope himself knew that this was not sufficient because during the consecration ceremony (March 25, 1984) he admitted, regarding the Russian people, that “*Our consecration is still to be expected and hoped for*” [see *L’Ossevatore Romano*, May 14, 1984]. He also knew that his handling of the procedures was not what the Mother of God expected. Moreover, Sister Lucy stated in an interview in September 1985: “The bishops did not take part nor was Russia mentioned.” Thus things stand till the present moment.

High church circles tried to silence the warnings of Lucy through counterfeit letters and a counterfeit interview in which Lucy suddenly stated the complete opposite of what she had been telling the popes time and time again. Such a position taken by Lucy especially after the appearance of the Blessed Mother in 1929 in untenable. The failure of Russia to convert shows clearly that the consecration has not been achieved as Heaven expects.

### **Is not the end of the Cold War seen as a sign of the beginning of the conversion of Russia?**

Absolutely not. The fruit of this collapse of the Iron Curtain merely achieved a powerful swing to the Left in the governments of Europe, most of which are in the hands of the Socialists. In Germany, we are particularly involved, [though nominally Christian in name] supporting time and time again pure socialist politics. The position of the Catholic Church in Russia has deteriorated drastically since the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 1997 a law went into effect in Russia that discriminated against the Catholic Church while the Orthodox, Judaism, Islam, and Buddhism have been enhanced. In all of Russia today there are fewer than 300,000 Catholics; fewer than in 1917 when Our Blessed Mother appeared at Fatima and promised the conversion of Russia.

### **Isn’t it a little too late for the consecration of Russia, since the errors of Russia have already spread across the world?**

No. Our Lord Himself saw this coming, and in August 1931 confided in Sister Lucy in Rianjos:

They [the popes] do not wish to achieve My wish (*i.e.*, the conversion of Russia)... Like the king of France, they will repent and will finally do it. It will be late. Russia will have already spread her errors over the world.

It is also known that this consecration will finally take place. There is no “too late.” In this connection one must see the vision of the second visionary child of Fatima—who has been beatified—Jacinta Marto, who saw regarding the pope:

Do you not see the many streets, the by-ways and fields full with people who cry from hunger, for they have nothing to eat, and the Holy Father in a church praying before

the Immaculate Heart of Mary? And so many people that pray with him.

In this witness, the Mother of God allowed the visionary to see in what tragic situation the pope would finally make the consecration.

### **What significance does the “Conversion of Russia” have for the fruit of the consecration promised us by Heaven?**

When Heaven speaks of conversion, it means naturally the conversion to the one eternal Church founded by Jesus Christ—the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. “Conversion of Russia” means that Russia, after 1,000 years of schism, will become Roman Catholic. St. Maximilian Kolbe had this vision towards the end of his life: “One day you will see the Statue of the Immaculate on the highest battlements of the Kremlin.” The *Immaculate* referred to is, of course, the Immaculate Conception of Mary. The dogmatic status of the Immaculate Conception of Mary does not exist in the Orthodox Church. Thus by seeing this vision, the return of Russia to the Roman Church was clearly indicated by St. Maximilian Kolbe.

### **However, how is it that the consecration of Russia is also the key to the healing of the world and the Church?**

Without a doubt the healing that is mentioned is not only of Russia, but rather Russia with the entire world. The word *world* is the center of the message on July 13, 1917, and is used four times. *In the world* God wills the beginning of the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. If man does not obey, *the world* will be punished for this crime. Russia will spread her errors *to the world*. At the end, *the world* will be given a time of peace. Thus the words “In the end, my Immaculate Heart shall triumph” do not only concern Russia, but have a universal meaning for the whole world and also for the Church. The Church suffers today more than ever under the ecumenical error which no longer requires conversion from error and return to the one *Sheepfold of Christ*, as those outside of which feel no compulsion to acknowledge the holy throne of Peter (Pope Pius IX). Roman authorities agreed with the Orthodox authorities in the Balamand Declaration (June 23, 1993) that the Church is no longer seeking the return of the Orthodox to the Roman fold. Having made this false step, one could extricate oneself through the consecration of Russia because in so doing, one would assert once again the conversion of the Orthodox as the ultimate goal. The accomplishment of the consecration of Russia by the pope and all the bishops of the Church would be a significant turning from *all* errors, offering an opportunity to examine and rescind faulty steps taken at the Council. In that way the consecration of Russia would be a healing for the whole Church as well. St. Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort went another step: He saw at the end of time



in his fiery prayer for a worldwide conversion to the Catholic Church:

Mary must dispense more than ever before her mercy... to the poor sinners and those in error, bringing them back and receiving them lovingly, converting them back to the Catholic Church. Give strength to fight against the enemies of God: the idolaters, the schismatics, Mohammedans, Jews, and the hardened godless.

He spoke of a flood of graces and of love which would flow over the entire world. Then there would be one sheepfold and one flock. When will this be? The holy man gives indications of the time when this will happen: after

a great crisis in the Church God's laws will be set aside, the Gospel abandoned, the stream of crime will flood the earth and pull God's servants with it, the entire earth will be without consolation. Godlessness will be enthroned, the sanctuary is defiled, and the horror enters the holy city.

This prophesy shows—in the deep crisis of belief—a hopeful glimpse of the future with a Christian and Marian age to come. It is the pope, however, who by Heaven's command, must lead us there—no one can replace him.

### Can we have hope that this will transpire?

From the mouth of Mary and Our Savior comes the promise that the consecration will be achieved someday in the correct way: "The pope will dedicate Russia to my Immaculate Heart; however, it will be ever so late....In the end, my Immaculate Heart shall triumph" and the *entire* Church will acknowledge the triumph of Mary. It will also be a triumph for the Church.

[This prophecy] has come to pass already: We are in the year 2009 and we see how late it is for this consecration. The Church finds itself in "a process of self-destruction" [Pope Paul VI] and almost the entire world, particularly Europe, is contaminated with the errors of Russia and finds itself in socialist hands. In view of the financial crisis, a new, intensive drive for a new *world order* is in the works, an order where nothing good is said about Christians. Therefore all the more reason for a world-wide "Gulf offensive" of prayers. All Catholics that love their Church are thereby called out for a united emergency prayer to save the Church: the *Holy Rosary*. It is up to us to pray that the promised consecration will happen as quickly as possible and that the coming triumph of Mary will be thus hastened. Encouraging are the words of Our Savior to Sister Lucy:

Make it known....It will never be too late to have recourse to Jesus and Mary. 

Fr. Maehlmann is an SSPX priest in Germany (ordained in 2001). Since 2006 he has been involved in various campaigns of the German district of the SSPX, providing information nationwide to Catholic priests about the celebration of the Traditional Latin Mass, *etc.* This article originally appeared in the August 2009 issue of *The Angelus*.



## The Message of Fatima

The Message of Fatima is simple: prayer and penance. Specifically, it is divided into three "Secrets." The first, as described by Sister Lucy, was a vision of Hell:

"Our Lady showed us a great sea of fire which seemed to be under the earth. Plunged in this fire were demons and souls in human form, like transparent burning embers, all blackened or burnished bronze, floating about in the conflagration, now raised into the air by the flames that issued from within themselves together with great clouds of smoke, now falling back on every side like sparks in a huge fire, without weight or equilibrium, and amid shrieks and groans of pain and despair, which horrified us and made us tremble with fear. The demons could be distinguished by their terrifying and repulsive likeness to frightful and unknown animals, all black and transparent. This vision lasted but an instant. How can we ever be grateful enough to our kind heavenly Mother, who had already prepared us by promising, in the first Apparition, to take us to heaven. Otherwise, I think we would have died of fear and terror."

The second outlined Our Lady's requests and instructions. Again, in Sister Lucy's words:

"You have seen hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace. The war is going to end, but if people do not cease offending God, a worse one will break out during the Pontificate of Pius XI. When you see a night illuminated by an unknown light, know that this is the great sign given you by God that He is about to punish the world for its crimes, by means of war, famine, and persecutions of the Church and of the Holy Father. To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of reparation on the First Saturdays. If my requests are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred; the Holy Father will have much to suffer; various nations will be annihilated. In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, and she shall be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world."

A third secret was written down by Sister Lucy, to be revealed in 1960. That was not done, however, and it remained undisclosed until ostensibly being released in 2000. It remains unclear whether the Third Secret has been revealed in its entirety.



# TELEVISION

## THE SOUL AT RISK

### PART 4

ISABELLE DORÉ

This is the fourth installment of a series on television.

It was originally published as a book by Clovis in France (Clovis is the publishing house of the French district of the SSPX).

The series will continue every month in *The Angelus*.

## THE EFFECTS OF TELEVISION ON THE MIND

### I. Living with Lies

Most of the time, lies are accepted: the power of images, the prestige of the media, and the authority of familiar faces on the screen, skillfully arrayed, give more power to lies than either reality itself or a local authority has. For instance, a parish priest preached on the existence of the devil after a widely viewed broadcast in which a theologian explained that the devil does not exist. A few people thanked him for reasserting the truth, but, on the whole, his parishioners denounced him to his superior and overwhelmed him with reproaches.

We find that it is very difficult to fight against disinformation about the Shroud of Turin, Pope Pius XII, and other topics dear to Catholics' hearts, but this is especially true when dealing with people who get most of their information from the mainstream media. Between a good book on Pius XII and a derogatory report on the local TV station, it is the TV program that sticks in people's minds.

"Live not by lies" was Solzhenitsyn's motto. To avoid breathing in the climate of lies, it is best to live far from the media; otherwise one is almost sure to let oneself be seduced. In his book *The Hidden Persuaders*, the American sociologist Vance Packard explains that, incontestably, it is television that plays the preponderant role in the manipulation of minds.

New techniques of persuasion appear; some are based on psycho-physiological research. How can we be sure of escaping the influence of these hidden techniques of persuasion? We have a propensity to believe what we wish, and we can all let ourselves be drawn into a reassuring, seductive lie. Television is not the only medium in question. The danger also exists elsewhere, but television is the most active *medium* of persuasion.

## II. The Confusion Between Real and Unreal

From time to time, newspapers relate dramatic examples of television viewers having desired to imitate their favorite heroes. A teenage boy horribly killed his girlfriend after watching *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Children lie down on the highway, imagining that the cars will pass over them without injuring them. Others leap from windows like Superman or Batman. After watching *The Big Blue*, teenagers drowned themselves, asphyxiated in their bathtubs after attempting to experiment with holding their breath like the free-divers in the movie.

An educator involved with murderous children explained that her main task was to teach them to live in the real world, to establish the relation of cause and effect between actions and their consequences. Those children no longer live in the real world: they think it's okay to kill, strike, and get rid of people like in the movies; making people disappear is the same thing as turning off the TV (cf. Marie Winn, *The Plug-in Drug*).

Certainly, these dramatic cases involve vulnerable, neurotic children, but the confusion between real and unreal can affect normal, balanced people—less spectacularly, perhaps, but perhaps no less dramatically.

To appreciate the confusion between the real and unreal possible from watching audiovisual sources, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology showed visitors film clips and asked them to indicate which they thought they were seeing, dramatized scenes or real events. They showed scenes of men really dying from war or accidents and other fictional scenes of actors playing dying people. The visitors got it wrong systematically: the real deaths, insufficiently spectacular, seemed fictional to them, and the fictitious deaths, so well staged, seemed real.

### TV-tinted Glasses

We can therefore conclude that television watchers do not necessarily distinguish between the real world and fiction on the screen. But might not this dependence, this intrusion of the screen into daily life, also disturb their perception of reality? It is a theory difficult to verify: it does not lend itself to laboratory experiments. Researchers sometimes try to do studies on diverse populations; one thing they have observed is that what is required is to re-educate affected persons in engaging reality. Child psychologists deal with children who have trouble connecting with the real world and learning; they do not know how to act upon things, to use their five senses, to handle language, to be considerate of others. They do not know many of

the common words of daily living: to cut, to glue, to balance, to slip...

It is not easy to evaluate the effects of the audio-visual on our perception of reality, but in the absence of a systematic evaluation, one can often make suppositions or observations. When a television watcher hangs up a poster of his favorite hero in his room, what does this mean? It means that he confuses the actor with the hero of a true or fictional story.

In the 1990's, the Tamagotchi craze was all the rage among "plugged-in" families. The Tamagotchis are virtual animals configured on a small, hand-held liquid-crystal screen. The owner of the device has to press buttons several times a day when summoned by a bell to "feed" and "walk" the animal—virtually, of course. In case of forgetfulness or negligence, the gadget self-destructs. This fad seems to have subsided by now. The infatuation with the Tamagotchis revealed not only an absurd snobbery, but also a notable loss of the sense of reality, which is probably caused by the assiduous frequentation of audio-visual and virtual worlds.

Some movies cause nightmares and acute anxiety (*The Planet of the Apes*, for example) even though the story is absurd and unbelievable. Why then do we watch them? "I like the special effects," or "I like movies that make me fantasize," admit some viewers, showing their limited understanding of the reality. Are these fantasies always innocent or inoffensive? Do they not rather constitute a refusal of reality? Might they not be dangerous for us and for our neighbor?

### Skewed Expectations

We all know fathers and mothers who seem to project on their children a dream of conquest, glory, social success, or wealth. Such ambition has always existed, of course (reading a book may inspire the same dreams of success), but nowadays the dream is about un-Christian things: glory, vanity, riches, and pride. This is far from the legitimate desire to place one's talents at the service of the good. What is especially surprising is that the dream is impossible, but the parents or the person himself do not seem to realize it.

Thus, in our region, a number of boys, encouraged by their fathers, wanted a special sports studies program so that they could become professional soccer players (ever since a local team moved up to a professional league). The dream rapidly crumbled because the postulants lacked the necessary aptitudes. It is rather serious that the parents were unable to truthfully assess the talents or obvious lack of talents of their sons.

Another family has been sacrificing money and honor for the last ten years and has dangerously mortgaged their son's future in the hope that he

might become a famous actor, even though this son lacks the talent, physique, or the connections that enable one to attain not only glory, but even a modest living in the field. Whether it be sports, music, cinema, or Ivy League schools, these families that “fantasize”<sup>1</sup> take their inspiration from television and seem incapable of assessing the reality, morality, utility, and possibility of their project. Even more astonishing, these families do not hesitate to commit irreparable actions, to ruin or dishonor themselves in pursuit of an illusion.

The influence of television seems determinant in all these cases we see occurring in our neighborhoods. Books, of course, can also lead to living in an imaginary world. *Don Quixote* is the story of a man who had read too many books about chivalry, but Don Quixote was mentally ill. There is also the Werther<sup>2</sup> Effect: The epidemic of suicides that broke out in Germany after the publication of *Werther* was the result of a literary work; the audio-visual had nothing to do with this epidemic of suicides. Perhaps it was a matter of very fragile characters. According to Goethe (whose indifference and cruelty should be noted in passing), “Surely you do not expect me to be concerned about half a dozen fools and rotters of whom I’ve purged the earth.” What is novel about television is that everyone is affected by it, not only the weak-minded, fools, and “rotters.” Fortunately, most of the time providential circumstances oblige parents to renounce their dream or transform it.

### Flight from Life


Consider yet another effect of the audio-visual and virtual reality, equally as dramatic for the viewers or their entourage: “no-life” Americans and “hikikomori” Japanese (“those who stay shut in their room”) have become a social phenomenon: these are teenagers or young adults who abandon the real world in order to live in a virtual reality; they dispose of televisions, game consoles and

computers in their room, communicate with the exterior by Internet, and do not work. They are perhaps more attached to the computer than television. Undoubtedly, other factors contribute to their addictive behavior: social emulation, parental pressure for academic success, failure at school, *etc.* One might well think, however, that television paved the way for these young, handicapped in life, to flee from the real. As is true of violence, television and computers can be both a cause and effect of pathology.

In the United States, these teens and young adults receive special classes to teach them to conduct themselves normally in real life with real people, teaching them to look people in the eye, to speak to them, and take an interest in them. The same phenomenon seems to be happening in France, affecting both civility and good manners in the strict sense, but also in the broadest sense.

Families might escape from at least some of the negative effects of television if the adults would go to the trouble of knowing and critiquing what was watched. But, according to the children interviewed, that rarely happens. Television is not an occasion for communication between parents and children, nor between adults. Indeed, we were able to observe that our own appearance on television occasioned very few reflections or conversations with our friends and acquaintances.

It was often limited to “We caught you on television.” The only truly positive result from

our appearance in the TV broadcast on homeschooling, which was supposed to be educational, was that it conferred on us a kind of respectability among our circle. 

(To be continued.)

Translated from *La Télévision, ou le péril de l'esprit* (copyright Clovis, 2009).

<sup>1</sup> Etymologically, the word means to fancy, imagine.

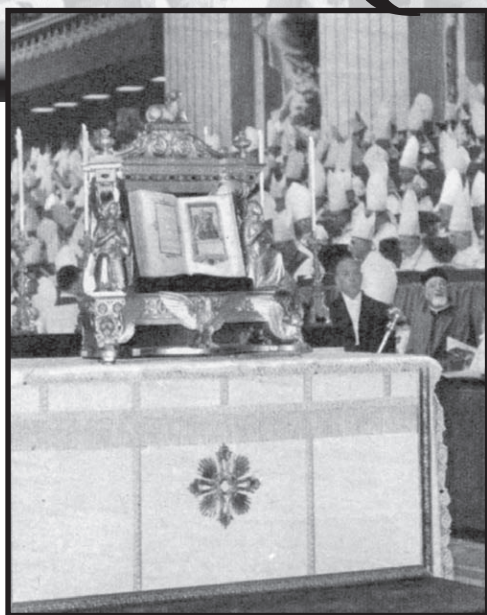
<sup>2</sup> A novel by the writer Goethe.

We all know fathers and mothers who seem to project on their children a dream of conquest, glory, social success, or wealth. Such ambition has always existed, of course (reading a book may inspire the same dreams of success), but nowadays the dream is about un-Christian things: glory, vanity, riches, and pride. This is far from the legitimate desire to place one's talents at the service of the good. What is especially surprising is that the dream is impossible, but the parents or the person himself do not seem to realize it.

ARCHBISHOP MARCEL LEFEBVRE

# THE AUTHORITY OF VATICAN II QUESTIONED

## PART 3



### **Vatican II Is Not an Infallible Council**

**In a spiritual conference given at Ecône on June 28, 1975, Archbishop Lefebvre explained what the intentions of Popes John XXIII and Paul VI were at the time of the Second Vatican Council. They did not intend to define revealed truths, but to give a teaching of a pastoral character corresponding above all to the “aspirations” of modern man. This is why the Second Vatican Council is not covered by the Church’s infallibility.—Fr. Gleize**

Fr. Gleize is a professor of ecclesiology at the seminary of the SSPX in Ecône and now a member of the commission involved in the doctrinal discussions with the Holy See.

In 2006, he compiled and organized Archbishop Lefebvre’s thinking about Vatican II. It was published by the Institute of St. Pius X, the university run by the SSPX in Paris, France.

Why did I allude to the Council in my Declaration [of November 1974]? Of course, it is difficult for some people to understand. Obviously, people can easily be mistaken, because until Vatican II all the councils, as far as I know, were dogmatic councils, councils that were intended to define, councils that really had as their intention and purpose the definition of truth against the errors of the day. Their intention was always to state the truth precisely. You know very well that Revelation, the body of revealed truth, the totality of revealed truth, was completed after the death of the last apostle. After the death of the last apostle, all Revelation had been given to us, but clearly it had not been fully explained, it had not all been fully stated. So, through the intermediary of the Fathers of the Church, through the intermediary of all the theologians, these truths were stated explicitly; and the Sovereign Pontiffs, either by themselves and by their own teaching authority [magisterium] or by the magisterium of a council, defined the truths that belong to the body of revealed truth, Revelation: we say that such or such a

truth is revealed. This does not mean that the truth was revealed at that moment; it already was such; it already formed part of the truths revealed before the death of the last apostle. They belong to Tradition.

So, the councils always had as their goal to define truths against errors. But the [Second Vatican] Council has a particular character—this is clear, it is indicated in all the acts of the Council; it has a pastoral character, and Pope John XXIII himself was careful to say that he did not want to define truth in this Council because he judged that, at present, the truths necessary for our faith were sufficiently clear and that for the moment he saw no need to make any new definitions. This statement of the Holy Father is very important; it defines the purpose of the Council and the intention the Holy Father had in convoking it. So afterwards, it isn't up to the theologians or the experts or even the Council Fathers, the members of the Council who worked at the Council, to say, "Excuse me, we intended this, we wanted this, we wanted that!" What matters is to know the Holy Father's mind, for the Council is first and foremost what the Holy Father wants to do; it is he who, in some way, communicates his infallibility to all the Fathers present and who make up the Church Teaching. Consequently, the Holy Father took care to tell us that.

Then, this was told us many times—how many times did I myself hear it! At the Council I suggested there be dogmatic schemas and pastoral schemas for the sake of seminary professors. It would be interesting for seminary professors and all those who have to teach religion to have clear and precise formulas. We could make a first brief schema with clear and concise formulas that could be used by seminary professors and theologians, and then we would have another part of the schema that would be pastoral in character, that is, that these truths would be presented to the faithful and to the whole world, and consequently would necessarily be expressed in terms more accessible to mankind as a whole and to the Church as a whole and to the faithful as a whole, and consequently it would necessarily lend itself to diverse interpretations. Whereas when a truth is being defined, one looks for the scholastic terms, the theological terms that are not always within the grasp of all the faithful but which the theologians and professors like to hear because they are concise, precise, and clear, and one knows what they mean, and consequently one is able to teach something certain! Then it is up to the professors and theologians to explain what it means to the faithful. So the pastoral schemas

would be addressed to all of the faithful and would make use of simpler language. But this proposal was rejected, even though it was well received by several cardinals. Several cardinals had backed this proposal, but immediately a hue and cry was raised by the so-called leaders of the Council, who said "No, no, no, no! We don't want a dogmatic council here; we are conducting a pastoral council."

So, it was agreed that this Council was a council that should address everybody. Inevitably, since they didn't want to define things, since they didn't want to employ dogmatic or theological language, then necessarily, you know, by that very fact the Church's infallibility was not exercised. Because exercising [the Church's] infallibility means that the Holy Ghost prevents error, for that is what infallibility is. It is not inspiration, as with Sacred Scripture where the Holy Ghost in some way takes the wit and understanding of the writer and makes him write what the Holy Ghost wants him to write—in his own style, undoubtedly, but always what the Holy Ghost wants; whereas infallibility denotes preservation from error. Well, given that [the Council] finally involved preaching and pastoral exposition, the Holy Ghost was not obliged to intervene as He would in a definition where the pope intends precisely to bind the faith of the faithful in all of the expressed terms.

Certainly, if the Church respects the truths which have already been defined, which have already been given as obliging belief, as defined truth, it is clear that they always remain of defined faith or theologically certain; they bear the theological note that was given to them—that is clear! There are many defined truths in the Council, but defined by other councils, by other teaching authorities. Undoubtedly, the Council was an important act of the Church; that's true, it is an important act of the Church, but which, precisely, must be considered in relation to all the truths revealed and defined before the Council. But what is new is the new presentation made in the Council—and God knows if there was a new presentation in the Council!—but not necessarily a presentation marked by the sign of infallibility. This being said, I do not have before my eyes the text of Cardinal Felici's answer to the question that had been asked, namely, what was the theological note of the conciliar documents. Cardinal Felici answered that that should be determined depending on the different texts, that a general theological note could not be given, that it had to be determined according to the documents, that he did not know, and that

he couldn't give a general note. And by that very fact he was saying: Not all the propositions of the Council are necessarily to be believed with divine faith, they are not theologically certain.

Consequently, I can tell you that logically one may discuss certain paragraphs and certain schemas of the Council, I would say in their orientation; one may, therefore, judge this Council; one is not obliged to take all its statements as articles of faith. That is why, moreover, to my understanding, some equivocations and orientations were able to slip into the Council, which, had the pope intended to hold a dogmatic council, could not have happened. But given that he himself said that he did not want to define anything, but that he wanted a pastoral council, and because they insisted on this quality of the Council by saying that it was a pastoral council, there is room for error in the Council. When you really examine the schemas overall and the way in which they were drafted—the first drafts, then the second revisions and the third revisions—one cannot help noticing certain tendencies; I would say, orientations. Undoubtedly, there may not be statements contrary to the Faith, but there is a definite orientation.



might be contrary to Tradition and which can, finally, be dangerous to the faith and make people become Protestant and modernist?" I think that, if the Holy Father asked me a question like that one, I would say: "Look at the facts." I am not looking for anything, no one wants to condemn or attack anyone; but there are the facts: people are losing the Faith, the priests are becoming protestants and

## The Pope and Tradition

**In these remarks excerpted from the spiritual conference given at Ecône on September 14, 1975 (the first part), Archbishop Lefebvre states that one may not follow a council in which the pope proposes novelties contrary to Tradition, for the pope should be the guardian of Tradition.—Fr. Gleize**

I think that after all is said and done, the problem is rather simple. We refuse nothing except that which might go against a solid, clear tradition and a definition of faith that was made by the councils, by the pope, for two thousand years. Evidently, I imagine that faced with this response the Holy Father will say: "But then you suppose that in the Council and in the reforms and in the post-conciliar orientations there are things that

modernists. The consequences are there and they're obvious, absolutely obvious. The catechisms are no longer Catholic catechisms, and the universities no longer teach orthodoxy. What is to be done? There is, all the same, something that is not normal.

They recognize that we are keeping the traditions and that we are a traditional seminary. And if because we keep these traditions, because we keep the traditional liturgy, and because we keep the traditional orientations, we are subject to condemnation in the name of the Council, it is because from the time of the Council there is something new that is contrary to Tradition. [This condemnation] is incomprehensible otherwise...But we find ourselves before this fact.

"Then you are against the pope, you are against the Church," people tell us. We are not at all against the pope; we are the pope's best defenders. We

are those who are united, I would say, in the most intimate way with the pope. Why?

What is the pope? Here is what, not I, but Pope Pius IX says in his encyclical *Pastor Aeternus*, in which he solemnly defined the pope's infallibility: "For, the Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter that by His revelation they might disclose new doctrine, but that by His help they might guard sacredly the revelation transmitted through the apostles and the deposit of faith, and might faithfully set it forth" [Dz. 1836]. So there you have it; for us it is simple. For us the Holy Father has not received the Holy Ghost, the successors of Peter have not received the Holy Spirit, in order to disclose new doctrine, but to sacredly guard and faithfully set forth, with His assistance, the revelations transmitted by the apostles, namely, the deposit of faith.

That is what we are doing; we adhere to that teaching, I would say, with our whole heart, with our whole soul. All the days you spend in the seminary are nothing but that: you scrutinize the deposit of faith; you scrutinize the Revelation that was given by our Lord and which has been transmitted to us from the apostles to our days by the successors of Peter, under the protection of the successors of Peter. Thus if the pope is really the successor of Peter, he cannot not continue Tradition, he cannot not bring with him this deposit; if not, where would we find it? It is he who has received in charge the deposit of faith in order to transmit it, and we are attached to it as to the apple of our eye; we are attached to the pope's dearest duty: to defend the deposit of faith, to transmit the deposit of faith, the revelations of the apostles, given to the apostles by our Lord. Thus we are not at all against the pope.

## The Laws of the Church and the Faith

**In the second part of the spiritual conference given at Ecône on September 14, 1975, Archbishop Lefebvre reiterated that the laws of the Church exist for the defense of the Faith. No law can be invoked to condemn those who want to keep the Faith.—Fr. Gleize**

In any case, personally, I sincerely believe that if we are sure of following the Tradition of the Church, if we are sure of following the truth of the Church, and thus of following all that the successors of Peter have taught us and what the present pope teaches

us, and sometimes allows to be abandoned, then we have a duty to hold fast to it. And all the legal opposition that can be arrayed against us, all the penalties and all that pertains to positive law, cannot touch what is of divine law, the divine law that must be believed.

"He who believes will be saved; he who does not believe will be condemned." That is the first of laws, and it is a divine law, whereas human laws, which canon law, penalties, and so forth, are—all that is very good and we desire to be subject to all these laws, but only insofar as they uphold the primary law for which they were made. Canon law exists to guard our faith, to uphold our faith; it is for that end that canon law was made. The Church's positive law is made to support and defend natural and positive divine law. There is, for all that, a hierarchy among laws.

Consequently, if, because we observe the divine law, because we observe the law of faith, we are attacked by the Church's positive law, a law that is after all, finally, I would say, an ecclesiastical law, that amounts to nothing, because that positive law is running counter to the law which is its basis, its very foundation, the foundation of canon law. So that cannot stand, it's impossible. That is why, even if tomorrow I were to receive a letter from the pope telling me that I was excommunicated, under interdict, suspended, *etc.*, even if they applied to me all the penalties of canon law, that counts for nothing. I would continue as if nothing had happened because one may not, by means of ecclesiastical law, pressure us to disobey a divine law.

"You must fall in line with the Council, you must fall in line with the post-conciliar reforms, you must fall in line with the post-conciliar orientations," we are told. We know full well that if we fall in line with all that is being done, we will fall slowly but surely into error, we will be infected by liberalism, modernism, and even by communism—we will even fall into communism. Well, there is no help for it, nobody can make us do that—nobody. Nobody can oblige us to go down that path, which is a contaminated path. There is no help for it. The facts are there. People take the poison every day. ☞

(To be continued.)

Fr. Gleize is a professor of ecclesiology at the seminary of the SSPX in Ecône and now a member of the commission involved in the doctrinal discussions with the Holy See. In 2006, he compiled and organized Archbishop Lefebvre's thinking about Vatican II. It was published by the Institute of St. Pius X, the university run by the SSPX in Paris, France. Although slightly edited, the spoken style has been preserved.



FR. SCOTT GARDNER, SSPX

# VALIDITY IS NOT ENOUGH



## The Vocation and Suitability of Candidates for Holy Orders

We have now seen all of the factors which must be taken into account to ensure the validity of ordination, and we have gone through the unpleasant catalog of the warning signs—the irregularities and impediments—by which Holy Mother Church has indicated danger ahead. It remains now to see the positive qualities which young men must possess in order to give a reasonable foundation to the judgment that they are truly called by God to the sacred priesthood, for His glory and the salvation of souls.

### **The Twofold Vocation: Divine and Ecclesiastical**

Before proceeding to the positive qualities themselves, it is necessary to dispel a serious misconception about “having

a vocation.” *Vocation* means “calling”<sup>1</sup>; one who has a vocation has been called. Too often, even in traditional circles, one is tempted to think that “having a vocation to the priesthood” means experiencing some sort of emotional desire to become a priest.<sup>2</sup> This desire can indeed accompany a true vocation, but it need not. Many fine priests have experienced no such emotional desire to become priests, and many men who have such a desire do not have vocations.

This confusion seems to result from having imbibed just a bit of the Protestant spirit whereby one ends up following the emotional impulses of the soul as if they were infallible signs of grace at work—or as if they were grace itself. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Grace is an essentially supernatural reality. It cannot be “felt” with the senses, experienced by the emotions. Certainly, the actual graces sent by God to direct us can, by His permission, cause an emotional response within our souls, but practically *anything* can cause an emotional response within our souls! An emotional desire for the priesthood—indeed for anything holy—can come either from God, from the devil, or from our own nature.<sup>3</sup> One must attempt to *discern* the origin of any emotional movements in the soul before basing any important action on them, especially such an important action as becoming a priest.

Vocation to the clerical state is...an act of Divine Providence whereby God selects some above others for His priesthood and prepares them with suitable gifts for the worthy exercise of priestly duties. For this reason, and because this sacrament has been instituted not so much for the recipient as for the common good of the faithful, one who is conscious of a lack of vocation or who has made insufficient inquiry or who is in serious doubt about his vocation is liable to grave sin in approaching the reception of Holy Orders. (Halligan, *The Administration of the Sacraments* [1962], 376)

Since the emotional desire for the priesthood in an unreliable guide, how is it possible to tell if one is being called by God? It is customary to speak of certain “signs of a vocation,” objective factors which can already point out a man’s suitability as a candidate for the seminary. Among those commonly named are reasonably good physical and moral health, reasonable intellectual ability, and an upright intention (namely, the willingness to put oneself at God’s disposal for His glory and the salvation of souls).

This is precisely why the seminary is the place for *trying* one’s vocation. *Try* is not used here in its common meaning of “attempt,” but in its older meaning of “test.”<sup>4</sup> A young man concretely enters the seminary because he has asked for permission to do so and because the superiors have judged that sufficient signs of a vocation are objectively present in him, but the entire process of seminary formation

contains a major element of trial. The candidate for Holy Orders tests his aptitude for the priestly life, and he is tested—not only in his studies—by those who have charge of his formation.

The object of these combined tests is to determine whether an otherwise apt young man’s intention to become a priest is in line with God’s will. In other words, the “trial” aspect of seminary formation is to allow the superior to form a judgment—a judgment not only about the aptitude of the candidate but about whether God is calling him to the priesthood. Discovering the interior Divine vocation, which God gives mysteriously and invisibly to those whom He chooses, is the object of the trials of the seminary.

If a candidate for Holy Orders requests ordination, his superior must make a judgment based upon the cumulative results of years’ worth of seminary trials. If he judges that, after all, the young man has a Divine vocation, he recommends the candidate for ordination by his proper bishop.<sup>5</sup> If this bishop agrees, then the candidate’s *ecclesiastical* vocation is sure. Strictly speaking, this ecclesiastical vocation to the priesthood only comes during the ordination ceremony itself, when the archdeacon calls the ordinand’s name and he answers, “*Adsum*”; “I am here.” Until this point, no vocation is certain, but the formal calling of the candidate by the representative of the Church hierarchy is considered both to reflect and to guarantee the Divine vocation of the ordinand.

Following the chanting of the Litany of the Saints, with the ordinands prostrate on the floor, the ordaining bishop asks the archdeacon, “*Scis illos esse dignos*”; “Do you know them to be worthy?” The archdeacon then responds, “*Quantum humana fragilitas nosse sinit, et scio, et testificor ipsos dignos esse ad hujus onus officii*”; “As far as human frailty allows to know, I both know and testify that they are worthy of the charge of this office.” All of this presupposes the considered judgment which has been made, over the course of a serious formation, of the ordinand’s aptitude and upright intention. It is not an overstatement to say that such a judgment is morally impossible without, as was stated earlier, a stable relationship between the ordinand and his superior and a reasonably complete seminary formation.

Here is the crux of the problem: In most, if not all, of the irregular traditional ordinations, there is a lie told officially and liturgically during the rite itself. If there has been no prolonged seminary formation, the one presenting the candidates for ordination can scarcely claim both to *know*, “as far as human frailty allows,” and to *testify* that the candidates are worthy.

How can anyone expect the Holy Ghost to confirm what is thus done? How can anyone expect God to bless the apostolate of a bishop who “lays

hands lightly” on a man of whose vocation he cannot be sure, or of a priest who so rashly accepts ordination without heeding the voice of God, as expressed objectively through centuries of canonical regulations whose purpose is precisely to verify the presence of a Divine vocation?

## Suitability in Detail

### Physical and psychological well-being

More is necessary in a candidate for Holy Orders, generally speaking, than a mere absence of bodily defects. The physical demands placed on the typical traditional priest in the 21st century are very great; long hours, multiple apostolates, and heavy travel combine to age a new priest quickly. At the very least, decent health and a certain degree of energy are of inestimable value to the priest.

The absence of psychological problems is only the beginning of the story when one comes to evaluate a candidate for the priesthood. Not only must a young man be free of serious mental illness; he should be notably balanced. There needs to be solid proof both of his sound judgment and his common sense.<sup>6</sup> All candidates for Holy Orders must be observed carefully for signs of psychological problems, and, if there is suspicion of such problems, experts should be consulted. While such scrutiny should obviously not be used as a weapon against otherwise apt candidates, as has often happened in conciliar seminaries, it has its proper place in the discernment of the vocation. Whatever the case, a superior must be convinced of a candidate’s good psychological health, his balance, his solid judgment, and his common sense before advancing him to Holy Orders.

### Intellectual excellence

While an average intellectual ability is considered to be an initial sign of a vocation, a man who asks to be ordained a priest must already possess a great store of theological and philosophical knowledge, and a thorough knowledge of—and competence in—the Latin language is indispensable for learning what is required. Other important subjects such as Sacred Scripture, canon law, and patrology complete the priestly formation, but secular subjects should in no way be omitted from a well-rounded seminary program.<sup>7</sup>

The popes of the early to mid-20th century were adamant that the priest must be a man of learning, not only in order to refute false arguments against the Faith and to teach true doctrine to the faithful—the priest must seek the source of his union with Christ in the contemplation of the sacred sciences.<sup>8</sup> St. Pius X wrote:

All those who are preparing in the quiet of the seminary for the exercise of the sacred and difficult functions of the priesthood must take timely steps to see that they are equipped with the rich resources of learning. (*Sacrorum Antistitum*)

Pope Pius XI warned that, even for religious priests destined not for the external ministry but for the cloister, the sacred sciences are necessary:

Anyone who undertakes the sacred ministry without training or competence should tremble for his own fate, for the Lord will not suffer his ignorance to go unpunished; it is the Lord who has uttered the dire warning: “Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will reject thee, and thou shalt not do the office of priesthood to me” (Osee 4:6). (*Unigenitus Dei Filius*)

Finally, Pope Pius XII states that,

In conformity with Our Apostolic duty, We have insisted earnestly on the importance of a high standard of intellectual training for clerics. (*Menti Nostrae*)

The example of St. John Vianney is sometimes brought up to argue that piety and a quite basic knowledge are sufficient for an ordinand in a time of crisis. After all, the *Curé d’Ars* never even learned Latin properly! The answer is that the exception proves the rule—the fact that something is seen as exceptional shows that there *is* a norm.

The fact of the matter is that this Saint’s primary handicap was his inability to learn Latin well; he certainly studied philosophy and theology using manuals written in French. He learned the material, rather slowly, under the patient tutelage of his own pastor, who believed so much in his vocation because of his other outstanding qualities. The fact that the holy Curé received special infused knowledge directly from God is another factor often overlooked by those who claim his example as a justification for downplaying the importance of intellectual competence among the clergy in a time of crisis.

### Moral excellence in general

If intellectual suitability is crucially important for the future priest, moral suitability is even more necessary. Living fairly consistently in the state of grace and practicing some virtues well may be sufficient for a new entrant to the seminary, but, the closer the approach to Holy Orders, the greater holiness is required of a candidate.

Clerics are bound to lead a more saintly interior and exterior life than the laity, and to give them the example by excelling in virtue and righteous conduct. (1917 Code of Canon Law, c. 124)

A candidate for the priesthood must not only enjoy a good reputation and be free from gross external sins; he must live habitually in the grace of God and consistently show a high degree of solid virtue, especially in the area of chastity. How can any of these things be known with a moral certainty

“Vocation to the clerical state is... an act of Divine Providence whereby God selects some above others for His priesthood and prepares them with suitable gifts for the worthy exercise of priestly duties. For this reason, and because this sacrament has been instituted not so much for the recipient as for the common good of the faithful, one who is conscious of a lack of vocation or who has made insufficient inquiry or who is in serious doubt about his vocation is liable to grave sin in approaching the reception of Holy Orders.” (Halligan, *The Administration of the Sacraments* [1962], 376)

unless the candidate has lived for a long period with the one who must make the judgment of his suitability?


### Chastity: the *sine qua non*

Among the gifts of grace and nature of which there must be positive proof in order to recognize a Divine vocation to the priesthood, chastity must be singled out as the “*sine qua non*” condition. (Sacred Congregation of Seminaries, *Reserved Instruction*, July 1, 1955)

As stated above, virginity, in imitation of Our Lord Jesus Christ, is the ideal for the priest, and perfect chastity is the ancient standard. Like other virtues, chastity in the cleric must not merely reflect the absence of deviation. Heroic virtue is required of an *alter Christus*. Chastity must be

proven or tried, in that there must be positive evidence of its presence...consequently, the seminarian must be a person of proven purity, solidly possessed, profoundly appreciated, and zealously cherished. (Halligan, *Administration of the Sacraments*, 379).

The Church has traditionally taken severe measures against unchastity among priests, and it was always seen to be easier and better to “weed out” seminarians who have difficulty keeping chaste than to deal with the problems arising from sensual priests. Before the Second Vatican Council, detailed instructions from Rome told superiors how to handle problems of chastity among seminarians—which sins were automatic disqualifications, which level of chastity was necessary for promotion to which level of the seminary, *etc.* Superiors, spiritual directors,

and confessors all had their roles to play. How is such a discernment practically possible outside a seminary—or at least outside a stable relationship over time between a superior and an ordinand? The fact is that it is scarcely possible at all, and the propensity of some “independent bishops” to ordain men of untried chastity—or even married men—is one of the clearest signs of their departure from the “accumulated prudence of the Church.” 

### (To be continued.)

Rev. Fr. Scott Gardner, ordained for the Society of Saint Pius X in 2003, is currently assigned to St. Mary’s Assumption priory in St. Louis, Missouri, where he coordinates the work of the St. Raymond of Peñafort Canonical Commission. He is also the United States District Chaplain for the Third Order of Saint Pius X, and he serves the Society’s Chicago mission, Our Lady Immaculate, on weekends and holy days.

<sup>1</sup> From the Latin *vocare*, meaning “to call.”

<sup>2</sup> “Having a vocation is like a cup of hot chocolate [*sic*],” said one conciliar seminarian in the *Winona Daily News* during the late 1990’s.

<sup>3</sup> See the works of St. John of the Cross.

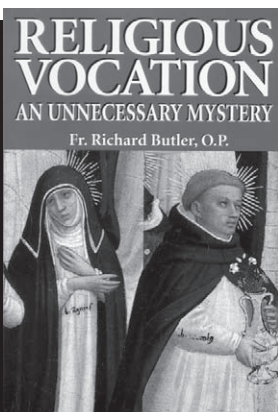
<sup>4</sup> As judges “try” cases by testing the arguments of one side against those of the other

<sup>5</sup> Or by the proper bishop’s delegate.

<sup>6</sup> Scarcely enough can ever be said of the necessity of common sense, especially when it comes to the question of giving or receiving Holy Orders. In fact, almost the whole study of this subject can be summarized by saying, “Use common sense in deciding whom to ordain or whether to receive ordination.”

<sup>7</sup> “[I]t is Our most earnest wish, that in literary and scientific studies, future priests should at least be in no way inferior to lay students who follow corresponding courses...” (Pius XII, *Menti Nostrae*).

<sup>8</sup> Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre insisted that priests must find their spirituality in the *Summa* of St. Thomas and in Holy Mass.



## Religious Vocation: An Unnecessary Mystery

Fr. Richard Butler, O.P.

The question of discerning a vocation is agonized over by many generous young Catholics today. A solid Thomist, who wrote this book in 1961, Father Butler shows that this type of question shows a totally wrong approach to a religious vocation—an approach that began with misguided theology in the 20th century, which then trickled down to the popular level, confusing both aspirants and spiritual directors.

Though Fr. Butler deals primarily with vocations to the religious life, he also gives the classic guidelines on priestly vocations. The author states, based on the tradition of the Church, that religious vocation is not uncommon, rare or extraordinary and that it does not require an introspective search for some special voice or attraction. This book provides welcome, intelligent guidance both for spiritual directors and for those considering the religious life or that of the priesthood!

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# THE ULTIMATE ROMANCE

## PART 1

Through the gray mist of July morning a young man saw his paradise.

The use of the personal pronoun is not intended to psychologize Heaven, but to note that each of the elect must approach beatitude along a particular path designated by Providence. And that path can be rough or smooth, straight or tortuous, long or short, level or steep; and it can take us through strange lands or familiar precincts.

Isaac Jogues was not yet 30 years old when his ship slipped along the St. Charles River in the summer of 1636 and the cannon from the small fortress of Quebec boomed its welcome. His excitement was intense. As he neared the great rock over which the French flag fluttered more as a token of hope than a sign of conquest, he fixed his eyes on the shore and saw for the first time the people among whom he was to live and at whose hands he was to die: the natives of New France.

In a letter to his mother he began to compose shortly after arriving, he wrote: "I do not know what it is to enter Paradise, but this I know, it would be difficult to experience in this world a joy more excessive and more overflowing than that I felt when I set my foot in New France and celebrated my first Mass here at Quebec on the Feast of the Visitation."

Paradise, for Isaac Jogues, would not appear very appealing to us, nor did it to his contemporaries.



Rather than a communion of saints, it presented a confederacy of savages.

Had Jean-Jacques Rousseau been Isaac's companion in his travels, he may never have given literary shape to his imaginary "man in the state of nature." Such a man, Rousseau claimed, as though he had a crystal ball through which he could gaze into the prehistory of our race, possessed a sense of compassion as yet uncorrupted by the pride that private property and social position engender in his civilized counterpart; and such a man, he divined, was also more receptive to the ennobling instinct of family love.

How many horrors, starting with the French Revolution, have been engendered by the desire to create a world that might resurrect these supposedly lost virtues?

But a century before Rousseau wrote, man in the state of nature roamed the desolate woodlands of America, yet he expressed his compassion in odd ways, as young Father Jogues was to discover.

One of the early scenes he witnessed in New France was the arrival of a trading party of Algonquins in Three Rivers. He noticed first the poles decorated with human scalps fixed upright in their canoes. Then, he heard the wild whoops and the pounding of paddles against birch bark that signified a triumph in battle, and a fierce-looking figure standing in one of the hulls shouting defiance in the strange, guttural tongue of the Iroquois.

When the party stepped onto the shore, the Algonquins fell upon their Iroquois prisoner, beating him with clubs, cutting him with knives, chewing his fingers, searing his flesh with flaming torches, one of which was jammed down his throat. Men, women and children gleefully joined in the mutilation and torture until Father LeJeune, the Blackrobe, stepped into their midst and commanded them to stop.

His appeal was not to compassion, but to self-interest: he threatened to bar the Algonquins from trading at Three Rivers if they did not desist. Sullenly, they complied. They would have time later to “caress” their captive, as they put it.

Contra Rousseau, the only compassion evident on this occasion was that of the ultra-civilized man: the educated and refined Jesuit scholar turned missionary. And such was his compassion that he was willing to plunge headlong into a mortally dangerous situation from which most men would retreat in terror.

What dominated Isaac’s emotions upon first witnessing this extreme brutality was not disgust and revulsion, but pity. He conceived an intense and lasting desire to bring these cruel and debased people to God. He felt for them the most profound of all forms of family love: that they were his brothers for whom he would lay down his life. And so it was to be.

When Isaac Jogues presented himself at the age of 17 for entrance into the novitiate of the Society of Jesus in Rouen, Father Louis Lallemand asked the formula question: “What do you seek?” Isaac replied: “Ethiopia and martyrdom.” The priest shook his head: “Not so, my child. You will die in Canada.”

The Jesuits had just assumed responsibility for the mission begun by the Franciscan Recollet Fathers, who were the first to evangelize the Indians in the vast territory of New France. The Jesuits took up the task with their characteristic zeal and determination. What an incomparable band were these sons of St. Ignatius. When were there men more on fire with the love of Christ yet more prudent in their deliberations? They were wise as serpents yet gentle as doves, and perhaps the gentlest among them was the favorite child of a large and affluent family in Orleans, Isaac Jogues.

We possess many facts about his remarkable life among the savages, both as missionary and, later, as captive slave. We know a great deal about his dramatic escape and his no less dramatic return to the people who tortured and would eventually kill him. We can follow the events of his final embassies to the Iroquois, first as a representative of the governor and, finally, as a priest of Christ. We have abundant material from his own writings to his superiors and from the carefully detailed accounts

of the Relations the Jesuit missionaries sent to their communities in France.

But the great heart of Isaac Jogues cannot be transcribed; only wondered at by lesser men.

So what can be accomplished within the scope of an article such as this? Nothing can be added to the historical material, nor can the meticulous scholarship and elegant style of Jesuit biographers Francis Talbot and John O’Brien be equalled or given due honor.

In approaching the soul of Isaac Jogues, I feel in some way as I imagine the early missionaries felt when they arrived in America: as though I were gazing on something wondrous; a vastness dimly understood and largely unexplored. For the faith of Isaac Jogues seems to belong to a time when giants roamed the earth: men so pure of heart and set in purpose that they must stand above us, looking down on our diminutive status, perhaps with a prayer that we might grow to the full height God has intended for us.

If I can accomplish anything in this brief space, it will be to show something of the beauty of a soul given wholly to Christ.

For “mon cher Isaac,” as his mother used to call him, there was but one reality: Christ. It was Christ he loved and served; it was to Christ he longed to bring the lost children of the new world. It was to Christ he offered his immense suffering, as though he were offering something so small and inadequate that he must make his oblation with apology for its paltriness.

After his thumb had been sawed off with a clamshell, he picked it up and offered it to Our Lord as reparation for all the times he had held the body and blood of Christ at the altar with insufficient love and reverence. We tend to read such accounts in passing, noting with admiration the stoical endurance displayed, but without pausing to appreciate the depth and constancy of feeling from which such a prayer arose.

I find it difficult to pray when I am in pain, for I tend wholeheartedly to wish that the pain will go away, and I avail myself of any remedies at hand to effect its cessation. To imagine my thumb being sawed off and my first thought at seeing my severed flesh to be that of my failure to respond as fully as I might have to God’s love rather staggers me.

But there appears never to have been a time when the heart and mind of Isaac Jogues was not fixed on his Lord. And so it was for his fellow Blackrobes.

Isaac’s first assignment was to join Father Jean de Brebeuf at the Jesuit mission in Ihonotiria, the principal village of the Hurons. He left Three Rivers with a trading party and traveled 900 miles over 19 days of paddling and portage, sometimes carrying canoes and supplies as many as ten miles through

thick forests, and feeding only once a day on the corn mush that was the staple of the Indian diet.

Such journeys were a usual part of the life of the Blackrobes, whose mission territory encompassed all the land from the Hudson Bay to the Carolinas and from the Mississippi to the Atlantic Ocean. But such travels took their toll, physically if not mentally. The rigors of the wilderness seemed to have the effect of enervating their bodies while strengthening their minds. It was as though each seemingly insurmountable physical obstacle only increased their evangelical zeal and resolution.

Almost immediately after arriving in Ihonotiria, Jogues became deathly ill. An influenza epidemic was raging in the Huron villages. The medicine men blamed it on the arrival of the Blackrobes, whom they always portrayed as evil sorcerers intent upon the destruction of the Indians. They had powerful corroborating evidence for their claim.

Epidemics were common occurrences, and all natural phenomena were believed to be the work of spirits. The Jesuits would not baptize an adult Indian until the catechumen had been properly instructed and had proved the sincerity of his intention. The Indians were very fickle, espousing one day what they might denounce the next. So the missionaries performed the majority of their baptisms on the dying: mostly infants and children.

The medicine men told the people that it was the water and incantations of the Blackrobes that brought death. If the crops withered or the hunt failed, it was because the demon gods of the Hurons were displeased by the presence of the French sorcerers and withheld their favor; or because the Blackrobes had let loose an evil spirit upon the village to starve and kill the people. Every misfortune could be laid at their feet and their lives were always in peril.

Jogues recovered, and a council that had decreed death to the Blackrobes for bringing the plague failed to carry out the sentence. De Brebeuf, a tall and imposing figure whom the Indians called "Echon," had walked boldly into their council in Ossosane and argued against the notion that he and his brothers wished the Indians harm. Perhaps his pleas had some effect. The behavior of the Indians was often inscrutable and highly unpredictable.

The Hurons dubbed Isaac "Ondessonk," which was their word for a bird of prey. The reason for choosing the epithet is uncertain: either it was the closest they could come to pronouncing his name or perhaps his aquiline profile suggested it.

Language was the first challenge to the new missionaries. The Hurons spoke the generic tongue of the Iroquois, for whom they bore an implacable hatred, despite their sharing a common ancestry. To the French, the native tongue sounded crude: a string of guttural grunts. The language had only

eight consonants. The Indians also possessed no script and so produced no written specimen of their language that could be studied.

De Brebeuf instructed Isaac and the other newcomers to Ihonotiria that they must be prepared to be silent among the Indians for a long time. He told them that though they were educated men, theologians and scholars in their own country, here they were humble elementary students. And their masters were to be the barbarians, even the women and children, of the Huron villages. Before they could preach, they must spend a long time listening and learning.

And although the language sounded crude, the missionaries discovered that it was quite complex, with a grammar as elaborate as ancient Greek and classical Latin.

De Brebeuf also told Isaac and the other neophytes that they must be prepared to die at every moment. There were many among their prospective converts who hated them, and this malice might be acted on at any time. Whenever they stepped out of a cabin or entered a village, it was entirely possible that someone would split their heads with a tomahawk. Then, he spoke these words of calm assurance: "Fear no difficulties; there will be none for you, since it is your whole consolation to see yourself crucified with the Son of God."

And so our dear Isaac began his apprenticeship. After the plague in Ihonotiria abated, the Hurons abandoned it. It was their practice to leave a village after ten years or so, for by that time they would have depleted the soil, hunted most of the game and used up the nearby firewood. And when an epidemic struck, it often left the population decimated and the survivors merged with another village.

The villages were not large, ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand inhabitants. Most lived in houses about 35 feet in length and breadth, made of saplings covered with birch bark. There was an opening in the roof to let out the smoke of the constantly burning fire, but there was no proper draft and most of the smoke was trapped inside, where it irritated the eyes of the householders, often causing blindness in old age.

There were also long houses, about 200 feet in length. Several families gathered in these dwellings, each with its own fire along a central pit above which the roof was open. The Indians had no sense of privacy, nor any concept of hygiene. The stench in their dwellings was overpowering, and their dissolute behavior without self-conscious restraint.

It was in these circumstances that Isaac, reared in the refinements of an affluent family in Orleans, had to live and work. But he received every privation as though it were a precious gift. For he valued everything by only one currency: the

salvation of souls. He wrote to his mother: "We have baptized about 240 of them this year....All the labors of a million persons, would they not be worthwhile if they gained one single soul for Christ?"

And so Isaac continued his labor of love. The Jesuits, after the Hurons had abandoned Ihonotiria, had decided to build a central outpost to serve as their headquarters in the Huron missions. Isaac was in charge of superintending the building of Sainte Marie, for he was as reliable in practical matters as he was devoted to his spiritual work. Sainte Marie became a refuge for the Hurons, too. Many would come there for temporary shelter or in time of want. It was also the place where adult converts came to be baptized.

In 1641, the great decennial Feast of the Dead was held among the Hurons. Distant tribes also traveled many weeks to attend, among which were the Chippewas from the shores of Lake Superior. The Jesuits, ever alert for opportunities to win souls for Christ, spoke to the Chippewas, who received their suggestion of a visitation to their lands favorably.

Isaac, by then a veteran, and Father Charles Raymbault were chosen to make the formidable journey. For weeks, they followed the Indians, paddling their canoe along seemingly endless stretches. Finally, they alighted at a place the Jesuits named Sault Ste. Marie. Isaac Jogues and Charles Raymbault were the first white men ever to set foot on the shores of Lake Superior.

They fashioned and planted a huge cross in the village, facing westward toward a land they were told was home to the Sioux nations. Isaac then addressed an assembly of 2,000 Chippewas, preaching to them in their own tongue the glories of the Faith and promising that a priest would return to teach and baptize them in the name of Christ.

And perhaps it would not be out of place to remark here upon a human aspect of the missionary work of Isaac and his brother Blackrobes: it was a great adventure. And with the exception of de Brebeuf, the missionaries were comparatively young men, or at least they had not reached that vestibule to middle age that leads a man into the room of his familiar comforts, where he prefers to stay. They exulted in new vistas, new challenges; they met hardships headlong. They had the explorer's hunger for pushing ever deeper into the unknown. And if evangelical zeal was their principal motive force, I think it likely that they also experienced the sense of excitement that comes with discovery.


After leaving the Chippewas, the two Jesuits retraced the arduous path back to Sainte Marie. There, to his dismay, Isaac learned that the Iroquois were on the warpath, terrorizing the Algonquins and Hurons and sending their war parties north along the St. Lawrence River. But there was also good news: the mission among the Hurons was flourishing and an event of great significance was about to occur.

The most respected war chief, Ahatsistari, was being instructed in the Faith. On Easter Saturday 1642, he was baptized Eustace at Sainte Marie. The Huron church, the Jesuits felt, was now firmly established.

In June of that year, a trading party of Hurons was heading to Three Rivers. They would need to be accompanied by a priest. Father Jerome Lallemand, now superior, knew that whoever he chose might very well be captured, tortured and killed. He asked Isaac if he would undertake the mission. He readily agreed, and in June he, and the ailing Father Raymbault, then dying of tuberculosis, set out on a perilous journey accompanied by several canoes of Huron braves led by Eustace Ahatsistari.

Ahatsistari was feared and hated by the Iroquois. He had beaten them in battle many times, and his very name reminded them of their humiliations. The Iroquois also hated the French, as Governor Montmangy of Quebec had once assisted the Algonquins in a campaign that ended in defeat for the Iroquois, who had sworn revenge on the ally of their bitter enemy. But Ahatsistari had no fear, insisting that the Hurons could well defend themselves against an Iroquois war party.

The flotilla made it to Three Rivers and then to Quebec without incident. There, Isaac pleaded for missionaries to be sent to the Chippewas, but there were no new priests sent from France that year and no one to replace Raymbault, who had to be left in Quebec to be cared for.

On the return journey, every eye was alert for movement in the woods or for canoes in the distance. In a narrow stretch of waterway, when their canoes were moving close to the land, the sound of musket fire erupted. Out of the marsh reeds in front of them came the Iroquois. The rear canoes of the Hurons turned back, leaving the lead party to defend themselves. Then, from the rear, came another 40 Iroquois, cutting off the possibility of retreat. 

Edwin Faust is a retired newspaperman who writes for Traditional Catholic publications and lives in New Jersey with his wife, Kathleen. They have three sons.

**(To be continued.)**





## Excerpts from Bishop Fellay's Conference at Paris, January 8-10, 2010

Please, let us not use the word negotiations, it completely misses the point. This has nothing to do with negotiating, bargaining—nothing at all... For us, we must really see this opportunity for the discussions with Rome as truly a disposition of Divine Providence, as truly an amazing grace to be able to present to the highest authorities in the Church what that Church has always said and which, thanks be to God, we have kept; thus, to make it resound at the very top of the Church. To bear witness to the Faith is a great grace. And even at Rome, a certain number [of prelates] are expecting from these discussions—and it's a direct quote—"very much good for the Church."

...The situation in the Church is truly a nightmare, it's truly a great tragedy, and so to be able to give utterance to what the Church has always taught at the very top of the Church is really something out of the ordinary, hence extraordinary. It is a great grace, and also a great duty, because, of course, we hear: "What are you going to do in that mess? You are going to get lost... you are going to sell out the Society." It involves no such thing!

...Humanly speaking, you might say that we are in a bad way! We are in about the same shape as Gideon when he went out to attack 20,000 or 30,000 men of the enemy army with his jars, trumpets, and torches—three hundred men to attack tens of thousands of heavily armed enemy soldiers. They were really in a bad way. It is about the same thing when we go down to Rome with our jars, torches, and



Bishop Bernard Fellay

trumpets..., but we are not counting on our human efforts, we are counting on the good Lord as Gideon counted on the good Lord. We are counting on the promises that our Lord made to His Church, we are counting on this duty....It is the good Lord who has given us the grace of still having the Faith, of not having lost it, of having received the instruments of this Faith, even natural instruments, a sound philosophy. Yes, it is a duty to go and remind them of these truths.

...[These are] extremely delicate theological discussions; [there are] a lot of preconceived ideas [a priori]. We can see very well that we are not at all known...there are all sorts of ideas about us.

...The boat is sinking; humanly speaking, the Church is lost; humanly speaking, the Church is not recovering—notice that I say, humanly speaking, for we know that there are the promises of God, so that she is going to recover. How is she going to recover? We may say that it is in the hands of the good Lord, agreed! But the good Lord asks everyone to act according to his strength and capabilities, in his place, for this recovery. We cannot say that the pope has only to do this or that. It is every member of the Church who must, once again, at his place, according to his powers,

according to the grace of the good Lord, do everything he can for the Church's restoration. Everybody must contribute his efforts—everybody. So let us make this effort precisely by our prayers, by our sacrifices, by all the means that truly give life to the Church. The means that the good Lord commonly uses to restore and uplift the Church is called holiness. It is the life of grace; it is faith. It is absolutely certain that every good action within the Church uplifts the Church. The greater the goodness of the act, the more the Church is uplifted.

...The good Lord doesn't need numbers, but He does need holiness... He asks us for it, and I should say that this battle, these terrible, horrible difficulties that we have briefly outlined, should be for us a stimulant, a real stimulant towards holiness—let's dare to use the word, it is a very Catholic word....That will be the best way we can contribute, collaborate, and co-operate in helping to bring about an end to the crisis in the Church.

*(DICI)*

## Bishop Alfonso de Galarreta on the Doctrinal Discussions

At the end of the sermon he gave on December 19, 2009, during the ordinations at the seminary of La Reja (Argentina), Bishop Alfonso de Galarreta provided some information and his judgment concerning the doctrinal discussions that began last October between Rome and the Society of St. Pius X. These remarks, coming from the person at the head of the delegation of the Society's theologians, are of particular interest. We herewith pro-



vide some lengthy excerpts from his sermon:

Bishop de Galarreta characterized as “good” the atmosphere in which the first meeting with the Roman theologians took place, considering the circumstances and expectations.

“Last October 26, the first meeting with the Roman Commission took place, and while obviously I cannot relate certain details, certain circumstances, or certain things that were said, I can nonetheless tell you the outline of what happened and what we did. This first meeting was relatively good; I say relatively, since it pertains to the circumstances in which we find ourselves and the hopes that we may reasonably entertain. So, considering these circumstances and what one might expect, the meeting was good.”

Then Bishop de Galarreta explained that the discussions were good because they are exclusively doctrinal and bear solely on the Second Vatican Council and the post-conciliar magisterium.

“It was good first of all because these meetings are clearly placed on the doctrinal level. It involves a commission which has as its objective the study of doctrinal questions, and which does not have as its finality the consideration either theoretically or practically of any kind of accord whatsoever of a purely legal, canonical, or practical nature. That question is totally excluded. And this was very clearly stated. It is a discussion situated solely and exclusively on the doctrinal level.

“Secondly, it is a discussion about the Second Vatican Council and the post-conciliar magisterium; to be precise, on the Council and the post-conciliar magisterium. The subjects, the themes, of which we shall treat have been well established; they are the ones concerning



Bishop Alfonso de Galarreta

all the questions, all the themes, we have been critiquing for forty years, especially religious freedom, the modern liberties, the freedom of conscience, the dignity of the human person—as they say—the rights of man, personalism, ecumenism, interreligious dialogue, inculturation, collegiality—the egalitarianism, the democratism, and the destruction of authority that have been introduced into the Church; as well as all the notions of ecclesiology which have totally changed what the Church is: the question of the ‘self-consciousness’ of the Church, the Church as communion, the Church as sacrament, the Church as the People of God; and all these new ideas about the relation between the Church and the world. Then there is the question of the Mass, the new Mass, the new missal, the liturgical reform..., and still other themes. We agreed to have a doctrinal discussion on all these themes. And the most important thing, which was very clearly established, is that the only common criterion possible for these discussions is the anterior Magisterium. I repeat: the only

common criterion possible, the sole criterion that we accept and that is a condition *sine qua non* for these discussions, is the magisterium prior to the Second Vatican Council, the Magisterium of all time, Tradition.”

The method for conducting the work adopted by the members of the commission is also, in Bishop de Galarreta’s eyes, a guarantee of its seriousness.

“I consider that it was a good beginning if we look at the methodology that was adopted. There will be meetings every two or three months: every three months when a new theme is to be taken up, and every two months when the same theme is under discussion. If we begin on a theme and continue it, the following meeting may take place in the next two months; but if we have to prepare a new question, we need three months’ time. And it was decided that the Society, whose delegation I direct, will be first to submit a study of a particular theme....The Roman experts must answer us in writing, and then, on the basis of these two documents, the oral discussion will ensue, after which a written document will be issued.

“Everything is being recorded by their side and by ours, and it is also being filmed. So, though for obvious reasons we cannot relate everything that we are saying and studying, everything will be documented: there will be a testimony that is written, recorded, and filmed—before you, before the Church, before God. At the close of each encounter, we will draft a report showing if there was agreement (on points of view) or not, and where the problem lies. The topic will be defined and greater precision added, and upon completion of each question, we shall compile a dossier to be forwarded to the other members of the Congrega-



tion for the Doctrine of the Faith, if the prefect judges it suitable, and to other Congregations if there is a dicastery interested by the theme under discussion; for example, the one on the Mass will of course be made in collaboration with the Congregation for the Liturgy and for Divine Worship. And then, for each of the themes debated, a dossier, a written summary, as I said, will be given to the Pope and to the superior of the Society.

“Once again, this commission’s objective is not to reach some kind of doctrinal agreement, which would be deleterious. No. We are simply going to bear witness to the faith, defend it, do the good we can, and at any rate we shall defend the honor of God, the honor of Our Lord, and the honor of the Church, which is the main thing, if you have understood what I said at the beginning [of this sermon] on the mediation and function of the priest, and that is what matters.”

The intellectual caliber of the Roman interlocutors enables them to grasp perfectly the objections formulated by the Society’s theologians. But, Bishop de Galarreta reminds us, only Our Lord can enlighten minds.

“Our interlocutors—I am referring here specifically to our counterparts in this commission—are people with whom one can speak. They understand our language, they understand what we are saying, and they understand our objections very well. We can speak peaceably and in all freedom, and that is enough. If up to that point everything depended on our corresponding with the grace of God, from now on we might say that everything depends entirely on the grace of God, because God, Our Lord, and He alone, is the inner Master Who can illuminate minds and convert [wills]. Only God can

## The Rosary Crusade as of Dec. 31, 2009

Bishop Bernard Fellay asked the superiors of the SSPX Districts to forward to the General House the number of Rosaries recited through December 31 as part of the Rosary Crusade for the conversion of Russia launched last May and which will conclude March 25, 2010. The number of Rosaries recited by those who have been submitting their tallies before the end of the Crusade came to 7,095,272.

During the conference he presented at Paris on January 9th, the Superior General declared: “Twelve million is a symbolic number. One thinks of the 12 stars that accompany the “*signum magnum*” spoken of in the Apocalypse, the great sign that appeared in heaven, the Blessed Virgin with a crown of 12 stars (Apoc. 12:1). That’s the reason for 12 million—to offer this crown to the Blessed Virgin. For I think that—

it is very clear, if one is willing to pay attention—yes, I think that there will be, since she announced it, a triumph of Mary. She announced it at Fatima too plainly for there to be any doubt.”

But earlier he had stated: “Twelve million is a lot, and that means that everybody needs to get busy, that’s for sure. I think that we may make it, given the enthusiasm and the effort that we’re putting into this prayer crusade. I cannot tell you anything more, except that we should certainly carry on. If you would like to do even a bit more, that wouldn’t be bad.”

Bishop Fellay concluded: “May Our Lady keep watch over us and make us grow in this faith, this fervor, this charity—truly, in this desire to see God our Lord reign in souls. So then, to your beads!”

touch hearts. We are going there to preach—as I am doing right now—but touch your mind or your heart, only God can do that, and as we do not know God’s designs, we do not know where this will go. What we do know for sure is that He can do everything. For God nothing is impossible. He can convert when He wishes, as He wishes, and whom He wishes.”

If he recognizes the incertitude that exists in every human enterprise, Bishop de Galarreta clearly reaffirms the twofold certitude the Society possesses in these discussions:

“I am giving you these explanations so that you may have some measure of peace and reassurance. If these circumstances, which seem to me absolutely sure, were to change, then we would reconsider whether these discussions, these contacts, should continue or not.

We do know clearly what we are not disposed to accept. If we do not know perfectly how things may evolve, on the other hand we do know very clearly what we have no intention of doing under any circumstance: firstly, to yield on matters of doctrine, and, secondly, to make a purely practical agreement. With these conditions and with the disposition which is theirs to agree for the first time to discuss the Council, for this is indeed the first time they have given us the opportunity to present to them a profound doctrinal critique based on the Church’s perennial magisterium—it’s the first time!—clearly, we must do it. Then, God will tell! Prudence shows us what we ought to do now but not exactly what we should be doing in three or six months because circumstances can change. Be that as it may, what is clear for us is that the mission of

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## Can my monthly holy hour for priests fulfilling the requirements of the Prayer Crusade for Priests be changed to another day?

The Prayer Crusade for Priests is an apostolate of the US District of the Society of Saint Pius X. It is the practical application of the special desire of fervent lay Catholics to pray for priestly vocations and for the sanctification of their priests. It is especially motivated by the realization that it is upon the sanctity of its priests that the work of the Society of Saint Pius X for the Church depends more than on anything else.

The members of the Prayer Crusade for Priests take on four obligations, which are listed in the *Prayer Crusade for Priests* booklet (p. 73), available from Angelus Press:

- The recitation of a daily oblation, in which they offer the prayers, actions and sufferings of each day for the sanctification of priests;
- A daily general prayer for all priests, including the Pope;
- A daily particular prayer for the priest assigned;
- The monthly Hour for the sanctification of priests and religious and the increase of priestly and religious vocations.

It is specifically determined that the Holy Hour be done on the First Thursday of the month. The reason for this lies in the request for prayers for priests and vocations made by Pope Pius XI in 1935 in the magnificent encyclical on priestly virtue and sanctity, published on the 56th anniversary of his own priestly ordination, *Ad Catholici Sacerdotii*. In this encyclical he requested prayers for good and holy priests, pointing out that this is both the easiest and most efficacious means to achieve this goal:

Ask for good and holy priests, and the Lord will not refuse to give them to his Church; throughout the centuries He has always given them, even at those times that seemed less apt for the flowering of priestly vocations; much more, He gave them then in greater abundance....

The encyclical goes on to promulgate the Votive Mass of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Sovereign High Priest, which Pius XI commanded be added to the Missal and published at the same time as his encyclical. The Sacred Congregation of Rites determined that this Mass would have special privileges as a Third Class Votive Mass, but only on the First Thursday of every month, and then only when devotions for the sanctification of the clergy were performed, which day henceforth became consecrated to prayers and holy hours for priestly vocations. These prescriptions remain in effect in the 1962 Missal. It is for this reason that the

rule of the Prayer Crusade for Priests specifically designates the First Thursday of the month for the holy hour for priests. A member unable to accomplish this obligation, either at church or in the quiet of his own home, is exempted from it, nor is he bound to transfer it to another day which lacks the symbolic value of the First Thursday of the month.

## Is it true to say that Christ is head of all men?

St. Thomas Aquinas asks himself this question in the *Summa Theologica* (III, Q. 8, a. 3) and proceeds to answer his own question in a way that seems at first to be somewhat surprising.

It is written (I Tim. 4:10): Who is the Saviour of all men, especially of the faithful, and (I Jn. 2:2): He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. Now to save men and to be a propitiation for their sins belongs to Christ as Head. Therefore, Christ is the Head of all men.

He goes on to explain his affirmative answer by making some very necessary distinctions. The important distinction here is one that is fundamental to all of his metaphysics, namely the distinction between act and potency, which is that which is already accomplished and in actuality on the one hand, and that which is yet in potentiality, and not yet actualized, on the other. In considering the question of whether or not all men are members of Christ's Mystical Body, the Church, the obvious consideration is that of actuality, that is the case in reality here and now. According to this way of thinking Christ is in act Head of all those men who are right now members of His Mystical Body through baptism and sanctifying grace. However, it is not the only way of thinking, for there are also men whom Christ redeemed through His precious blood, who could become members of His Mystical Body, of whom He is the Head in potency, whether in fact he will actually every become their Head or not. It is only after this consideration that it can be understood to what extent and how Christ is indeed Head of all men, although not all are actually members of His mystical Body.

Here is the conclusion given by the Angelic Doctor:


Hence we must say that if we take the whole time of the world in general, Christ is the Head of all men, but diversely. For,

- first and principally, He is the Head of such as are united to Him by glory;
- secondly, of those who are actually united to Him by charity;
- thirdly, of those who are actually united to Him by faith;

- fourthly, of those who are united to Him merely in potentiality, which is not yet reduced to act, yet will be reduced to act according to divine predestination;
- Fifthly, of those who are united to Him in potentiality, which will never be reduced to act; such are those men existing in the world, who are not predestined, who, however, on their departure from this world, wholly cease to be members of Christ, as being no longer in potentiality to be united to Christ.

This conclusion is of great practical importance, especially in the times in which we live. It demonstrates that Christ is indeed the Redeemer of all men, having shed His blood for all men, and having loved all men as His own, who rightly belong to Him, their only Savior. Yet there are those who, of their own deliberate will, refuse the union of charity, and even of faith, which makes for the unity of the Mystical Body, the Church, and there are even those who will always refuse to embrace this unity of the Church. Yet Christ is by right and in truth the Head of all without exception, until such time as death without grace brings to an end all possibility of eternal salvation.

Here lies a profound mystery. Not all men love Christ. Far from it. Many are those who refuse His divine governance. Yet Christ loves all men, for He

sees them all as (potentially) children of God, members of His Church, co-heirs with heaven. This is the universality of the objective redemption, from which no human being is excluded. Understand, if you can, “the breadth, and length, and height and depth: to know also the charity of Christ, which surpasseth all knowledge” (Eph. 3:18-19), but do not fall into the ecumenical trap of saying that He loves all men equally, regardless of whether they have faith or charity, or are actually members of His Mystical Body, or actually refuse the advances of His love or are of any religion or no religion at all. He loves us that we might correspond in actuality with the excess of His love and love Him in return, and become actually members of His Mystical Body, not that we might remain cold and indifferent, just a vain potentiality to love, an eternal disappointment and refusal of love that can only have one destiny: eternal damnation. 

Fr. Peter Scott was ordained by Archbishop Lefebvre in 1988. After assignments as seminary professor, US District Superior, and Rector of Holy Cross Seminary in Goulburn, Australia, he is presently Headmaster of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Academy in Wilmot, Ontario, Canada. Those wishing answers may please send their questions to Q&A in care of Angelus Press, 2915 Forest Ave., Kansas City, MO 64109.

## Church and World

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the Society is essentially, before all else, even before going to Rome, to bear witness to the Faith. We must perpetuate, safeguard, transmit, and live the true Catholic priesthood. We must keep, defend, live, and transmit the true sacrifice of the Mass.”

### Benedict XVI to Visit Portugal May 11-14, 2010

On December 7, Msgr. Carlos Azevedo, spokesman of the Portuguese Bishops' Conference, announced that the Pope will be in Portugal from May 11-14, 2010, where he will visit three cities: Lisbon, Fatima, and Porto. The visit coincides with the tenth anniversary of the beatification of Francisco and Jacinta Marto (May 13, 2000),

the fifth anniversary of the death of Sister Lucy of Jesus (February 13, 2005), and the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Jacinta Marto (March 11, 1910).

In reply to journalists, Msgr. Carlos Azevedo confirmed that Anibal Cavaco Silva, President of the Portuguese Republic, will accompany Benedict XVI during his stay in Portugal. At the head of the country since January 2006, he is the first right-wing head of State in Portugal since the Carnation Revolution in 1974.

Specifically, on the afternoon of the 12th, he will travel to Fatima, 80 miles north of the capital, where he will preside over the office of Vespers. The next day, the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima, the Pope will celebrate a Mass marking the anniversary of the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin to Lucia dos Santos

and her cousins Jacinta and Francisco Marto 92 years earlier.

Although it is a secular State (according to its 1976 Constitution), Portugal has a large Catholic majority (85%). The relations between Church and State are governed by a concordat signed in May 2004, which replaced the concordat of 1940. It notably provides for “the free and public exercise” of the Catholic Church’s activity in Portugal, “especially as regards worship, teaching, and ministry, but also jurisdiction in ecclesiastical matters.” Paul VI (1963-1978) went to Fatima on May 13, 1967, and John Paul II (1978-2005) went to Portugal four times: in May 1982, in March 1983, in May 1991, and then in May 2000.

(*DICI*No. 208, Jan. 23, 2010)

# Newest Distributed Titles



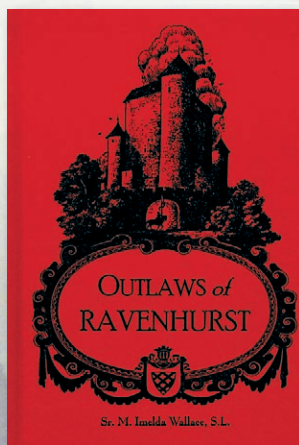
Statue of Queen Isabel and the coat of arms of the crown of Castille.



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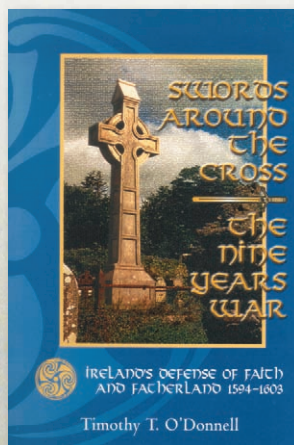
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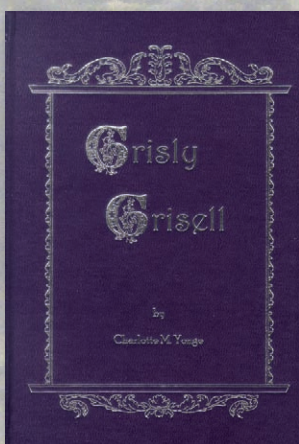
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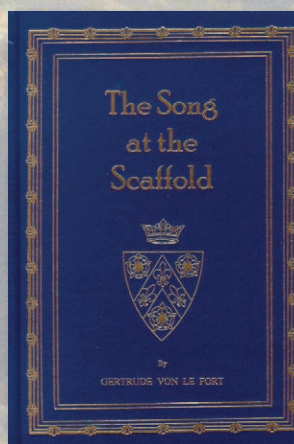
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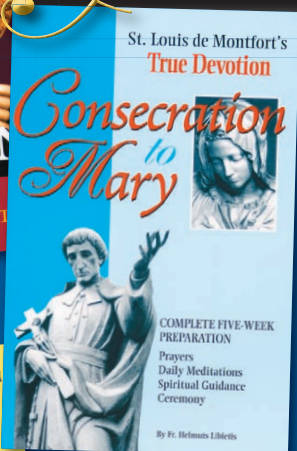
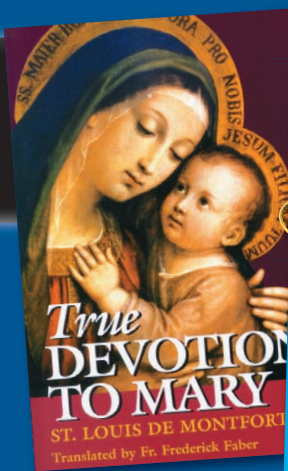
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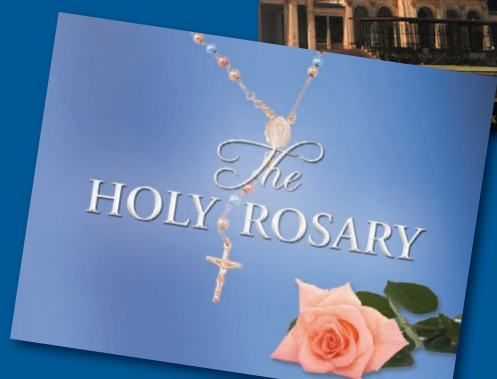
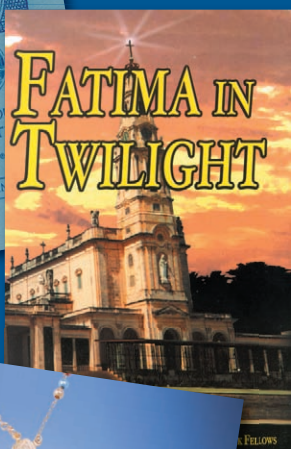
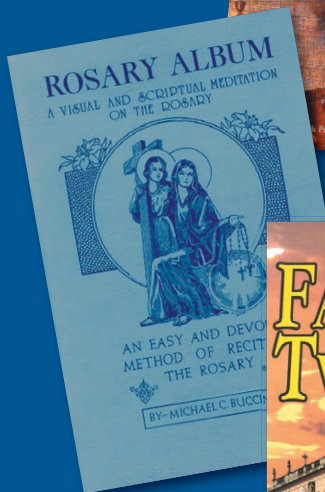
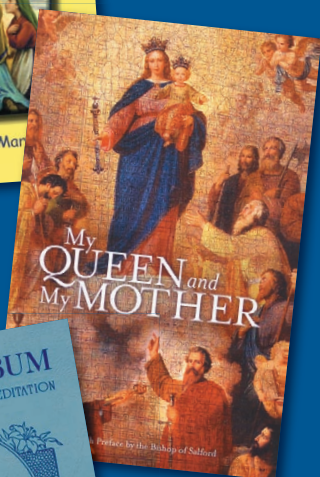
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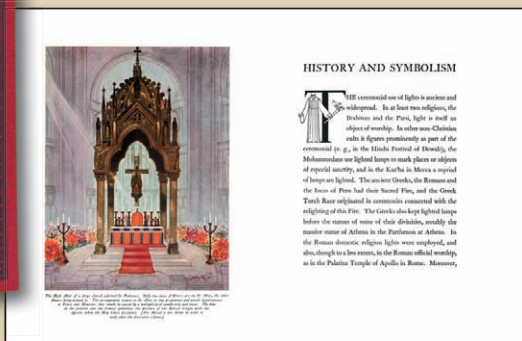
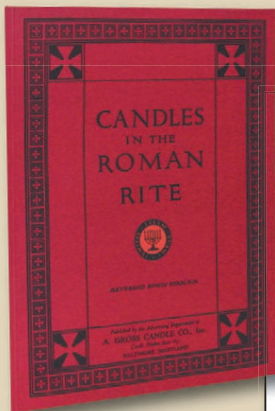


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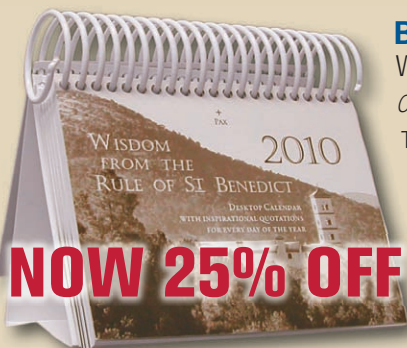
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