



S S P X



The Angelus

“Instaurare omnia in Christo”

The Importance of the Faith

Legitimate Doctrinal Progress

Face to Face in Darkness

Haec Credimus





Faith

“This faith, which is the beginning of human salvation, the Catholic Church professes to be a supernatural virtue, by means of which, with the grace of God inspiring and assisting us, we believe to be true what He has revealed, not because we perceive its intrinsic truth by the natural light of reason, but because of the authority of God Himself, who makes the revelation and can neither deceive nor be deceived.

“Nevertheless, in order that the submission of our faith should be in accordance with reason, it was God’s will that there should be linked to the internal assistance of the Holy Spirit external indications of His revelation, that is to say divine acts, and first and foremost miracles and prophecies, which clearly demonstrating as they do the omnipotence and infinite knowledge of God, are the most certain signs of revelation and are suited to the understanding of all.”

Vatican Council I, Sess. 3, Chapter 3

With this issue taking the occasion of the “Year of the Faith” we are happy to present you a large range of articles on the theological virtue of faith.

Letter from the Publisher

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel. For it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and to the Greek. For the justice of God is revealed therein, from faith unto faith, as it is written: The just man liveth by faith” (Romans 1: 16-17).

Saint Paul gives here a summary of the Gospel: “The just man liveth by faith.” He reminds us in a few words how faith comes from God. It is not a natural belief, coming from men’s inventions, views, feelings... It is a gift from the power of God that men must receive and assume.

Faith is for all men; the universality of the revelation is recalled here also. It is for the Jew and the Gentile: “Outside of the Church there is no salvation.”

But above all, and as a logical consequence, it is by faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected that we must live. Faith, in other words, cannot remain a dead letter. It must direct our lives, our thinking, and our actions. To possess God we must believe in Our Lord Jesus Christ and let the Faith animate every aspect of our lives.

It is so true that an inert faith, a faith without consequences, can even lead us away from God. It can become an obstacle to our union with God, an excuse for our unfaithfulness. In other words, we are inexcusable if, having received the gift of Faith, we do not live accordingly by a life of prayer, a life of sacrifice, of virtue, of faithfulness to our duties of state, and so forth.

Without the Faith there is no God, no holiness, no hope. With Faith comes everything: truth, holiness, hope. What else could we preach?

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Fr. Arnaud Rostand, Publisher

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The Angelus

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Legitimate Doctrinal Progress

In the Church

by Fr. Dominique Bourmaud, SSPX

The problems raised by the history of dogma and its development in time are not something new. The Catholic Church is a living society: She has a history and so can we say of its doctrine. The development of dogma was a hotly debated question at the time of the modernist heresy, and it allowed the Church to draw the precise laws of growth of doctrine.

For Tyrrell, the English Modernist, life is a movement of adaptation to perpetually variable conditions. This finds ready-made applications to the Church which must grow from Catholicism to world religion, as it grew from Judaism to Catholicism: "This is altogether a liberation and a spiritual gain, a change from tight clothes to elastic." Tyrrell could amplify at will the Church boundaries because he had also a very elastic concept of Revelation and dogma. "Revelation

belongs rather to the category of impressions than to that of expression": it is not so much affirmation as experience. Doctrines and dogmas are to the true Church what a pocket map of London is to the city itself, "a sufficient guide in certain matters for certain practical purposes" (taken from *One Hundred Years of Modernism*, Ch. 12). By contrast, we need only quote St. Paul (Gal. 1:8) who anathematizes whoever spreads another gospel.

To touch ever so briefly on this matter, we shall endeavor to define and connect the terms at hand, to explain how dogma can be both immutable and yet variable, to distinguish the various expressions of dogma and those which are subject to development, and the criteria for discerning genuine from cancerous growth.



Revelation, Faith, Dogma and Magisterium

These are terms so closely tied that they should never be dissociated. Revelation precedes faith as God precedes the believer. Faith, by bringing the believer's mind under divine Revelation, can ultimately reach God and His mysteries. Revelation, however, deals with the formulation of the same mysteries because, when God speaks to men, He will not use mumbo-jumbo language, but reveals Himself intelligibly.

This spoken Revelation is the object of declaration by the Church magisterium. The Church has been endowed with the privilege of infallibility for this precise purpose, "to preserve faithfully and declare infallibly" the divine Revelation (Vatican I). This magisterium is expressed in two ways: by common declaration of doctrine, or by a definitory or dogmatic sentence. Dogma is a definition of some revealed truth with the seal of approval of the Church magisterium.

Immutable and Expandable

How can we reconcile the fact that dogma is definitory, and therefore essentially unchangeable, with its expansion over the course of the centuries? Is there no contradiction between the immutability and the development of dogma? The answer to the dilemma lies in the double aspect of the deposit of revelation, which holds all revealed truths and was ended with the Apostolic age. We are dealing with a divine deposit revealed to man.

It is because it is a divinely revealed deposit, immutable because God is immutable, that the only possible development is one perfectly homogenous with what was said before, such that never has the Church given a definition of dogma which she has later been called to revise. The declarations of God are not a philosophical invention waiting for the final touches of human genius; it is a divine deposit, confided to the Spouse of Christ. This unchanging dogma gives the mark of veracity to the ecclesiastical magisterium, as Bossuet so eloquently testified:

"God willed that the truth come to us carrier to carrier and hand to hand without any appearance of innovation. Thus we are able to recognize what has always been believed and consequently what should always be believed. It is, so to speak, in this *always* that appears the force of the truth and of the promise, and we lose it entirely as soon as we find an interruption at any point" (*One Hundred Years*, Ch. 13).

On the other hand, the deposit of the faith is addressed to man. And precisely because dogma is given to men and through human teachers, limited and imperfect minds, men can, over the course of ages, unfold and elucidate the riches of this treasure. Said otherwise, Catholic doctrine is expandable because of its living magisterium. Living contrasts with 'posthumous,' which can be understood only of the subject, that is the doctors, but not of the object, *i.e.* the doctrine. If there is progress, this is not in the dogma, but in the understanding of the dogma by the doctors and their auditors, who are better protected against the assaults of error. Church doctrine, however, is not subject to change. If the object of our faith was itself 'living' in the modernist sense of evolving, it would no longer be the faith. If in order to live, faith in the Trinity had to grow into faith in the 'Quaternity' of God, this would not be the same faith! There would be a difference in kind, as between apples and pears.

Various Expressions of Dogma

Conceding nothing to the modernist ever-flexible dogma, we can nonetheless observe that dogma does admit of diverse expressions adapted to modes of human language.

In the first place, dogmatic facts express things seen by the Apostles, such as Christ's death and Resurrection and Mary's divine maternity.

Next, the most general affirmations employ human images beneath which are hidden the dogmatic message, easily understood by all. Such is the case with our Creed, "He sitteth at the right hand of God the Father," naturally evoking Christ's judiciary power. >

Finally, certain dogmas employ universal philosophical notions, such as person, substance, nature, transubstantiation, consubstantiality. When definitions, under the infallible seal of the Holy Ghost, allude to the universal categories of being, they stretch the human mind to the limit of its comprehension. Then, the dogmatic formulation is perfect. These definitions are unchangeable both in their meaning and in their form.

Dogmatic Truths Subject to Development

In the deposit of Revelation, which truths are open to development? To set the doctrinal edifice, like any building, one needs two phases: firstly assert the fundamental elements: foundations, supporting pillars, and roof. Only then may one add partitions, the motifs, and the finishing touches.

Hence, some dogmatic truths, because they are immediately necessary to our salvation, have always been explicitly set forth from the word *go*. Such are the mysteries of the Trinity, of the Incarnation, of the Redemption, of the life of the world to come, and of the divine sanctions for our actions. The only development which they could have undergone is a precision of their formulation, and even this was over by the fifth century.

On the other hand, implicit truths, less directly connected to the mysteries of salvation, can be believed simply in general at first, and then more explicitly. Thus, belief in the Church's teaching power contains the faith in the infallibility of the pope; belief in Mary's holiness implicitly contains the belief in the Immaculate Conception.

Sound Dogmatic Development

St. Vincent of Lerins, in his *Commonitorium*, offers two criteria for distinguishing Catholic doctrine from heretical excrescence.

The first is external: Any teaching which is not entirely at home in the universal Church is to be discarded. He explains that the Catholic faith is

“what has been believed everywhere, always, and by all.” Yet Cardinal Newman, in his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, explains that this criterion is of delicate use in practice as these terms cannot realistically be taken in their total extension.

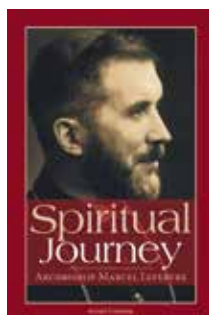
So, St. Vincent offers a more assertive criterion. Does this new doctrine represent a genuine development of revealed principles present in the early Church and preserved as part of the apostolic deposit of faith. As in biology, it consists in checking whether the type itself has been preserved or not. Do the changes allow the same essence to continue in existence amidst changing circumstances or do they turn it into something else? To quote St. Vincent: “Teach those same things that you have learned, and when you put them in a new way, do not say new things. Therefore, let there be growth... and all possible progress in understanding, knowledge and wisdom...but only within proper limits, that is, in the same doctrine, in the same meaning, and in the same purport—*eodem sensu eademque sententia*.” The application of these criteria ordinarily receives the approval or veto of Church magisterium. Yet the legitimacy of a development can also be readily asserted from an examination based on our own logical thinking and historical knowledge.

How does the hermeneutic of continuity in the reform of Benedict XVI fare in the light of the criteria of St. Vincent? Unfortunately, it seems that it has endorsed the lethal modernist principle of doctrinal relativism. Let not the term continuity applied to Church magisterium deceive anyone! It refers primarily to the subjects, the doctors, leaving aside the object, the doctrine. This magisterial continuity, meaning the prolongation of Church teaching, demands not so much the unity of the truth as contiguity in time among the teachers. Truth does not convey unity any longer. Now, unity makes the truth! Is true what unites and false what divides. Now, curiously, the only heretic is the schismatic, and the schismatic is not he who disobeys but he who does not get along. At that rate, the ecumenical rabbi is more in the truth than the lonely Archbishop Lefebvre!

The Works of the Archbishop

A Bishop for the Faith

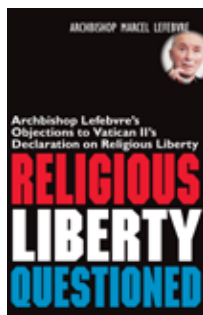
Through the heyday of the Second Vatican Council, and into the post-conciliar confusion that struck everywhere, one bishop stood for the defense of Tradition, and as a sign of contradiction to a world and a Church gone mad. Though times have changed, we still find ourselves in a massive crisis which has crippled and continues to cripple the Church. There is only one solution to this crisis: Sound doctrine. Learn from Archbishop Lefebvre, through his numerous works, what the Church truly teaches, and understand more clearly the conciliar and post-conciliar errors.



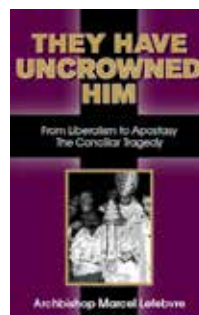
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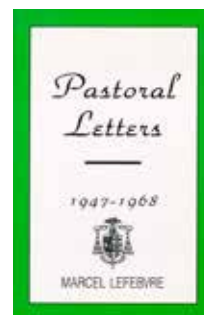
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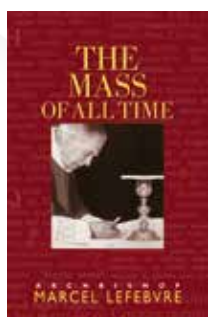
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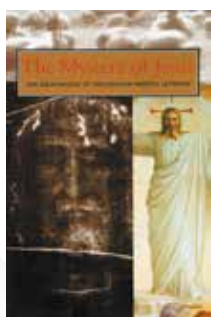
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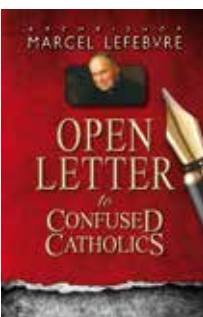
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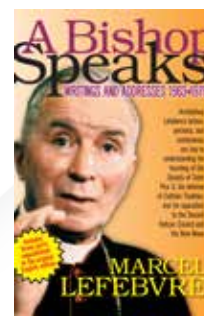
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Face to Face in Darkness

by Fr. Jonathan Loop, SSPX

St. Paul was a man of action, and thus he was often quite blunt in his expressions. When, therefore, discussing the necessity of Faith he is most succinct and to the point: “Without Faith it is impossible to please God.” In this, of course, he is merely making his own the doctrine of his master, Our Lord, who before He ascended to heaven declared to His apostles: “He that believes and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believes not shall be condemned” (Mk. 16:16). At first glance, St. Paul’s declaration appears to be nothing more than a concise rejection of the attitude so prevalent in the modern world by which it is held that a God who disapproves of men for what they think is not worth taking seriously. However, if one delves somewhat deeper into St. Paul’s statement, it becomes evident that he is asserting much more. He

speaks of “pleasing God.” Since the office of pleasing other persons belongs most especially to friends and companions, it is clear that St. Paul is maintaining that the Faith is the necessary foundation for any true friendship with God.

Substance of Things to Be Hoped For

Before then exploring the manner in which Faith contributes to our friendship with God—that is, to speak in another fashion, our spiritual life—it would be good to look briefly at what St. Paul understands by Faith. Earlier in the same chapter, he states: “Now, faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not.” In the first place, it is the “substance



of things hoped for”; that is to say, it provides us with our goal in life and therefore determines the will to its proper object. It is through faith that we learn of heaven, of eternal life, of the good things—which have not entered the heart of men—which Almighty God has prepared for them who love Him. In the second place, it is the “evidence of things which appear not.” By this, St. Paul wishes to make clear that the Faith is a description of reality as it stands before God. In other words, it is not a mere sentiment or a blind trust in God, but a sure guide to understanding the universe, part of which is inaccessible to our mere reason. It is this understanding that the Faith reveals to us of the true nature of the world that allows us to be friends with God.

Why should this be so? The answer is simple: it makes us know the goodness of God. This can be seen in several ways, among which may be counted the basic fact that it is through the Faith that we come to understand and to acknowledge the purpose of life as God intends it. To better grasp this point, it may be helpful to consider briefly its opposite: that is, the belief that there is no God and that He has established no meaning to life. St. Paul points out, on a somewhat mundane level, that were the Faith false, then one may as well give oneself mindlessly to empty and transitory pleasures. “And if Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain: and your faith is also vain...for the dead shall not rise again. And if the dead rise not again? Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die.” (I Cor. 15:14, 32.) In other words, there would be nothing more to be done than distract ourselves from the reality of our impending annihilation.

“Where has God Gone?”

There is perhaps no better expression of the horror of this point of view than that given by Friedrich Nietzsche in the person of a madman in *The Gay Science*: “Where has God gone?” he cried. ‘I shall tell you. We have killed him—you and I. We are his murderers. But how have we done this? How were we able to drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire

horizon? What did we do when we unchained the earth from its sun? Whither is it moving now? Whither are we moving now? Away from all suns? Are we not perpetually falling? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there any up or down left? Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is it not more and more night coming on all the time?”

Faith Helps to Realize the Truth

Without God, without the Faith, there would be no reference points—no horizon, no sun, no up or down—which would allow us to define life or any of our actions as good or purposeful. Everything we did would be vain, pointless, and the cause of pain. (This may be said to be the position of Buddhists, who claim that man ought to strive to find “Nirvana,” which is a state of nothingness. In effect, they claim there is no meaning to reality and that all of man’s desires for happiness can never be satisfied. Therefore, it is best to suppress them lest one be tormented by ceaseless and insatiable longings.) The Faith, however, makes known to us that there is a God and that He is good, both in Himself and in His dealings towards us.

This is especially important for us to keep in mind when we encounter the trials and vicissitudes which so often dominate our lives. Here, in particular, the Faith informs us of God’s love for us. In the first place, we are given a vision of a God who is both in utter and complete control of all events and uses all of those events only to further our happiness. St. Paul teaches us that “All things were created by him and in him. And he is before all: and by him all things consist” (Col. 1:16-7). He further states that Our Lord “upholds all things by His power” (Heb. 1:3). Nothing happens contrary to the will of God. Nothing. When we suffer therefore, the Faith helps us to realize the truth of what St. Paul teaches: “And we know that to them that love God all things work together unto good” (Rom. 8:28). Indeed, the Faith teaches us that the crosses >

Theme The Importance of the Faith

we must bear in our daily lives are special tokens of affection from God: “For whom the Lord loves he chastises: and he scourges every son whom he receives” (Heb. 12:6). Our trials and vicissitudes are therefore in truth causes of rejoicing and occasions of gratitude.

St. James goes so far as to say: “My brethren, count it all joy, when you shall fall into divers temptations...[for] blessed is the man that endures temptation. When he has been proved, he shall receive the crown of life which God has promised to them that love him” (Jas. 1:2, 12). Our temptations and our trials prepare us for eternal life, our ultimate goal. But we may ask: what is this eternal life? Our Lord Himself tells us that it is “to know the one true God and Him whom He sent: Jesus Christ” (Jn. 17:3). Here we receive new light on the first part of St. Paul’s definition of the Faith: that it is the “substance of things hoped for.” The joy of the blessed consists in the vision of the good God and Our Lord Jesus Christ. What is important for those of us who live in this valley of tears to realize is that by Faith we behold this same God and one identical Lord. In other words, we already possess in substance eternal life. When compared with the elect we are, as it were, new born babes who gaze upon the same scene as our elders. Though we see the same shapes and colors as do they, we have difficulty focusing our eyes and making sense of the objects which present themselves to our view. St. Paul expresses this reality as follows: “We see now through a glass in a dark manner: but then face to face. Now I know in part: but then I shall know even as I am known” (I Cor. 13:12). Our vision may be dull, but it is nonetheless directed at the same object, God, which crowns the elect in heaven.

“Face to Face in Darkness”

We may go further and make our own the phrase of Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity: namely, that “Faith is the face to face in darkness.” In other words, by faith we look at God as He looks at us. Furthermore, we are thereby enabled to enter into a profound and intimate

conversation with Him. St. Paul prays that “Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts.” What does this mean? Nothing less than that—provided we are in the state of grace—we bear God with us wherever we go. As a result, we are never alone. Any time we wish to speak to the good God, we may do so. Indeed, it is Our Lord’s delight to make our soul His dwelling place and to live with us as a friend would. He speaks thus to His apostles at the Last Supper: “If any one love me, he will keep my word. And my Father will love him and we will come to him and will make our abode with him” (Jn. 14:23). The foundation of this companionship is our belief in Him; He can only dwell in our hearts and enrich us with His friendly society if we first have faith. “Too late loved I Thee, O Thou Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new! too late I loved Thee! And behold, Thou wert within, and I abroad, and there I searched for Thee; deformed I, plunging amid those fair forms which Thou hadst made. Thou wert with me, but I was not with Thee. Things held me far from Thee, which, unless they were in Thee, were not at all” (St. Augustine, Confessions, X, 27).

What matter then is it to us if we are rejected by the world in which we live and must be, as it were, ever greater outcasts in this valley of tears? It is true that we see men who hold the Faith more publicly and decidedly mocked and derided in our post-Christian society. We need simply make our own the cry of St. Paul: “If Christ be for us, who can be against us?” Indeed the unbelievers shall have occasion to say of God’s faithful on the last day: “These are they, whom we sometime had in derision, and jested upon. We fools thought their life was very madness, and their end to be without honor. But lo, how they are counted among the children of God, and their portion is among the saints.” In the meantime, let us go by Faith with Christ outside the camp and joyfully embrace such trials as endured the saints of old and described by St. Paul at the end of the eleventh chapter of his epistle to the Hebrews. If we are faithful, we shall merit to hear Almighty God say of us, “Come, the world is not worthy of you; I judge it no shame to be called your God.”



Haec Credimus

by Fr. Jean-Michel Gleize, SSPX

¹ St. Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto*, XXX, 77; PG 32, 213 A; SCh 17 ff., p. 524, quoted by Benedict XVI in his Christmas Speech to the Roman Curia of December 22, 2005.

1. “The raucous shouting of those who through disagreement rise up against one another, the incomprehensible chatter, the confused din of uninterrupted clamouring, has now filled almost the whole of the Church, falsifying through excess or failure the right doctrine of the faith...”¹ Quoting the words of the Bishop of Caesarea, the pope’s Address of December 22, 2005, compares the post-conciliar period with the period following the First Council of Nicaea. The two situations are not quite the same, and Benedict takes care not to blacken the tableau of the last fifty years. But, with this small reservation, in his eyes the comparison is not inappropriate, and it even appears useful to him for trying to comprehend the underlying reasons for the persistent malaise in the Church today, long after the close of the Twenty-first Ecumenical Council. In the pope’s mind, the same causes produce the same effects: like that of Nicaea, the reception of Vatican II occurred with some difficulty.

2. As did the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith before, the reigning Sovereign Pontiff has been attempting to draw lessons from an all too obvious failure. Before, it was in 1988 in a speech delivered

to the Episcopal Conference of Chile by Cardinal Ratzinger. The 1988 speech, together with *The Ratzinger Report: An Exclusive Interview on the State of the Church*, is the primary antecedent of the argumentation of 2005. The earlier speech was analyzed at the time in the November 1988 issue of *Courrier de Rome*, the French version of *SiSiNoNo*, in an article entitled “Cardinal Ratzinger demonstrates a state of necessity in the Church.” That newspaper took up the same topic several times in its November 1989, April 1991, September 1991, and March 1992 issues. Cardinal Ratzinger’s explanation was that the teachings of Vatican II are consistent with Church Tradition and do not stand in need of reform; some revision of their application (or “reception”) would be needful to put an end to simple abuses. For, thought the future Benedict XVI, “many presentations give the impression that with Vatican II everything changed, and that what came before it is no longer of value.” Twenty years later, Cardinal Ratzinger having become pope still remains convinced that this explanation is the right one. The December 22, 2005, speech decries the same false presentations and what he calls “the hermeneutic of rupture.” The solution would be to return to a hermeneutic of “renewal in continuity,” a continuity which would be that “of the one subject-Church which the Lord has given to us....remaining the same, the one subject of the journeying People of God.”

3. Does such an assessment sufficiently account for the facts? For it is a question of explaining the facts. Facts tend to speak up first and often more tellingly than all the ensuing speeches. The Council of Nicaea convened to put an end to a disorder that had already been introduced into the Church. We can well see how the Arian heresy progressively retreated and disappeared thanks to the application of the teachings of the First Ecumenical Council. On the other hand, we are obliged to note that such has not been the case with Vatican II. It is a widely recognized, established fact that disorder entered the Church after the Council. For the last fifty years, disorder has taken hold and become the norm. Is this merely the result of two conflicting interpretations? There is no alternative but to acknowledge that there are also two magisteriums: the magisterium of all time and the new magisterium born of the last Council. The renewal, as Benedict XVI describes and wishes it, would prove their continuity. But unity cannot be defined only as unity in time, for the unity of the Church is not merely chronological. More deeply, it involves unity of faith, the unity of the same meaning of the same divinely revealed truth.

4. Examination of the texts reveals that this [pre- and post-conciliar] unity has been seriously undermined since the last council by the very teachings of Vatican II. As the *Courrier de Rome* article of November 1988 (page 4) demonstrates, “some texts of the Council express a departure from Tradition, and can in no wise be reconciled with it. It is not only that, as Cardinal Ratzinger thinks, ‘many presentations give the impression that with Vatican II everything changed, and that what came before it is no longer of value’; no, there are texts of the Council that constitute a change from what preceded it and that consequently compel us to choose between Vatican



² Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, *They Have Uncrowned Him* (1987; English version: Angelus Press, 1988), Ch. XXIV, p. 163-4.

³ Cf. *ibid.*, Ch. XXXII, "A Suicidal Liberalism: The Post-Conciliar Reforms."

⁴ DS 3070 (Dz. 1836).

⁵ DS 3020 (Dz. 1800).

⁶ DS 3043 (Dz. 1818).

⁷ DS 3541 (Dz. 2145).

II and Tradition. Texts like *Nostra Aetate* on the non-Christian Religions, *Unitatis Redintegratio* on ecumenism, and *Dignitatis Humanae* on religious freedom effectively lead us reasonably to wonder, as did Cardinal Ratzinger, 'if the Church of today is really the same as yesterday's, or if it has been replaced by another one without anybody bothering to tell the Catholics.'" The explication of this rather surprising fact is to be found in the explicit intention of Pope John XXIII and Paul VI: "Proclaiming this council to be '*pastoral*' and not dogmatic, putting the stress on *aggiornamento* and *ecumenism*, these Popes at the outset deprived the council and themselves of the intervention of the charism of infallibility which would have protected them from all error."² Should the Council be accused or excused? In other words, did Vatican II fulfill the conditions of a magisterial act beyond doubt and beneficial for the whole Church?

One must have recourse to the texts to get a serious answer.³ Considering these texts, we are obliged to say that it would be much too simple to exculpate Vatican II. And to avoid begging the question, there is no need to measure Vatican II by our own standard. One need only subject the Council to the test of its own continuity.

5. The proper object of an act of the magisterium is the revelation transmitted by the Apostles, that is, the deposit of faith to be guarded sacredly and faithfully set forth always in the same meaning. Vatican Council I reiterated this twice: (1) In the dogmatic constitution *Pastor Aeternus* on the Church: "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";⁴ (2) in the dogmatic constitution *Dei Filius* on the Catholic faith: "The doctrine of faith which God revealed has not been handed down as a philosophic invention to the human mind to be perfected, but has been entrusted as a divine deposit to the Spouse of Christ, to be faithfully guarded and infallibly interpreted. [That is why] that understanding of its sacred dogmas must be perpetually retained, which Holy Mother Church has once declared; and there must never be recession from that meaning under the specious name of a deeper understanding. 'Therefore...let the understanding, the knowledge, and wisdom of individuals as of all, of one man as of the whole Church, grow and progress strongly with the passage of the ages and the centuries; but let it be solely in its own genus, namely in the same dogma, with the same sense and the same understanding' (Instruction of Vincent of Lerin, n. 28)."⁵ And so, "If anyone shall have said that it is possible that to the dogmas declared by the Church a meaning must sometimes be attributed according to the progress of science, different from that which the Church has understood and understands: let him be anathema."⁶ Pius X's Anti-Modernist Oath in its fourth affirmation confirms Vatican I on all these points of doctrine: "I accept sincerely the doctrine of faith transmitted from the apostles through the orthodox fathers, always in the same sense and interpretation, even to us; and so I reject the heretical invention of the evolution of dogmas, passing from one meaning to another, different from that which the Church first had...."⁷ >



“To you I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven.” (Mt 16:18)

⁸ DS 3886 (Dz. 2314).

⁹ Angelus Press edition, p. 13, §14.

6. As Pius XII teaches in *Humani Generis*, the function of the magisterium is “to illumine and clarify what is contained in the deposits of faith obscurely and implicitly.”⁸ Pius XI affirms the same thing in the Encyclical *Mortalium Animos* of January 6, 1928, when speaking of the solemn magisterium of ecumenical councils: “But in the use of this extraordinary teaching authority no fresh invention is introduced, nothing new is ever added to the number of those truths which are at least implicitly contained within the deposit of Revelation divinely committed to the Church; but truths which to some perhaps may still seem obscure are rendered clear, or a truth which some may have called into question is declared to be of faith.”⁹ Pius XII further explains that in the work of rendering doctrine more explicit, “it is clear that the method whereby clear things are explained from the obscure is wholly false; but rather all should follow the opposite order.”

7. Therefore it is hard to grant the hermeneutic of reform (or of renewal in continuity) proposed by Benedict XVI in his Address of December 22, 2005,¹⁰



¹⁰ “The steps the Council took towards the modern era which had rather vaguely been presented as ‘openness to the world’, belong in short to the *perennial problem of the relationship between faith and reason that is re-emerging in ever new forms...* The Second Vatican Council, with its new *definition of the relationship between the faith of the Church and certain essential elements of modern thought*, has reviewed or even corrected certain historical decisions, but in this apparent discontinuity it has actually preserved and deepened her inmost nature and true identity” [emphasis added]. [Text online at the Vatican’s website, www.vatican.va.]

on the following two points: firstly, when this reform pretends to justify the introduction of novelties contrary to Tradition, when it says that Vatican II set itself the task of redefining the relationship of the faith of the Church with some essential elements of modern thought; and secondly, when this reform pretends to establish renewal in the continuity of the one subject-Church by calling in question objective teaching of the magisterium on essential points.

8. In light of the principles indicated above, the right “hermeneutic” or manner of understanding the texts of Vatican Council II would be to proceed in accordance with the truth stated by Vatican I, according to which “that understanding of its sacred dogmas must be perpetually retained, which Holy Mother Church has once declared.” This truth requires that the teaching of Vatican II be interpreted in light of truths already taught by the constant magisterium, such that things contrary to Tradition are to be rejected, ambiguities are to be interpreted according to Tradition, and things consistent with Tradition are to be accepted.

9. At least on three points, the doctrinal teaching of the Second Vatican Council seems to us to be irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Catholic faith as it has been set forth in previous documents of the Church’s magisterium and therefore unacceptable. These points are the following:

10. The doctrine on religious freedom as it is expressed in No. 2 of the Declaration *Dignitatis Humanae* and in Nos. 2104-2109 of the new 1992 Catechism of the Catholic Church contradicts the teachings of Gregory XVI in *Mirari Vos* and of Pius IX in *Quanta Cura* as also those of Pope Leo XIII in *Immortale Dei* and those of Pope Pius XI in *Quas Primas*. Vatican II declares that everyone has the right not to be hindered by any authority whatsoever from exercising the worship of the religion of his choice, true or false, provided that this exercise not injure the common good of civil society. The Tradition of the Church proclaims the social kingship of our Lord Jesus Christ, teaches that civil authorities have a duty to repress or moderate the external exercise of false religions for the sole reason that this exercise violates that of the Catholic religion, and condemns the principle according to which “that is the best condition of civil society, in which no duty is recognized, as attached to the civil power, of restraining by enacted penalties, offenders against the Catholic religion, except so far as public peace may require.”

11. The doctrine on ecumenism and the non-Christian religions as it is expressed in No. 3 of the Decree *Unitatis Redintegratio*, as also in No. 819 of the new Catechism of 1992; in No. 2 of the Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, as also in Nos. 839-848 of the new Catechism of 1992; and in No. 8 of the Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, as also in No. 816 of the new Catechism of 1992, contradicts the teachings of Pope Pius IX in Propositions 16 and 17 of the Syllabus of Errors and those of Pope Pius XI in *Mortalium Animos*. Vatican II declares that the communities separated from the Roman Catholic Church retain elements of truth and sanctification leading to Catholic unity, that >

¹¹ Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, Letter to Cardinal Ratzinger, April 17, 1985.

¹² "Mgr Lefebvre et le Saint Office," *Itinéraires*, No. 233, May 1979, pp. 146-7.

¹³ John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution *Sacrae Disciplinae Leges*, January 25, 1983: "Fundamentalis illa ratio novitatis, quae, a traditione legifera Ecclesiae numquam discedens, reperitur in Concilio Vaticano II, praesertim quod spectat ad eius ecclesiologicalam doctrinam, efficiat etiam rationem novitatis in novo Codice."

they are not without signification in the mystery of salvation, and that the non-Christian religions possess a ray of the truth that enlightens all men. The definition of the Church as sacrament also adopted by Vatican II favors in its very ambiguity an ecumenical and latitudinarian notion of the Church. The Tradition of the Church teaches that our Lord Jesus Christ instituted only one visible society in which men are assured of finding salvation, which is the Roman Catholic Church; unless a man lawfully belongs to the Church as a full member or else is united to it by at least implicit supernatural desire, no one can be saved, no one can find any element of truth or sanctification, no one can receive any light of truth. The non-Catholic religions as such place an obstacle to the salvific action of Christ and the Holy Spirit.

12. The doctrine on collegiality as expressed in No. 22 of *Lumen Gentium*, including No. 4 of the *Nota praevia*, seriously departs from, so as to cast in doubt, the teachings of Vatican I in the Constitution *Pastor Aeternus* on the oneness [unicity] of the subject of supreme power in the Church. Vatican II teaches that the College of Bishops united to the pope as to its head is also, in addition to the pope considered alone, the subject of the primacy. Vatican I teaches that only St. Peter and his successors are the subject of the primacy. The definition of the Church as "People of God" and the idea of the common priesthood of the faithful understood in the true and proper sense of the term both tend toward a democratic and egalitarian conception whereby the Church appears much more as a communion than as a hierarchical society.

13. Moreover, the *Short Critical Study of the New Order of Mass* addressed on September 3, 1969, to Pope Paul VI by Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci, armed with proof, challenged the perfect orthodoxy of the new rite. The Cardinals wrote: "The *Novus Ordo Missae*...represents, both as a whole and in its details, a striking departure from the Catholic theology of the Mass as it was formulated in Session 22 of the Council of Trent." The two Eminences did not fear to express also a prudent reservation as to the validity of celebrations carried out according to the new rite by priests who would no longer receive traditional training. The Society of Saint Pius X has never asserted "that the *Novus Ordo Missae* celebrated according to the rite set out in the Roman publication is of itself invalid or heretical."¹¹ But it does deem, following Archbishop Lefebvre, that "this rite of itself does not profess the Catholic faith in as clear a manner as the ancient *Ordo Missae* and consequently it can favor heresy."¹²

14. Finally, as Pope John Paul II declared in the Apostolic Constitution *Sacrae Disciplinae Leges* of January 25, 1983, the teachings of Vatican Council II present "a new visage of the Church," which must inspire in its turn the canonical legislation of the new Code of 1983. In a certain sense, this new Code of Canon Law constitutes in particular "a great effort to translate this same doctrine, that is, the conciliar ecclesiology, into canonical language."¹³ The principled reservations that must be held concerning the teachings of the Council can apply, then, to this new legislation. Recourse to the 1917 Code of Canon Law should not be considered a practice peculiar



¹⁴ Lefebvre, *They Have Uncrowned Him*, Ch. XXXII, pp. 231-34.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

¹⁶ Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, Conference at Ecône, September 29, 1975, *Vu de Haut*, No. 13, p. 23.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, January 13, 1977, *Vu de Haut*, No. 13, p. 51.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹⁹ Lefebvre, Conference at Angers, November 20, 1980, *Vu de Haut*, No. 13, p. 53.

²⁰ Lefebvre, Conference at Ecône, April 10, 1981, *Vu de Haut*, No. 13, p. 55.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

²² Letter to Cardinal Ratzinger dated July 8, 1987; English version in *Archbishop Lefebvre and the Vatican*, 2nd ed. (Angelus Press, 1999), p. 22.

²³ Archbishop Lefebvre, Homily, May 14, 1989 at Ecône, *Vu de Haut*, No. 13, p. 70.

to the Society. It indicates a prudential measure that is objectively valid for every Catholic faced with the serious issues the new legislation, in itself questionable, raises.

15. Should we accuse or excuse the Council? We have had recourse to the texts in order to have a serious answer.¹⁴ Considering these texts, we are well obliged to say that it would be much too simple to exculpate Vatican II. And to avoid begging the question, there is no need to measure Vatican II by our own standard. One need only subject the Council to the test of its own continuity. We can repeat here what Archbishop Lefebvre already wrote¹⁵ and conclude that the thing chiefly responsible for the evils currently besetting the Church is nothing else than the Council itself, of which the seriously erroneous or ambiguous texts are the primary source of the great marasmus observed by the Sovereign Pontiff. To wish to remedy these evils and to recover from a mortal sickness without addressing their root cause would be illusory. Mgr. Lefebvre rarely spoke of Vatican II as magisterium. When he did, the locutions he employed show that this word cannot be applied to the last Council and the post-conciliar period in its proper and usual sense. He evoked “a magisterium that destroys the [constant] magisterium and destroys Tradition”,¹⁶ “a new magisterium or a new conception of the Church’s magisterium, a conception that is modernist besides”,¹⁷ “a progressively ill-defined magisterium”,¹⁸ “an unfaithful magisterium, one that is not faithful to Tradition”,¹⁹ “a magisterium that is not faithful to the magisterium of all time”,²⁰ “a new magisterium.”²¹ In official correspondence addressed to the prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the founder of the SSPX did not hesitate to express the following judgment in speaking about Vatican II: “A new magisterium without roots in the past, and all the more if it is opposed to the magisterium of all times, can only be schismatic and heretical.”²² And toward the end of his life he added: “Either we are with his predecessors who proclaimed the truth of all time and who are in agreement with the Church from the Apostles to Pope Pius XII, or else we are with the Council and we are against the predecessors of the current popes. You have to choose. There’s a choice to be made. It is obvious that Tradition lies with the 250 popes who have preceded Pope John XXIII and Vatican Council II, or else the Church has always been in error. There is the situation in which we find ourselves. We have to be firm, clear, resolute, and unhesitating.”²³ This is, one might say, the Credo of the Society of Saint Pius X because it is the Credo of the Church facing the errors of the modern world. The deep-seated evil of the present time has arisen because, under cover of Vatican II, these errors have become prevalent within the Church. And if the Society of St. Pius X desires more than ever an authentic reform, it is only so that the Church can at last parry the grave deficiencies that have been paralyzing the exercise of its magisterium since the last council and recover its perpetual youth.

General Chapter Statement

by Society of St. Pius X, Ecône, July 14, 2012

During the interview published at DICI on July 16, Bishop Bernard Fellay stated that this document was “the occasion to specify the (SSPX’s) road map insisting upon the conservation of the Society’s identity, the only efficacious means to help the Church to restore Christendom.” “For,” he said, “doctrinal mutism is not the answer to this ‘silent apostasy,’ which even John Paul II denounced already in 2003.”

Statement

At the conclusion of the General Chapter of the Society of St. Pius X, gathered together at the tomb of its venerated founder, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, and united with its Superior General, the participants, bishops, superiors, and

most senior members of the Society elevate to Heaven our heartfelt thanksgiving, grateful for the 42 years of marvelous Divine protection over our work, amidst a Church in crisis and a world which distances itself farther from God and His law with each passing day.

We wish to express our gratitude to each and every member of our Society: priests, brothers, sisters, third order members; to the religious communities close to us and also to our dear faithful, for their constant dedication and for their fervent prayers on the occasion of this Chapter, marked by frank exchanges of views and by a very fruitful common work. Every sacrifice and pain accepted with generosity has contributed to overcome the difficulties which the Society has encountered in recent



times. We have recovered our profound unity in its essential mission: to preserve and defend the Catholic Faith, to form good priests, and to strive towards the restoration of Christendom. We have determined and approved the necessary conditions for an eventual canonical normalization. We have decided that, in that case, an extraordinary Chapter with deliberative vote will be convened beforehand.

We must never forget that the sanctification of souls always starts within ourselves. It is the fruit of a faith which becomes vivifying and operating by the work of charity, according to the words of St. Paul: “For we can do nothing against the truth: but for the truth” (cf. II Cor. 13:8), and “as Christ also loved the church and delivered himself up for it...that it should be holy and without blemish” (cf. Eph. 5:25 ff.).

The Chapter believes that the paramount duty of the Society, in the service which it intends to offer to the Church, is to continue, with God’s help, to profess the Catholic Faith in all its purity and integrity, with a determination matching the intensity of the constant attacks to which this very Faith is subjected nowadays.

For this reason it seems opportune that we reaffirm our faith in the Roman Catholic Church, the unique Church founded by Our Lord Jesus Christ, outside of which there is no salvation nor possibility to find the means leading to salvation; our faith in its monarchical constitution, desired by Our Lord Himself, by which the supreme power of government over the universal Church belongs only to the Pope, Vicar of Christ on earth; our faith in the universal Kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Creator of both the natural and the supernatural orders, to Whom every man and every society must submit.

The Society continues to uphold the declarations and the teachings of the constant Magisterium of the Church in regard to all the novelties of the Second Vatican Council which remain tainted with errors, and also in regard to the reforms issued from it. We find our sure guide in this uninterrupted Magisterium which, by its teaching authority, transmits the revealed Deposit of Faith in perfect harmony with the

truths that the entire Church has professed, always and everywhere.

The Society finds its guide as well in the constant Tradition of the Church, which transmits and will transmit until the end of time the teachings required to preserve the Faith and the salvation of souls, while waiting for the day when an open and serious debate will be possible which may allow the return to Tradition of the ecclesiastical authorities.

We wish to unite ourselves to the other Christians persecuted in different countries of the world who are now suffering for the Catholic Faith, some even to the extent of martyrdom. Their blood, shed in union with the Victim of our altars, is the pledge for a true renewal of the Church *in capite et membris*, according to the old saying *sanguis martyrum semen christianorum*.

“Finally, we turn our eyes to the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is also jealous of the privileges of her Divine Son, jealous of His glory, of His Kingdom on earth as in Heaven. How often has she intervened for the defense, even the armed defense, of Christendom against the enemies of the Kingdom of Our Lord! We entreat her to intervene today to chase the enemies out from inside the Church who are trying to destroy it more radically than its enemies from outside. May she deign to keep in the integrity of the Faith, in the love of the Church, in devotion to the Successor of Peter, all the members of the Society of St. Pius X and all the priests and faithful who labor alongside the Society, in order that she may both keep us from schism and preserve us from heresy.

“May St. Michael the Archangel inspire us with his zeal for the glory of God and with his strength to fight the devil.

“May St. Pius X share with us a part of his wisdom, of his learning, of his sanctity, to discern the true from the false and the good from the evil in these times of confusion and lies.” (Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre; Albano, October 19, 1983).

Basilica of Sant' Apollinare, Ravenna

The basilica ends in a semi-circular apse. Mosaic decoration covers the apse and the triumphal arch. The mosaics of the apse are dated before the middle of the 6th century whereas the mosaics on the arch date between the 6th and 12th centuries.



At the top of the jewelled cross the Greek word for fish appears, an acrostic formed by the initials of five Greek words meaning "Jesus Christ, Son of God, the Savior." The alpha and omega appear at the sides—the last letters of the Greek alphabet, used symbolically by Christ in the Apocalypse to signify that he was the beginning and the end. Below the cross are the words *Salus Mundi*, Salvation of the World. Rather than depicting an event narrated in the Bible, this mosaic indicates important theological and symbolic ideas.





SALVS MVNDI

The Young Man of Character

by Bishop Tihamer Toth

The enduring failure known as the U.S. education system has for decades provided countless “experts” the opportunity to apply varying fixes to something many people consider unfixable. Most of these attempts are simply a variation on a theme, emphasizing cognitive success (raw intelligence numbers) as the key predictor of success in life and the validation of the education children receive. It’s as though the cold, utilitarian spirit of Dickens’s school master in *Hard Times*, Thomas Gradgrind (“A man of facts and calculations”), is alive and well in the form of hapless education reformers.

However, recent interdisciplinary research conclusions—inchoate but persuasive—challenge long-held assumptions about not only what education should measure, but what factors taught to us in school actually contribute toward success in life? (See Paul Tough, *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity and the Hidden Power of Character* [Houghton Mifflin, 2012].) Is it really the numbers on the Iowa Basics or the SAT that best predict success in life? Or are there other, “non-cognitive” factors that are as important as raw intelligence?

According to this research, intelligence is just one of several factors that ought to be measured when assessing the success or failure of an education. There are a variety of words to describe these qualities—fortitude, perseverance, resilience, self-control, obedience, self-denial, etc.—but one word sums them up: Character.

While post-Christians nod thoughtfully, perhaps even warily, at this idea called character and its relationship to success in school and life, generations of Catholic parents will not be surprised by the conclusions of this research. Still, ask any adult—teacher or parent—how difficult it is to instill character, especially in young men, and you will no doubt get a weak smile in return, the kind of smile that says, “Tell me about it!”

Thankfully, there is an easy-to-read book written by a man who knew his subject well, a man who spent decades teaching young men and experiencing the joys and disappointments of seeing hundreds of young men with varying degrees of poverty, intellect,

and, most importantly, character succeed—and fail. *The Young Man of Character: A Guide to Fortifying and Rebuilding the Natural Foundation of Manhood*, by Bishop Tihamer Toth, is exactly the book that should guide the formation of every young man.

Bishop Toth was a Hungarian priest whose life was spent in a supporting role forming the characters of young men. He died young, in his fifty-first year, having written an astounding twenty-two books and numerous sermons which were broadcast on Hungarian Radio. Rarely do accomplished men maintain such closeness with the everyday, ordinary goings-on of young men. But Bishop Toth was special. He knew the mind and psyche of a boy. He knew his temptations, his biology, his “study habits,” his love for *action*, for *doing*, for fooling mom with his head buried in a book pretending to study while his thoughts wandered carelessly.

There isn’t a young man who can read who won’t be able to comprehend the gentle, good-natured reasoning of Bishop Toth. A key theme of the book is “Catholic [character building] does not demand the destruction of passions; instead, it wants to make them your allies” (p. 48). You are impetuous? Control your rash anger like Caesar and “Count to twenty before answering” (p. 21). You wake up in a bad mood? Never mind! Force yourself to smile...and to some extent you have already conquered your emotions” (p. 82). Feel tempted to tell a little lie? Never! “No matter what you do, ask your conscience: Is it right to do so?” (p. 122).

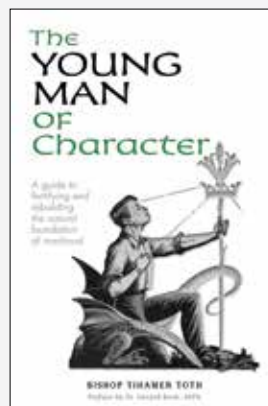
Anyone can lecture a young man. It takes a special gift to present such difficult truths in a way that he will want to continue to read, and this is Bishop Toth’s masterstroke. Sprinkled throughout are anecdotes of great men who faced hardship, persevered, and ultimately triumphed. The young man (or adult, for that matter) who reads this book will receive its wit, wisdom, and honesty as if spoken directly to him. Bishop Toth treats the reader as a young *man*, not a mere child, and does not back down from addressing some pretty serious character flaws that, in his experience, he has seen lead otherwise gifted students to lives of ruin. Still, he keeps the message on the level that a



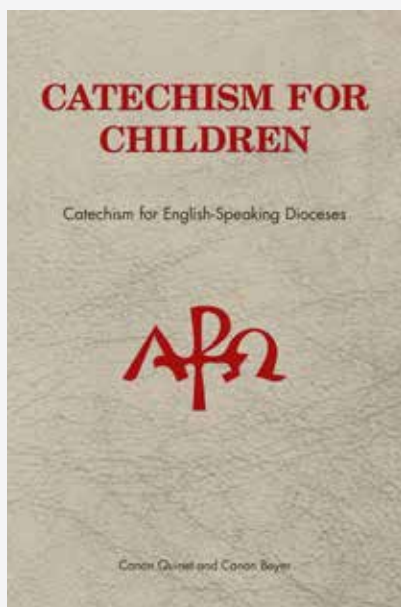
young man can understand.

This is the perfect book to read first then discuss with your son while he's reading it. Fathers, this book will make you look like a sage to your young man. Use examples from your own life to give these examples of character-building a concrete reality so that your son does not think these challenges are only for other people but, in fact, confront everyone to one degree or another. Once he hears how you or some great figure in history handled the same challenge, he'll be more confident and prepared to make the right decisions, "daring to be Catholic in his whole life too" (p. 29). And making the right decisions, Bishop Toth reminds us, will save us from having a "desolate heart" and win for us "the happy invitation from Our Lord Jesus Christ" (p. 175) to join Him in heaven.

Scott Quinn



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God Is Unique

by Fr. Albert, O.P.

¹ By unity here, as Cajetan points out in his commentary, we are not referring to the inner cohesion of God but rather simply to the fact that there is only one of Him, what we could call His “uniqueness.” God is unique.

² In fact the same principle applies to all beings that have no matter, that is, the angels, who, like God, are pure spirits. The nature of Gabriel (his “form”) is all there is of Gabriel because he has no matter. Consequently, there cannot be another being that has Gabrielness because it would have to be Gabriel to have it, since Gabriel is not distinct from his Gabrielness. Thus all angels are specifically different: it is as if there were only one

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord! (Deut. 6:4)

In our knowledge of what God is not, there remains one last thing to deny of Him: multiplicity. St. Thomas gives three proofs of the unity of God.¹

Firstly, it follows from His simplicity, the fact that there is no composition in Him at all. Thus we say that God is His own nature, and so there can be no difference between Him and the Divinity. He is not like a man, who is distinguished from his nature and whose nature, therefore, can be found in other beings. God is Divinity: therefore there cannot be more than one God.²

Infinity of Perfection

Secondly, the unity of God is proven by the infinity of His perfection. If there were two Gods they would have to differ in some way (otherwise they wouldn't be “two”). Therefore something would have to belong to one that didn't belong to the other. Now if this “something” was just a privation, then the one to whom it belonged would not be infinitely perfect, and therefore



specimen of each species of animal. In animals there can be more than one specimen of each species because in each animal, along with their species, there is matter, and so each individual animal is not identified with its species, but in the angels—and in God—this is not the case.

³ Thus, as John of St. Thomas remarks: “That which is most perfect in the whole universe, namely the ordering of things, would be the product of an accident, that is, the result of several causes that by chance come together to produce one effect.”

would not be God. But if it was a perfection, then the one to whom it didn't belong would be lacking that perfection and so wouldn't be infinitely perfect and therefore would not be God. Therefore there can only be one God.

Finally, the oneness of God is shown by the unity of the world, which requires some cause that is one at least in some way, for otherwise it could not cause the world to be one. If this cause, however, was only one “in some way” (that is, in so far as many things came together to produce one effect) and not in itself, it would be a cause of unity not by itself but by a sort of chance.³ Furthermore, many are reduced to one order in a more perfect way by what is one in itself than by what is multiple in itself and one only “in some way” or accidentally. Now God, who is the ultimate cause of the order of the universe, is absolutely perfect, as has already been shown previously. Therefore He causes this order in the most perfect way, that is, as a cause that is one in itself and not just “in some way.”

God is not a Lowest Common Denominator

The uniqueness of God has very important consequences, especially with regard to religion. Thus it is absolutely false to say, as is often said today, and even by the highest officials in the Church, that we have “the same God >



The Holy Trinity, 15-century fresco, Castelletto Cervo (Vercelli, Italy), St. Peter and St. Paul Church

⁴ II-II, q. 10, a. 3.

⁵ "Id quod ipse opinatur non est Deus," which literally translated would be: "That which he opines is not God."

⁶ Being capable of laughter (being "risibilis") is something that belongs to every man, because it follows necessarily from the fact that he has an intellectual nature that knows by discursive reasoning. Thus what is not capable of laughter cannot be Socrates.

as the Muslims" or "the same God as the Jews." For, to start with the most basic thing, our God is Triune, whereas the God of the Muslims and the God of the Jews is not. Now there is only one God: so if He is Triune, then any God which is not Triune isn't God. God is not a lowest common denominator obtained by abstracting from the different Gods of the different religions everything in which they differ: He is unique. He is what He is and whatever is not that isn't Him.

Cajetan seems to have anticipated and refuted in advance this modern error that claims that all religions have the same God in his commentary on an article in St. Thomas's treatise in the *Summa* on faith.⁴ The article asks whether the sin against faith is the greatest of sins. St. Thomas answers that yes, it is, because it distances man from God more than any other sin, and he explains: "For thus (that is by his false faith) man does not possess a true knowledge of God; rather by a false knowledge of Him he does not approach Him but is distanced from Him. Nor is it possible for one who has a false opinion of God to know Him in any way at all, because the object of his opinion is not God."⁵

Cajetan comments: "This seems to be false because an infidel, for example a Jew or a philosopher, who refuses faith in the Incarnation, still knows something about God: he knows that God is pure act, for example, that He is above all things, that He is the best of all things, the first cause, *etc.* And the being that he thinks has not assumed flesh is God..."

But he responds to his own objection: "It is one thing to speak of the infidel as such; and another of the infidel man who has other knowledge. For St. Thomas does not say that the man who is an infidel does not have any knowledge of God, which is what the objection attacks; rather he says that God is not known through infidelity, neither simply nor even in some way. Not simply, because the false knowledge of something is not knowledge of it but an error about it: and thus it does not approach one to it but rather distances one from it....Neither even in some way, because a false proposition, as such, enounces the opposite of its subject....For when it is said: 'Socrates is not capable of laughter,' by this proposition is enounced what is not Socrates; for what is not capable of laughter implies what is not Socrates.⁶ And when it is said: 'Socrates is running,' when in fact he is seated, there is enounced what Socrates is not right now: for there is presented a running Socrates, who is not to be found. And thus in all matters it is evident that a false proposition, as such, gives no knowledge about the subject, because it enounces the opposite of the subject.

"And if it is said that it gives at least the simple knowledge of the terms of the proposition it must be said that that knowledge does not belong to the false proposition but is rather presupposed by it. And in our case it does not regard unbelief. Thus St. Thomas does not say that what is meant by the term of the proposition is not God: but that what it affirms is not God. For what an infidel, as such, affirms, is not God, as was said."

Thus we can respond to the modern error by saying that the God of the Muslims or the Jews is not God, because even though when they use the term "God" they mean the God that everyone can know by reason, the propositions they form about Him are absolutely false and do not give any



⁷ *Scritti Kolbiani* (SK) 1270. He often comes back to this theme. He writes, for example, in an article in his review: "Truth is one.... It is true, for example, that in this moment I am writing these words and you, dear reader, are reading them. Against this the contrary statement cannot be true, that is, that I did not write these words, or that you are not reading them. Indeed, about this question both 'yes' and 'no' cannot both be true. The truth stands either in "yes" or "no." Truth, in fact, is one.

Truth is also powerful. If someone wanted to lie and affirm that neither did I write nor did you read, the truth would not change, while he who denied it would be mistaken, he would delude himself. And even if these deniers were numerous, the force of the truth would not be affected in the least. More, even if all the men on the earth were to affirm, publish, film, and swear for their whole lives that I did not write these lines and that you did not read them, all that wouldn't be able to take away even a little crumb from the granite of the truth, namely, that I wrote, that you read. And not even God cancels nor can He cancel the truth by a miracle, because He is essentially Truth itself." (SK 1246, *Rycerz Niepokalanej*, XIII, 1940)

⁸ SK 1206, *Rycerz Niepokalanej*, April, 1936.

⁹ SK 357, Aug. 4, 1931, n. 2.

real knowledge of God but rather induce those who believe them into error about Him. Thus when the Muslims say: "Allah is one and Mohammed is His prophet!" they are not referring to our God, the true God, but to a false God, for Mohammed is not the prophet of God. And when the Jews say: "Jesus Christ is not God" they confess a false God because of the real God it is true to say that Jesus Christ is He.

The Truth is Unique

The ardent missionary zeal of the saints was founded on this fundamental truth of the uniqueness of God, and consequently of the uniqueness of the true religion. This was the case, for example, with St. Maximilian Kolbe, who had to fight against the modern ecumenical spirit that was present already at his time. He writes in some private notes: "Write in every issue of *The Knight* [the review he published]: the truth is unique....The truth is unique—also in religion."⁷

In his contacts with non-Catholics he was always very charitable and prudent, but he didn't hide the truth from them, precisely because of his charity for them. We see this, for example, in his relations with a certain Japanese philosopher, Nishida Tenko, who invited Father Kolbe to visit him. He recounts the story in an article:

"I was received very cordially. On one point, however, we did not manage to agree because of the fact that I obstinately maintained that the truth cannot be anything but unique and, consequently, that there can be only one true religion...."

"Some months ago on the train [I met] one of the collaborators of Nishida Tenko. We exchanged mutual questions and responses about health, our activities and so on and at the end we touched again on the question of religion.

"You must certainly look down on us, considering us to be inferior beings," he said to me.

"No, absolutely not, I appreciate and respect all those who seek the truth but...the truth is always and only one."

"On the little table of Mr. Nishida Tenko there is always the little statue of the Immaculate that you sent us."

"We had by this time arrived at the station where he had to get off, so we interrupted our conversation and said goodbye.

"Nonetheless, the news that the Immaculate, from Her little statue, turns Her look upon the founder of that village consoled me very much."⁸

The firmness of Father Kolbe—and the intercession of the Immaculate—bore fruit. In a note, the editor of his writings informs us that Mr. Tenko died February 29, 1968, at the age of 96 and that before dying he was baptized by a Conventual Franciscan priest.⁹

An Original School of Spirituality:

The Devotio Moderna

by Fr. Dominique Bourmaud, SSPX

It is not easy to trace the growth and varieties of the delicate topic called “Spirituality.” This is both a science and an art which deals with all things akin to the spiritual life. It aims at that Christian perfection which Our Lord but formally commanded to each of us: “Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

Schools of Spirituality

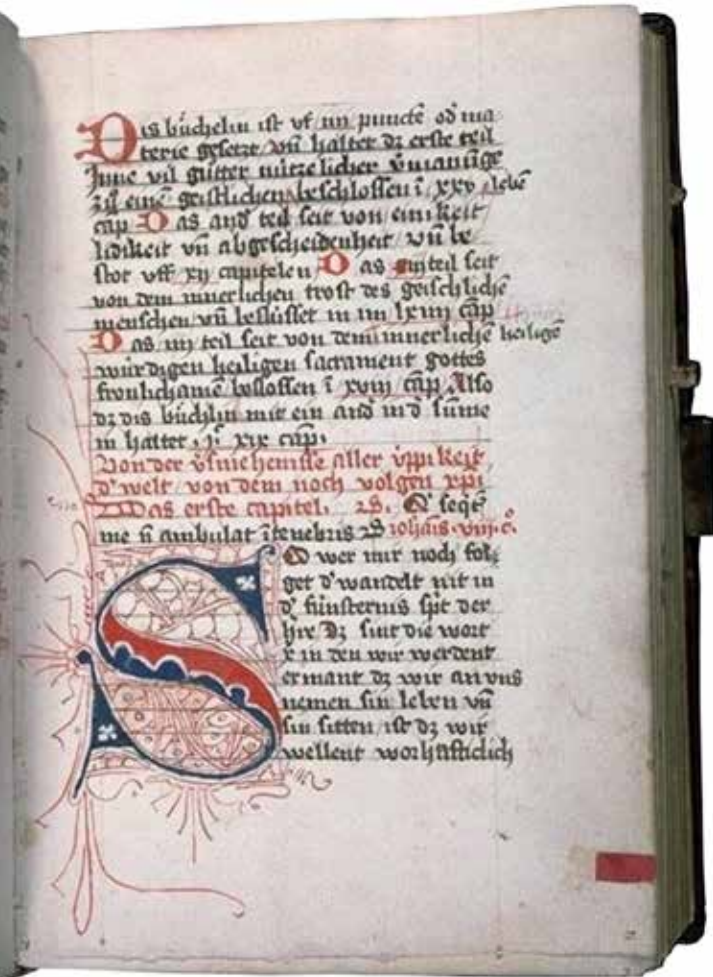
A quick glance at the history of spirituality reveals that, after rather scanty works produced on the subject in Patristic times, the Middle Ages break down the schools of spirituality according to the various orders (especially Benedictines, Carthusians, Dominicans, and Franciscans). As for the Modern era starting from the sixteenth

century, to the old schools, they add new congregations—the Jesuits, the Salesians, and others attached either to a person (the Liguorian school) or to a location (the seventeenth-century French school). The Augustinians were also well represented, but we shall see them quite involved as we delve into our present topic.

Much could be said about the nuances of spirituality among these categories. As we focus on the *Devotio Moderna*, it will suffice to say that up to the Middle Ages, and even later in the old monastic orders, the common method of prayer for all Christians was called *lectio divina*, a practice which involved reading Scripture at deeper levels of meaning.

Involved in this process are three steps:

1. meditation, the reflecting with the mind upon the meaning of the sacred texts;



Page of the *Imitation of Christ*

2. affective prayer, the spontaneous movement of the will in response to these reflections;
3. contemplation, the two previous mental prayers in a more quiet state in God's presence.

The Origins of the *Devotio Moderna*

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, wars and the Black Death spread chaos throughout the land, a chaos which was

also felt among the clergy both physically and spiritually. The *Devotio Moderna* (Latin for modern devotion) arose in the Low Countries around the year 1400 in an attempt to establish reform. It spread to Germany, northern France, Spain, and possibly Italy. Gerhard Groote was highly dissatisfied with the state of the Church and what he perceived as the gradual loss of monastic traditions and the lack of moral values among the clergy, a sentiment expressed by the Dominican Henry Suso long before him. To remedy this, Groote founded the Brethren of the Common Life; after his death, his disciple Florens Radewijns established a house of Augustinian Canons at Windesheim in Holland. These two communities—the former living in the world, the latter monastic—became the principal exponents of *Devotio Moderna*.

Under Radewijns, who added the vows and enclosure, the Congregation of Windesheim grew into a large tree. By the end of the fifteenth century, it comprised about 100 monasteries of either sex, although it suffered greatly from the Protestant depredations of the sixteenth century. The Windesheimers increased silence and austerity, focused their spirituality on inner devotions and frequent short periods of meditation, especially before each new activity.

Nor did they forsake all apostolic ministry. Their main outdoor activity was a new way of preaching, called conference or *collatio*. The non-ordained brothers would give the people, in cemetery or houses, simple exhortations in the vulgar tongue based on scriptural and patristic fragments. These conferences were joined together into collections called *rapiaria*, which we shall encounter again.

Thomas à Kempis left us a laudatory portrait of life in these oases of peace founded by Groote: "From the highest to the lowest each practiced humility, which is the first of all virtues; it turns the earthly dwelling into a paradise, and transforms mortal men into living stones of God's temple. There obedience was flourishing; there the love of God and of men warmed the hearts. Those who had come cold left full of joy, warmed at the sacred word... There seemed to revive, in all its freshness, the memory of the Ancient >

Fathers, and the ecclesiastical life was raised, in conformity with Church traditions, to the highest degree of perfection” (Mourret, *Histoire de l'Église*, V, 129).

The term *moderna* attached to this system is in no way derogatory, but simply indicating that it departs from the *Devotio Antiqua*. The latter was more scholastic and speculative, especially the great German mysticism of the Dominican school of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries represented by Master Eckhart, Tauler, and Suso. Oblivious of descriptive experience of the divine within the soul, these authors wanted to clarify *how* the soul adheres to the divinity, *what* is God in His Being, His Life and perfections. There is no room for the humanity of Christ. For instance, Blessed Suso's main work is *The Short Book of the Eternal Wisdom*.

The Legacy of the *Devotio Moderna*

The Christian world is forever indebted to this congregation in that it gave it two momentous gifts: the little book of *The Imitation of Christ* and a rigorous method of mental prayer.

If we need to sum up the essence of Groote's spirituality, we should say that it was to recall men to the imitation of Christ. *The Imitation of Christ*, this is the title of one the most famous book of the *Devotio Moderna*. Most likely, the four books of the *Imitation* are rapiaria, collections of maxims which guided the life of the Brothers of Common Life. Thomas was born at Kempen, near Cologne (Germany) and entered the monastery of Agnetenberg, ruled by his brother John à Kempis in 1399. He spent most of his life copying codices, composing spiritual works and poems, and died an old man at age 92. Chroniclers like to describe his spirit “most amorous of the Passion of the Lord and admirable consoler of those tried and desconsolated.” This goodly portrait tells us of a humble, sentimental, and tender religious. Among his other known works, we list *Meditationes de Vita et Beneficiis Salvatoris Iesu*, the *Soliloquium Animae*, and the *De Elevatione Mentis ad Inquirendum*

Summum Bonum. None of his works follows a logical pattern in treating the themes. However, *The Imitation of Christ* is remarkable in that it is written in a clear and vigorous style without the florid amplification and repetitions of the other treatises of Kempis.

Windesheim was from its beginnings a powerhouse of spirituality. Groote introduced a structured method in “On Four Kinds of Matter for Meditation,” including mental imagery. The concept of immersing and projecting oneself into a Biblical scene about the life of Jesus was developed by Ludolph of Saxony in his *Vita Christi* in 1374 and became popular among the *Devotio Moderna* community. Mombaer, who reformed some French convents, wrote in 1494 the encyclopedia of spirituality of the *Devotio Moderna*, a huge *rapiarium*, the *Rosetum Exercitiorum Spiritualium et Sacrarum Meditationum*. Here, he compiled all the spiritual principles, the religious practices, and ascetical methods used in Windesheim. Among others, he quotes Gansfort's ladder of meditation, which comprises no less than 23 degrees which go through memory, understanding, to reach finally the will. It is the paragon of psychological methodism, turned almost mechanical.

The Main Traits of the *Devotio Moderna*

It is generally admitted that the disciples of Groote compose a spiritual category of their own. By their forceful Christo-centricity, by stressing the affection over abstract thought, they are followers of the Franciscan over the Dominican spirituality. The line that goes from St. Bernard to St. Bonaventure continues straight through the *Devotio Moderna*, although it does add its proper nuances, which it will not be useless to spell out here.

- Not only is it distinct from the speculative *Devotio Antiqua*, it is even anti-speculative and depreciative of it. “What does it profit you to dispute of the high things of the Trinity?... I'd rather feel compunction than know its



definition” (Kempis I, 1). This is why everything reverts to the practice of the faith: imitate Christ practically, His humility, His patience, His obedience, His love of the Cross.

- To this practical aspect is joined the affective character, as indicated by the name *devotio*. Mombaer prefers feeling to understanding. He wrote: “Let all our things turn into affection... and let us reduce all understanding into captivity.”
- It tends to an excessive moralism. Even the concept of Christ seems less real and less conformed to history because it is made more abstract and moralizing. Rather than the person of Christ, they would meditate on His virtues.
- Yet the most characteristic of this spirituality is the methodization of the interior life. In Windesheim, all the acts of the day were perfectly regulated, from the moment of rising and hearing Mass and praying the office, to the mode of eating, walking, reading, and sleeping, with the corresponding ejaculatory prayers and internal acts. No one ever regulated mental prayer as much as they did. As an example, the Brothers of Deventer meditated on Saturday over sins; on Sunday, over the kingdom of heaven; on Monday, over death; Tuesday, God’s blessings; Wednesday, judgment; Thursday, hell; Friday, the Passion.

Need we say that this highly regulated piety had also its shadows. The Brothers, so monastically centered, imbued with such an anti-world spirituality, really shunned the care of the neighbor, which they saw as a danger for their own salvation. Also, due to its individualist bent, the *Devotio Moderna* gave little importance to the Mystical Body of the Church and to the Roman Pontiff as such. Its lack of interest for feeding the human mind would prove a hollow barrier against the Protestant heresy, which attacked dogma and would stress the individual feeling of the divine. Luther, for one, found the *Imitation* more inspired than the Epistle of St. James. His tragic error was confusion between scriptural and devotional inspiration.

This being said, during the Renaissance, someone had to teach hatred of the world to a worldly Papacy, attachment to Christ to a pagan revival, and the monastic ideal to a defiled secular clergy. Also, the ultra-methodical aspect of meditation has proven a valuable tool to Christianity as the famous *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius can testify.

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Re-dimensioning

The Catholic Simpleton

by Christopher Ferrara

¹ www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gLa9Te8Blw

During a film presentation at the Democratic National Convention, the narrator made the following declaration in that folksy American tone that is supposed to convey unchallengeable practical wisdom: “Government’s the only thing we all belong to. We’re in different churches, different clubs, but we’re together as a part of our city, of our county, of our state, and our nation.”¹ Why shucks, isn’t that just the plain ol’ American truth?

Spouting similar folk wisdom, Mitt Romney observed during his acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention: “We were Mormons and growing up in Michigan; that might have seemed unusual or out of place but I really don’t remember it that way. My friends cared more about what sports teams we followed than what church we went to.” Of course they did. And isn’t that the American way? What unites us—the Super Bowl, for example—is so much more important than the minor things that divide us, such as religion.

Both political parties reflect the final outcome of political modernity: the reduction of post-Christian Western man to a simpleton, a two-dimensional being—the citizen-voter and worker-consumer—whose “private” third dimension, including his religion, has no bearing on his “public” life and is left behind whenever he exits his home or the religious temple of his choice.



² Cavanaugh, *Theopolitical Imagination: Christian Practices of Space and Time* (London: T & T Clark, 2002), 99.

³ Cavanaugh, *Migrations of the Holy* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2011), 21.

⁴ *Two Treatises of Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), II, 89.

⁵ William T. Cavanaugh, *The Myth of Religious Violence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 162.

⁶ Cavanaugh, "Beyond Secular Parodies" in *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology*, ed. John Milbank, Graham Ward, Catherine Pickstock (London: Routledge, 1998), 191. Emphasis mine.

The simpleton of the modern nation-state inhabits what the Catholic scholar William T. Cavanaugh (citing the Anglican scholar John Milbank) characterizes as a "simple space," as compared with the "complex space" that was Christendom. Cavanaugh describes the transformation thus: "The rise of the modern nation-state is marked by the triumph of the universal over the local in the sovereign state's usurpation of power from the Church, the nobility, clans, guilds and towns. The universalization of law and rights would liberate the individual from the whims of local custom, thereby creating a direct relationship or simple space between the sovereign and the individual."²

The simple space of political modernity is precisely what the folksy narrator means by the proposition that "Government's the only thing we all belong to." The direct relationship between "We the People" and the federal and state governments that "we" supposedly created in the American Revolution is precisely "the political space imagined by Locke," which has "two poles, the individual and the state,"³ or what Locke described in his *Second Treatise* as "one body politic under one supreme government."⁴

According to the story that political modernity tells about itself—the story of what post-Christian man calls Liberty—the "democratic revolutions" of the 18th and 19th centuries finally brought an end to religious strife and bloodshed, inaugurating an endless epoch of peace, prosperity and domestic tranquility in "the spirit of democratic capitalism," to quote the title of Michael Novak's infamous and impudent attack on Catholic social teaching. But in truth the successful struggle for the subordination of religion by the state inaugurated an age of violence and civilizational decline without precedent in Western history, with the two world wars representing only a fraction of the vast carnage unleashed by the final emancipation of the nations from the influence of the Catholic Church.

Indeed, as Cavanaugh notes, the so-called wars of religion in the 16th and 17th centuries were really conflicts waged "by state-building elites for the purpose of *consolidating their power over the church* and other rivals."⁵ They were "the birth pangs of the state, in which the overlapping jurisdictions, allegiances, and customs of the medieval order were *flattened* and circumscribed into the new creation of the sovereign state (not always yet nation-state), a centralizing power with a monopoly on violence within a defined territory."⁶

This flattening and circumscription of social order involves a historically novel division of society into public and private domains, the latter consigned to a lower realm below the level of the public. That division represents a total destruction of the medieval constitution of the State as a unified moral totality whose complex structure reflects the existence of the Mystical Body with its many parts ordered to the same eternal end. In Christendom, wrote the great German historian Otto von Guericke, "the Church served as a model for a parallel system of temporal groups" existing together in an organic and hierarchical relation in which authority was exercised locally wherever appropriate, according to what Pius XI called "the principle of subsidiary function." And this perennial arrangement made for the true liberty of the individual, for as Guericke observed it was >

⁷ Otto von Gierke, *Political Theories of the Middle Age* (Cambridge University Press: 1900), 21, 34-35.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 16, 2.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 100.

always understood that “[r]ulers are instituted for the sake of Peoples, not Peoples for the sake of Rulers.” Contrary to the mythology of the Liberty narrative, “the doctrine of the unconditioned duty of obedience was wholly foreign to the Middle Age.... [E]very duty of obedience was conditioned by the rightfulness of the command. That any individual must obey God rather than any earthly superior appeared as an absolutely indisputable truth.”⁷ In this age of Liberty, however, the nations have no king but Caesar, and we are expected to obey men rather than God. Our mere opinions about Him and His will are not operative when we enter the public square, where, as Thomas Jefferson declared in his first Inaugural Address, we must exhibit “absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of republics...”

In Christendom, Gierke wrote, “Church and State were two Co-ordinate Powers” between which there was to be “an inseverable connexion and an unbroken interaction which must display itself in every part and also throughout the whole” of society.⁸ The Church, in short, was the soul of the body politic. But with the Protestant revolt and the so-called Enlightenment, the body politic of Christendom was inexorably divested of its soul, and thus its organizing principle, leaving only the great mass of “sovereign” individuals and the government their “sovereign will” supposedly created—the two poles of the simple space we now inhabit. The result, Gierke concludes, was “[a] combat...in which the Sovereign State and the Sovereign Individual contended over the delimitation of the provinces assigned to them by Natural Law, and in the course of that struggle all intermediate groups were first degraded into the position of the more or less arbitrarily fashioned creatures of mere Positive Law, and in the end were obliterated.”⁹

The formerly intermediate groups still exist in one form or another, of course. There are still churches and associations of various kinds, perhaps more than ever before. But they no longer exist as autonomous agencies with a determinative social influence upon the whole—least of all the Catholic Church, whose overthrow as the conscience of the State was essential to the building of the New Order of the Ages. That is, the once intermediate agencies are no longer *publicly* relevant, which is all that matters in the modern secular state. This was the diagnosis of Robert Nisbet in his *Quest for Community*, an ultimately futile Burkean conservative complaint about a post-Christian social order whose false principles Nisbet was unwilling to challenge.

Think of the modern nation-state, then, as a kind of sociopolitical Flatland whose two-dimensional inhabitants—bodies without legally cognizable souls—subsist in a condition of direct subjection to “their” government. Any potential countervailing authority, particularly the Catholic Church, has been consigned to an invisible third dimension known as the “private voluntary society.” If the Church is envisioned as a three-dimensional reality, her appearance in this Flatland can be likened to a physical impossibility.

Today, even Catholic Churchmen, captives of the *Zeitgeist* and the Second Vatican Council’s prudentially disastrous embrace of “religious liberty,” are unable to imagine the Church’s operative presence in the Flatland of American politics. Hence the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops,



¹⁰ <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/our-first-most-cherished-liberty.cfm/>.

¹¹ Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 9. Emphasis in original.

expressing its utterly impotent opposition to the contraceptive mandate of Obamacare, insisted: “This is not a Catholic issue. This is not a Jewish issue. This is not an Orthodox, Mormon, or Muslim issue. It is an *American* issue.”¹⁰ Being good citizens of Flatland, the American bishops consent to the reduction of all social questions, including matters involving the very foundations of the moral order, to a mere contest for votes in the two-dimensional simple space of the American political arena in which members of the Catholic hierarchy agree to be mere citizen-voters like everyone else. For after all, in the New Order of the Ages government *is* the only thing we *all* belong to.

How do we escape this absurd predicament before the suicide of the West is completed? It is useless to speak of “states’ rights” and secession, for the states are merely subdivided congruent spaces within the vast simple space of the United States. Thus the last attempt at secession, known as the Civil War, merely cut the overall simple space in two, with each resulting half (including its respective states) being governed by the same Enlightenment-bred principles, expressed in virtually identical constitutions. (The Confederate States Constitution was borrowed from the United States Constitution, including a federal supremacy clause and bans on any establishment of religion, including Christianity, or any religious test for office.)

What is needed, rather, is an *internal* secession from simple space, involving nothing more or less than a re-dimensioning of the Catholic simpleton into a three-dimensional Catholic man who refuses any longer to accept a life in that flattened and circumscribed realm known as the secular. “Once there was no secular,” writes Milbank. “Instead there was the single community of Christendom with its dual aspects of *sacerdotium* and *regnum*....The secular as a domain had to be *created or imagined*, both in theory and in practice.”¹¹ What this means is that we have always held the key to our own imaginary jail cell—a prison we ourselves confirm by accepting the errors of the Enlightenment from which it emerged.

The key to the jail is the Word Incarnate. Without firing a shot, and within the framework of existing institutions, re-dimensioned Catholics in every station of life—from the voter to the ruler, and beginning with the hierarchy of the Church whose divine commission is to make disciples of all nations—need only speak Truth to power. The results would be astonishing, as we have seen with formerly communist Hungary’s stunning adoption of a new Christian constitution only last year.

The “only thing we all belong to” is not a mere civil government, but rather the Kingdom of Christ, which embraces all men and all nations. When Catholics shake off their Liberty-induced stupor and act as if they still believe that Christ is King and Lord of History, the world will begin to change again, just as it did most miraculously in the days of the Roman catacombs. The question is not whether but when this social metanoia will occur, and what will be left of our world by the time it does.

Humani Generis

by Pope Pius XII, Concerning false opinions threatening to undermine Catholic Doctrine, Aug. 12, 1950

The encyclical *Humani Generis* of Pius XII gave a clear condemnation of neo-Modernism in the same way that *Lamentabili* of Pius X had condemned modernism 40 years earlier. The basic message is simple: the magisterium is the guardian and the interpreter of Divine Revelation. Any attempt to separate oneself from this magisterium would be to follow in the footsteps of Luther. But Lutheranism has humanized and fragmented Christianity, reducing it to a personal experience. It took only 15 years for the conciliar Church to undo what defenses *Humani Generis* had raised. Never before in the history of the Church had a dogmatic encyclical been so quickly and so completely disavowed by the very men who had fallen under its condemnation! Here we offer a few excerpts from this pivotal encyclical touching on faith: the undermining reefs of modern evolutionism and irenism, the limits

of theology, the sure foundation of perennial philosophy.

True and Certain Knowledge

1. Disagreement and error among men on moral and religious matters have always been a cause of profound sorrow to all good men, but above all to the true and loyal sons of the Church, especially today, when we see the principles of Christian culture being attacked on all sides.

2. It is not surprising that such discord and error should always have existed outside the fold of Christ. For though, absolutely speaking, human reason by its own natural force and light can arrive at a true and certain knowledge of the one personal God, Who by His providence watches over and governs the world, and also



the natural law, which the Creator has written in our hearts, still there are not a few obstacles to prevent reason from making efficient and fruitful use of its natural ability. The truths that have to do with God and the relations between God and men, completely surpass the sensible order and demand self-surrender and self-abnegation in order to be put into practice and to influence practical life. Now the human intellect, in gaining the knowledge of such truths, is hampered both by the activity of the senses and the imagination, and by evil passions arising from original sin. Hence men easily persuade themselves in such matters that what they do not wish to believe is false or at least doubtful.

3. It is for this reason that divine revelation must be considered morally necessary so that those religious and moral truths which are not of their nature beyond the reach of reason in the present condition of the human race, may be known by all men readily with a firm certainty and with freedom from all error.

4. Furthermore the human intelligence sometimes experiences difficulties in forming a judgment about the credibility of the Catholic faith, notwithstanding the many wonderful external signs God has given, which are sufficient to prove with certitude by the natural light of reason alone the divine origin of the Christian religion. For man can, whether from prejudice or passion or bad faith, refuse and resist not only the evidence of the external proofs that are available, but also the impulses of actual grace.

5. If anyone examines the state of affairs outside the Christian fold, he will easily discover the principal trends that not a few learned men are following. Some imprudently and indiscreetly hold that evolution, which has not been fully proved even in the domain of natural sciences, explains the origin of all this, and audaciously support the monistic and pantheistic opinion that the world is in continual evolution. Communists gladly subscribed to this opinion so that, when the souls of men have been deprived of every idea of a personal God, they may the more efficaciously defend and propagate their dialectical materialism.

Imprudent “Eirenism”

11. Another danger is perceived which is all the more serious because it is more concealed beneath the mask of virtue. There are many who, deploring disagreement among men and intellectual confusion, through an imprudent zeal for souls, are urged by a great and ardent desire to do away with the barrier that divides good and honest men; these advocate an “eirenism” according to which, by setting aside the questions which divide men, they aim not only at joining forces to repel the attacks of atheism, but also at reconciling things opposed to one another in the field of dogma. And as in former times some questioned whether the traditional apologetics of the Church did not constitute an obstacle rather than a help to the winning of souls for Christ, so today some are presumptive enough to question seriously whether theology and theological methods, such as with the approval of ecclesiastical authority are found in our schools, should not only be perfected, but also completely reformed, in order to promote the more efficacious propagation of the kingdom of Christ everywhere throughout the world among men of every culture and religious opinion.

12. Now if these only aimed at adapting ecclesiastical teaching and methods to modern conditions and requirements, through the introduction of some new explanations, there would be scarcely any reason for alarm. But some through enthusiasm for an imprudent “eirenism” seem to consider as an obstacle to the restoration of fraternal union, things founded on the laws and principles given by Christ and likewise on institutions founded by Him, or which are the defense and support of the integrity of the faith, and the removal of which would bring about the union of all, but only to their destruction.

21. It is also true that theologians must always return to the sources of divine revelation: for it belongs to them to point out how the doctrine of the living Teaching Authority is to be found either explicitly or implicitly in the Scriptures and in Tradition. Besides, each source of

divinely revealed doctrine contains so many rich treasures of truth, that they can really never be exhausted. Hence it is that theology through the study of its sacred sources remains ever fresh; on the other hand, speculation which neglects a deeper search into the deposit of faith, proves sterile, as we know from experience. But for this reason even positive theology cannot be on a par with merely historical science. For, together with the sources of positive theology God has given to His Church a living Teaching Authority to elucidate and explain what is contained in the deposit of faith only obscurely and implicitly. This deposit of faith our Divine Redeemer has given for authentic interpretation not to each of the faithful, not even to theologians, but only to the Teaching Authority of the Church. But if the Church does exercise this function of teaching, as she often has through the centuries, either in the ordinary or extraordinary way, it is clear how false is a procedure which would attempt to explain what is clear by means of what is obscure. Indeed the very opposite procedure must be used. Hence Our Predecessor of immortal memory, Pius IX, teaching that the most noble office of theology is to show how a doctrine defined by the Church is contained in the sources of revelation, added these words, and with very good reason: "in that sense in which it has been defined by the Church."

Properly Trained Reason

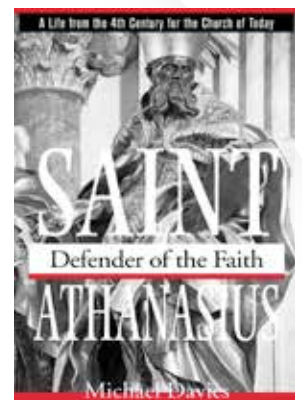
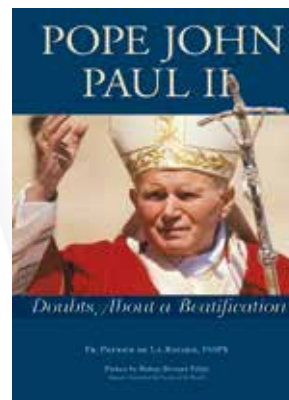
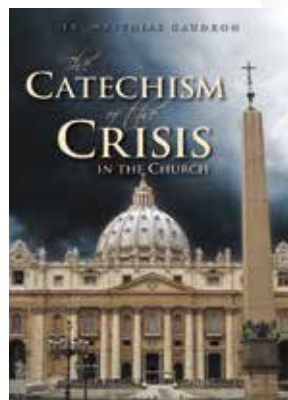
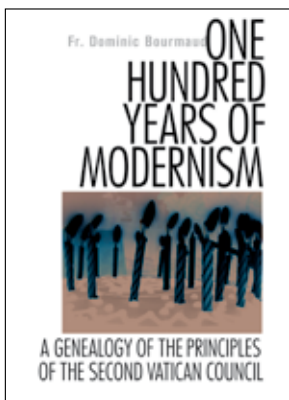
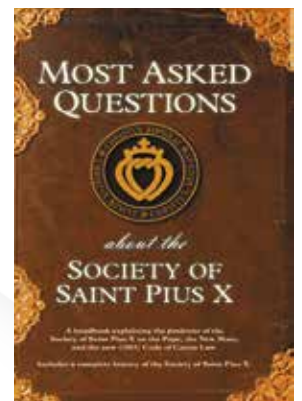
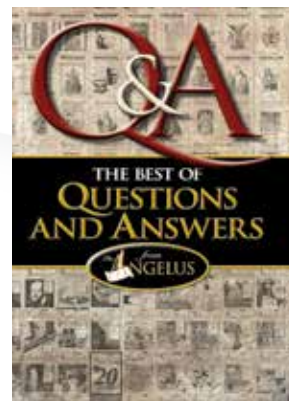
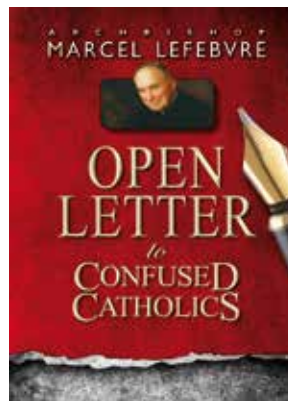
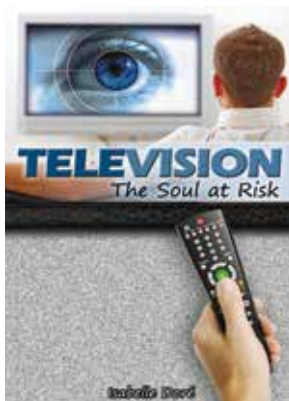
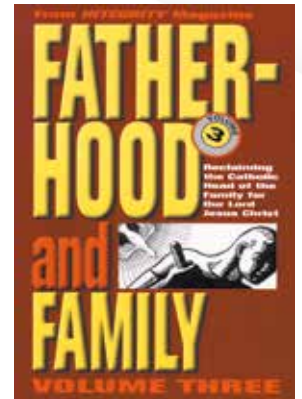
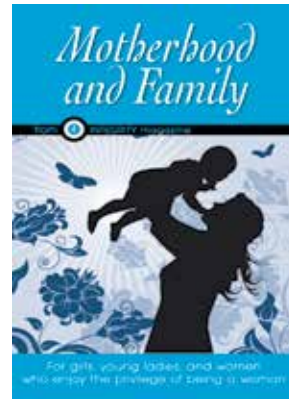
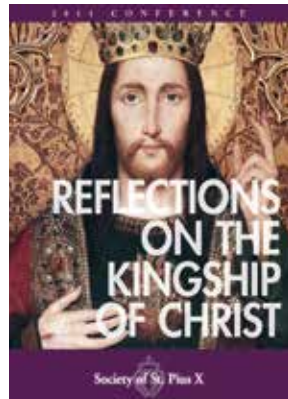
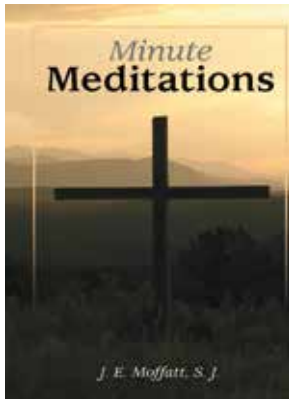
29. It is well known how highly the Church regards human reason, for it falls to reason to demonstrate with certainty the existence of God, personal and one; to prove beyond doubt from divine signs the very foundations of the Christian faith; to express properly the law which the Creator has imprinted in the hearts of men; and finally to attain to some notion, indeed a very fruitful notion, of mysteries. But reason can perform these functions safely and well, only when properly trained, that is, when imbued with that sound philosophy which has long been, as it were, a patrimony handed down by earlier Christian ages, and which moreover possesses an authority of even higher order, since

the Teaching Authority of the Church, in the light of divine revelation itself, has weighed its fundamental tenets, which have been elaborated and defined little by little by men of great genius. For this philosophy, acknowledged and accepted by the Church, safeguards the genuine validity of human knowledge, the unshakable metaphysical principles of sufficient reason, causality, and finality, and finally the mind's ability to attain certain and unchangeable truth.

30. Of course this philosophy deals with much that neither directly nor indirectly touches faith or morals, and which consequently the Church leaves to the free discussion of experts. But this does not hold for many other things, especially those principles and fundamental tenets to which We have just referred. However, even in these fundamental questions, we may clothe our philosophy in a more convenient and richer dress, make it more vigorous with a more effective terminology, divest it of certain scholastic aids found less useful, prudently enrich it with the fruits of progress of the human mind. But never may we overthrow it, or contaminate it with false principles, or regard it as a great, but obsolete, relic. For truth and its philosophic expression cannot change from day to day, least of all where there is question of self-evident principles of the human mind or of those propositions which are supported by the wisdom of the ages and by divine revelation. Whatever new truth the sincere human mind is able to find, certainly cannot be opposed to truth already acquired, since God, the highest Truth, has created and guides the human intellect, not that it may daily oppose new truths to rightly established ones, but rather that, having eliminated errors which may have crept in, it may build truth upon truth in the same order and structure that exist in reality, the source of truth. Let no Christian therefore, whether philosopher or theologian, embrace eagerly and lightly whatever novelty happens to be thought up from day to day, but rather let him weigh it with painstaking care and a balanced judgment, lest he lose or corrupt the truth he already has, with grave danger and damage to his faith.

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Einsiedeln Abbey

Saint Meinrad, of the family of the Counts of Hohenzollern, was educated at the abbey school of Reichenau, an island in Lake Constance, under his kinsmen Abbots Hatto and Erlebald, where he became a monk and was ordained. After some years at Reichenau, and the dependent priory of Bollingen, on Lake Zurich, he embraced an eremitical life and established his hermitage on the slopes of Mt. Etzel, taking with him a wonder-working statue of Our Lady which he had been given by the Abbess Hildegarde of Zurich. He died in 861 at the hands of robbers who coveted the treasures offered at the shrine by devout pilgrims, but during the next eighty years the place was never without one or more hermits emulating Saint Meinrad's example. One of them, named Eberhard, previously Provost of Strassburg, erected a monastery and church there, of which he became first abbot.

The church was miraculously consecrated, so the legend runs, in 948, by Christ Himself assisted by the Four Evangelists, St. Peter, and St. Gregory the Great. This event was investigated and confirmed by Pope Leo VIII and subsequently ratified by many of his successors, the last ratification being by Pope Pius VI in 1793, who confirmed the acts of all his predecessors.





St. Pius X, Our Guide

Through the Crisis

by Fr. Emanuel Herkel, SSPX

Pope St. Pius X is praised for many virtues. His story has been told in many ways. This will be an intellectual biography, limited to only one idea—the condemnation of Modernism. The ordinary history must be omitted, except for a few details. In 1903 Giuseppe Sarto was elected Pope Pius X. He died at the beginning of World War I, so he was a modern man. He understood the modern world, but he was not a Modernist. The virtue of faith made him the ideal choice as the patron of the Society of St. Pius X. This pope clearly condemned the heresy that is now ravaging the Church; he identified it and acted against it so strongly that the heretics did not dare to teach openly for 50 years. Unfortunately, the heretics have gained a certain prominence now, and that is a reason to invoke the patronage of St. Pius X.

Identifying the Error

Modernism is not an easy heresy to identify because it is not simply the denial of one or two truths of faith. Modernism is a different way of thinking about the faith; at its root it is a bad philosophy, and it touches every aspect of the faith. Previous popes had condemned Modernism, but they condemned only part of the heresy. It required the clear vision of St. Pius X to identify the error and condemn it effectively. This he did, and still today the best explanation of Modernism is the condemnation by St. Pius X in the encyclical *Pascendi*. The principles found in this encyclical were the guiding light for Archbishop Lefebvre. They continue to guide the SSPX in our relations with the heretics of today.



The Modernist as Believer

Let us begin with faith itself. A traditional definition of faith is “the adherence of the intellect to the truth revealed by God.” We believe in a truth that comes from outside, a truth that exists whether we believe it or not. We believe because of the authority of God who reveals, and there is no need to seek elsewhere.

No one has the right to take this faith from us and replace it by something else. What we are now seeing in the Church is the revival of a Modernist definition of faith that was condemned a hundred years ago by Pius X. According to this, faith is an internal feeling: there is no need to seek further than within a man’s heart to find the explanation of religion. The heretics think of faith as something purely subjective, a personal experience of God. They deny that God can be known by external means. It is everyone for himself, in his own conscience. This internal faith shuts us up within our human-ness.

The true Catholic faith does come to us from the outside, as a revelation from God. But the Modernists believe that “human reason is incapable of raising itself up to God, or even of knowing, from the fact of created beings, that God exists” (*Pascendi*). This was directly condemned by Vatican I (*Dei Filius*, Dz. 1806). As any external revelation is impossible for the Modernist, he will seek within himself to satisfy the need he feels for the divine, a need rooted in his subconscious. This need arouses in the soul a particular feeling which in some way unites us with God. If there is any reference to revelation in this heretical idea of faith, it is an immanent revelation of God created within the soul.

From Immanent Faith to Ecumenism

When Archbishop Lefebvre went to see Pope Paul VI in 1976, the Pope reproached him for making his seminarians swear an oath against the Pope. The Archbishop found it hard to conceive where that idea had come from. Then it dawned on him that someone had maliciously

interpreted in this way the Anti-Modernist Oath that until recently every priest had to take before his ordination, and every Church dignitary when he received his office. Here is what we find in this oath: “I hold most certainly and I profess sincerely that faith is not a blind religious feeling which emerges from the shadows of the subconscious under the pressure of the heart and the inclination of the morally informed will. But it is true assent of the intellect to the truth received from outside, by which we believe to be true on God’s authority all that has been said, attested and revealed by God in person, our Creator and Lord.”

This Anti-Modernist Oath is no longer required before becoming a priest or a bishop. It was one of the great safeguards established by St. Pius X to keep Modernism out of the Church. But today the concept of faith has been falsified and many people are influenced by Modernism. That is why they are ready to believe that all religions save. If each man’s faith is according to his conscience (since it is conscience that produces faith) then there is no reason to believe that one faith saves any better than another. We see from this how Ecumenism is not an isolated problem; it is part of the Modernist heresy.

The Catholic faith and the Modernist faith are completely different. The Catholic faith comes from an external God who came into this world and taught the Apostles all that we need to believe. The Modernists tell us that we did not receive truth; we construct it. The heresy is subjective to the point where we are told to tolerate everyone and everything because only sincerity matters, and we cannot judge other people’s sincerity.

Enemies inside the Church

How can we defend ourselves against these perverse doctrines that are ruining religion, all the more since the heretics are found in teaching positions within the Church? Thank God, they were unmasked by St. Pius X in a way that allows them to be easily recognized. Do not think of this as an old phenomenon of interest only to Church historians. *Pascendi* is a text that could have >

been written today; it is extraordinarily topical and depicts the “*enemies within*” with admirable vividness.

Here is a description of the Modernists from St. Pius X’s encyclical: we see them “lacking in serious philosophy and theology and passing themselves off, all modesty forgotten, as restorers of the Church” (*Pascendi*). These restorers of the Church are not afraid to change the traditional wording of prayers, or even of the Creed. The words, for them, are meaningless formulas, so they can be changed to other words that perhaps have more meaning. Continuing in St. Pius X’s exposition of Modernism, we read: “These formulas, if they are to be living formulas, must always be suited to the believer and to his faith. The day they cease to be so, they will automatically lose their original content, and then there will be nothing to do but change them. Since dogmatic formulas, as the Modernists conceive them, are of such an unstable and precarious nature, one understands perfectly why they have such a slight opinion of them” (*Pascendi*). The current phrase for this is the somewhat ambiguous expression “living faith” or even “living tradition.” Remember that by those words the Modernists mean something entirely subjective.

Forming a Collegial Church

After his personal faith experience, the believer will share this in a faith encounter. If the faith comes to be shared by many it is called “collective”; then the need is felt to combine together in a society to preserve and develop the common treasure. This is how a Church is formed. The Modernist Church is “the fruit of the collective conscience, in other words, of the sum of individual consciences, which all derive from one original believer—who for Catholics is Jesus Christ” (*Pascendi*).

The next step for the modernists is to re-write the history of the Church: At the beginning, when the Church’s authority was still believed to come from God, it was conceived as an autocratic body. “But now the mistake has been realized.

For just as the Church is a vital emanation of the collective conscience, so authority in its turn is a vital product of the Church” (*Pascendi*). Power, therefore, must change hands and come from the bottom. As political consciousness has created popular government among the nations, the same thing must happen in the Church: “If ecclesiastical authority does not wish to provoke a crisis of conscience, it must bow to democratic forms” (*Pascendi*).

Since Vatican II, the Church has been largely governed through bishops’ conferences. The Pope is expected to ask the permission of the bishops, the bishops defer to their priests, and the priests are told what to do and say by the laity on the parish council. The post-conciliar crisis is largely a crisis of authority, called Collegiality, which ensures that almost no heretics are ever condemned.

Loose Ends

That is almost enough about the Modernists. Briefly, here are a few other parts of the system. For the Modernists, the “sacraments are simply signs or symbols, although endowed with efficacy. They compare them to certain words that have a vogue because of their power of expressing and disseminating impressive, inspiring ideas. As much as to say that the sacraments were only instituted to nourish faith: a proposition which the Council of Trent condemned” (*Pascendi*).

The Bible is also distorted by this heresy. For the Modernists, the books of the Bible are a record of faith experiences. God speaks through these books, but He is the God who is within us. The books are inspired rather as one speaks of poetic inspiration; inspiration is likened to the urgent need felt by the believer to communicate his faith in writing. Thus, the Bible is a human work, and because the Bible is just a record of experiences they “do not hesitate to affirm that the books in question, especially the Pentateuch and the first three Gospels, were gradually formed by additions made to a very short original narrative: interpolations in the



form of theological or allegorical interpretations, or simply linking-passages and tackings-on” (*Pascendi*). In this way the Modernists feel free to reject any part of Scripture that does not correspond to their personal faith experience by saying that it was not part of the original experience.

The Modernists have given new definitions to Catholic terms like faith, the Church, and the sacraments. Catholics who wonder at the new language employed in the “Conciliar Church” will be helped by knowing where it comes from.

But the religion of Christ has not changed and never will. In this modern age, when the light of faith seems to be so dark, we need to appreciate and learn from the saints. St. Pius X is a bright light that God gave us at the beginning of this Modernist crisis, and he will guide us safely to the end.



Fr. Herkel was born in British Columbia, Canada, and graduated from boarding high school at St. Mary’s, Kansas, in 1992. He studied for the priesthood at St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary in Winona, Minnesota, and was ordained in 2001. Since then he has been stationed in Canada. He is currently stationed at Immaculate Heart of Mary Priory in Calgary, Alberta.



The Spirit of Poverty

by Fr. Michael Fortin, SSPX

The virtues and their acquisition is especially done through the sacred liturgy. Though we could discuss many such examples, we will here focus on one: let us venture to better discover and obtain the rich Christ-like virtue of poverty.

“And Satan said to Jesus: All the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them will I give thee, if falling down thou wilt adore me” (Mt. 4:9). Here is the delusion of pride, to offer to the very Creator of the planets, galaxies, sun, moon, and stars a few specks of His own creation! “All things were made by him: and without him was made nothing that was made.” What is poverty? It is man moved to godliness, the spirit which views dust as dust and longs for heavenly riches, eternal and incorruptible. What are worldly kingdoms, palaces and robes compared to the halls of eternal glory in company with the King of kings

and countless legions of angels and saints robed in holiness?

This was the first unspoken sermon of the Savior: The omnipotent owner of all things chose to have nothing in order to teach us the virtue of poverty, the happiness of poverty. For no man on earth was happier than Christ, possessing at all times the vision of His Father. And indeed, no woman was ever happier than the Virgin Mary, having like her Son nothing, yet always possessing in her mind and heart the vision and love of her Son, who is God.

But if we earnestly examine ourselves we notice a great dissimilitude. Our hearts are set upon creatures and “where a man sets his heart, there is his treasure” (Mt. 6:21). Whence does our stupidity come which justly merits rebuke from our Master? We inherit this disorder from



our first parents; it is a consequence of the great sin against the spirit of poverty! We have to understand that man was made lord over the creatures of the earth, and they were to be in perfect subjection to him as long as he remained subjected to the Supreme Being who made all things. But he broke this subjection; he preferred a creature (the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil) to the will of the Creator. As a fitting punishment, creatures no longer are in perfect submission to man; they strive after mastery over the now weak and disordered man.

Even before original sin, man had the spirit of poverty, even in the midst of earthly delights with no wants whatsoever. For he was supernatural (by grace) and lived a godly life; he was perfectly ordered, having his mind and heart set and attached upon his heavenly Father. Did he then not care for anything or anyone else other than

God? No, precisely because he was so rich with the Spirit of God, he could have the spirit of poverty. Genesis tells us that he dressed and kept the paradise of pleasures; and with the bestowal of Eve he acclaims in loving admiration that she “is bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh.” He views and holds these gifts as sacred realities due to their Source, due to the One who keeps them in existence, due to their purpose as helps to his eternal end of possessing the Beatific Vision. However, sin blinded his (and therefore our) vision; God is no longer clearly seen and served in His temporal gifts; we easily stop at the creature, making them obstacles to our End.

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” Indeed, the new Adam infinitely rich in grace, virtue, merit, and heavenly power >



Spirituality

comes to restore in us the spirit of the sons and daughters of God, the spirit of poverty, the spirit of ordering all to the glory of the Trinitarian Creator.

“And opening his mouth he taught them saying: Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 5:2).

Why “poor in spirit” and not simply “poor”? It is due to it being essentially a matter of spirit. It profits a man nothing to have nothing (to be poor) and yet have not the spirit of poverty. What is this spirit? No: we must rather ask, whose is this spirit?

By baptism one is no longer the same person as he was before. Yes, there is an ontological (on the level of being) transformation into godliness. By the infusion of the ineffable grace of the Holy Triune God, this subject of the sacred rite becomes an adopted son or daughter of the Heavenly Father, a mystical (nevertheless very real) incorporation into the Person of Christ, therefore producing a god (small “g”). And hence, a corresponding new spirit is breathed into this child of the new Adam, the spirit no less than the Spirit of the Father and the Son, the *Spiritus Sanctus!*

What is, or rather Who is this Spirit possessing us? He is the Spirit of the infinite love between the Father and Son. “*Deus est caritas.*”

But how does this all tie in with our present topic on the religious virtue of poverty? Perhaps it may best be discovered through use of an analogical example. John wishes to marry his own beautiful Sally. Each time he sees her, he professes to her his unflinching love while they speak of their future life together. John can’t get over how lucky his fate is. Sally comes from a well-to-do family; they have the nicest home in town, she drives in the seat of the latest model Audi, her ears and neckline decorated with diamonds sparkle in his eye, her taste in dress boldly states that money is no factor. Poor Johnny! He is madly in love...madly in love, not with Sally, but with what she has. He sets himself up for disaster; he may gain the riches of Sally, but the door to the happiness of love is already slammed in his face by his own greedy hand!

We need not unfold the apparent comparison

with Johnny and us. To love our Lord God with all our heart, means just that: all our heart. I have not the right to love anything or anyone else besides, due to the will of my Father that I love only Him. The Father loves only the Son, the Son loves only the Father, this love is only the Holy Ghost. The Father loves His creations only through, with, and in His eternal Word (the Son); the Son reciprocates this eternal love in the manifestation of the glory of His Father. This is Their Spirit, this is the exact same Spirit poured into the sanctified sons of men, the Spirit of **one** love for God and His glory, exclusive of all other loves.

Does this imply that Adam may not love Eve, or that they may not love the delights of Paradise? Of course not, but the creations of the Good God are only to be loved in Him, as He alone is their existential and essential beginning, preserver and end. Evil entered the heart of man when he loved Eve and the delightful fruit outside the will of God. “*Tu solus Sanctus. Tu solus Dominus. Tu solus Altissimus!*”

God has given to some more, that they may more easily love Him in the poor and in His Church by their generosity. He has allowed others to have less that they may more easily love Him in their benefactors and be more dependent on their Heavenly Father whose loving providence extends to our increasing gray hairs—“even if a mother was to forget her child, I will not forget you.”

Let us meditate upon this Spirit in us and pray to live according to His gifts. What a tragedy for us to live for goods and beauties, and thereby to forfeit the possession of Goodness and Beauty, God Himself. “For this is eternal life (happiness), to love the Lord thy God...” This is the spirit of poverty.



Fr. Michael Fortin was born in Montreal, Quebec, and raised in Virginia. After studying aeronautics he worked in various fields before entering St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary, Winona, in 2002. Ordained to the Sacred Priesthood in 2009, his first assignment was to New Zealand for a little less than three years. He is currently principal of Our Lady of Victories School in Manila, Philippines.



The Orphan Trains of New York's

Sisters of Charity

by Miss Susan Galleo

Dear Sister,

I received your letter and the little box you sent me, for which I return many thanks. I am grown so large that you would not know me. I have been busy all this fall helping Uncle Ned to get his corn out of the field, and he said I worked very well. I have only to cut some wood for the stove, and to play with the baby while Aunt Fanny sews. I am as happy as a little bird. I would love to see you. Please come to see me sometimes. I am learning my catechism, so that I can make my first Communion. Aunt Mary says you must pray for her and for Your little boy,

Harry

This letter is from the New York Foundling Hospital's annual report of January 1883. Hundreds of others like it can be found in the hospital's archives. They comprise part of the little remaining documentation regarding an era of U.S. history unfamiliar to most Americans—the era of the Orphan Trains.

The Orphan Trains ran for 75 years, from 1854 to 1929, and were the well-intentioned effort of several institutions to address the staggering number of orphaned and abandoned children on the streets of New York City. In the mid-1800's, the port of New York was flooded with immigrants, a great number of whom were the Irish who fled their country's devastating potato famine. Other Europeans were lured to America by advertisements about free land which could be found along the new railroad routes then

Christian Culture

being surveyed. Irish or otherwise, those who survived the journey to New York arrived to find a city ill prepared to handle their presence. There were not enough jobs for them, even temporarily. They lived in cramped and dirty tenement buildings. Thousands succumbed to cholera, typhoid fever, and tuberculosis, which thrived in such unsanitary conditions. When both of their parents died and with no extended family on whom to depend, children were left on their own to survive as well as they could. Often parents would simply abandon their children out of sheer desperation. Not surprisingly, these “street Arabs,” as they were derogatorily called, often turned to crime as a means to support themselves. They were regularly rounded up and flung into adult prisons. The Chief of Police in 1849 estimated that at the time there were 10,000 vagrant children on the streets of New York City. Other agencies’ reports estimated the number to have been around 30,000.



Documents being made public by the New York Foundling Asylum shed new light on a dark chapter of New York’s history.

Sister Mary Irene Fitzgibbon founded the organization, which began taking in abandoned children in 1869.



During this tumultuous time, Charles Loring Brace was living in New York City completing his training to become a Methodist minister. Moved by the plight of these destitute youngsters and supported by the funds of local businessmen, Brace founded the Children’s Aid Society in 1853 as a means to help the city’s abandoned children. Brace was convinced that the key to ensuring these children would grow to be productive and respectable adults was to get them off the streets of the city and into the fresh air and open, clean space of the countryside in the expanding Midwest. He believed the farmers of America’s frontier would welcome these underprivileged children. Though the lifestyle would be a drastic change for the children, it would certainly be a vast improvement over their present circumstances. What better way to transport them, he thought, than by the nation’s railways? Thus was born the idea of the Orphan Trains.

Brace’s system of the “placing out” of the orphans was quite simple. Notices were sent ahead of time announcing when and where a group of children would be arriving. Those interested in caring for one of them need



¹ Other orphanages and institutions besides the Children's Aid Society and the New York Foundling Asylum placed children on the trains. Many eastern cities participated in the movement. However, the CAS and the Foundling Asylum placed the largest numbers.

only show up at the appointed place, make their selection of a child, and sign the acceptance papers. Any children not chosen boarded the train again and proceeded to the next stop. The agreement between the Children's Aid Society and the new parents indicated that agents from the Society would make regular visits to assess the children's new situations. For the 75 years that the Orphan Trains ran, approximately 100,000 children were placed in homes this way by the Children's Aid Society, an average of just over 1,300 annually.

As is often the case, the Catholic Church takes an idea, either good or indifferent in itself, and improves it. In the Orphan Trains of Charles Loring Brace, the Sisters of Charity recognized an opportunity to find homes for the hundreds of abandoned infants and children at their recently-instituted New York Foundling Asylum.¹



Newborns were routinely abandoned on the streets, in church entrances, or on the doorsteps of the wealthy.

The Foundling's first baby, Sarah Kinsley, was left with the Sisters on October 12, 1869.



The story of the Foundling Asylum begins with the story of its founder, Sister Mary Irene. Born Catherine Rosamond Fitzgibbon in England in 1823, she moved to Brooklyn with her family when she was nine years old. It was during an outbreak of Asiatic cholera in 1849 that Sister Mary Irene had a vision of what her future would be. She contracted the disease. Her state of coma during the illness was so deep at one point that her parents believed her to be dead and had a priest administer last rites. Catherine, however, was not dead. She could hear the voices of those around her and prayed that God would spare her life. "And as she did...the talk and the weeping in the room seemed to quiet, replaced by a vision of a multitude of children, and the admonition, "These are the little ones you must save for Me."² Catherine survived the sickness, and the next year she entered the novitiate of the Sisters of Charity, by whom she had been educated as a young girl.

Sister Mary Irene was acutely aware of the number of abandoned children, especially the infants, on New York's streets. The unwanted babies were left daily on church doorsteps and on the stoops of houses of the wealthy. In >

² Gottlieb, Martin. *The Foundling: The Story of the New York Foundling Hospital*. New York: Norfleet, 2001. Print. p. 24.

Christian Culture

the worst cases, they were thrown out like refuse into garbage cans or into the gutters. Many were left on the steps of St. Peter's Convent where Sister Mary Irene and the other Sisters cared for them as best they could. Prompted by the recollection of the vision she had during her illness and by the obvious need for a better arrangement, Sister Mary Irene proposed to her superior the idea of an institution devoted to the care of these infants. Mother Mary Jerome presented the request to Archbishop John McCloskey, who approved the idea. On Oct. 5, 1869, two Sisters from St. Peter's were sent to prepare the rented building at 17 East Twelfth Street. On Oct. 11, Sister Mary Irene joined them, and they began the Foundling Asylum of the Sisters of Charity. The Sisters had planned to open the asylum in about three months, after they had time to ready the building for the reception of the infants. An infant was left at the door on the first night. By the end of the year, 80 others had arrived.



The agency has changed locations several times over the course of its history.

Notes were attached to many babies left with the Foundling.



The Orphan Trains had been running for almost 20 years by the time the Sisters of Charity began their own version in 1873. Opposed to the idea of sending the children to a destination with no idea into whose care they would be placed, the Sisters worked with priests throughout the country to have the children matched with a family before they ever boarded a train. Priests in Nebraska, Missouri, Louisiana, and other states announced during their Sunday sermons that there were orphans from the East who needed stable, Catholic homes. The interested parents signed up. Parish priests knew their congregations and could recommend suitable families to the Sisters. Prospective parents could even make requests for particular physical traits of the child. One such request read: "Your agent has promised me a nice red-haired boy. I have a red-haired wife and five red-headed girls and we want a boy to match."³

Also differing from the Brace system was the Sisters' insistence that the placing of the children be the end of a process instead of the beginning of one. Although infants were regularly placed with families, children from the

³ Gottlieb, *The Foundling*, p. 56.



⁴ Andrea Warren, *We Rode the Orphan Trains* (Boston: Houghton, 2001). pp. 51-52.

Foundling Asylum were most often sent on the trains only after having spent several years in the care of the Sisters and of a closely-monitored network of foster parents. Children left at the asylum were often sick. Of the 1,377 infants admitted during the first year of operation, 772 died. The babies' first months were most often concentrated on their being nursed to health. The Sisters then placed the infants and toddlers in foster homes so that beds were available for the other orphans continually arriving. After having spent time in foster care, the children returned to the Asylum, healthy and adjusted to spending time in a family environment. The final step was the placement with a permanent family.

When a group of children had been matched with families, the Sisters prepared the children for their journey. They were outfitted in the best clothes the Sisters could find. On the inside of one of each child's garments was pinned a slip of paper with a number written on it. Somewhere in another town or another state, an excited couple held documents with that same number. The youngsters boarded the train with two Sisters and several social workers who always accompanied them on the trips. Sister Mary Irene saw each train off from the station until her death in 1896. Once the group arrived at their destination, the Sisters assisted with the matching of a child to his new mother and father. Sister Justina, O.S.F., who rode the Orphan Trains in 1913, visited the Foundling Hospital in 1969 and read the following about her first meeting with her father: "Little Edith Peterson, then twenty-two months old, was placed aboard a baby train with fifty other Foundling Hospital children on their way to new homes. The number forty-one was pinned to her, the same number given to John and Mary, who came to the train station on the appointed day to meet their new daughter. When John Bieganeck first spotted her, he commented, 'I hope she's number forty-one!' and seeing that she was, he scooped her into his arms."⁴

The arrival of the trains was a local event. Even people who were not taking children came to the stations to watch the activity. In the contracts between the parents and the Foundling Asylum were provisions regarding upbringing, inheritance, and annual visits by the Sisters or their representatives. The children began their journeys with no family and ended their journeys with mothers, fathers, and siblings. Over 20,000 children were placed in homes by the Sisters of Charity during the 50 years they participated in the Orphan Train movement.

The Orphan Trains stopped running in 1929. Child welfare laws were being established to address orphans and abandoned children. Both the Children's Aid Society and the Foundling Asylum realized that placing children closer to their original homes better served all involved than sending them states away. Annual visits could be conducted more easily. Keeping the children closer to the places of birth proved less traumatic to these young ones who had experienced enough trauma already. In our modern way of thinking, the idea of shipping orphans and abandoned children to places unknown and into the homes of strangers might seem outlandish. However, the Sisters of Charity, faced with an almost impossible task of caring for such a number of orphans, made the best out of a bleak situation and sent out on America's Orphan Trains the most precious of cargo.

The Family Meal

by Michael J. Rayes

Kids are messy. That's why God created paper towels.

At some point, upon cleaning up after yet another meal, you may have the feeling that your children should learn more than simply how to eat. What about civility and the dignity of living as an honorable Catholic gentleman or lady? How do you pass on the greatness of our shared Catholic patrimony to your children?

The answer could be as simple as eating dinner together as a family.

The family meal is an opportunity to teach your children history, social anthropology, family life, and culture. Dinner is the time to inculcate your own family's culture and lineage into your children. What foods did your grandmother make? What about her grandmother? Making time to prepare these same foods will teach

your children a strong element of their ancestral history. Food is one of the most powerful factors of culture and ethnic social groupings. Your children have a right to learn about their own ethnicity and heritage. They may end up learning a few foreign-language words and phrases from you as you explain the dishes and how they are prepared.

I am not a dietician and not a professional nutritionist. This is not an article on food or weight-loss; rather, we'll explore the Catholic principle of family life as it pertains to the preparation and consumption of food. You may find, however, that a healthy relationship with food and the practice of Catholic principles will yield natural benefits for your body and supernatural benefits to your soul.

Eating together as a family not only teaches



your children civilized behavior, it is an opportunity to practice a right ordering of family roles. The father of the family will sit at the head of the table and lead prayers. The mother could sit at the father's side. The rest of the seats may be entirely pragmatic. Who will fight if they sit in proximity? Who has long legs to entwine or kick other legs under the table?

One prays grace before and after every meal. Properly, the father leads these prayers. At the end of the meal, all will wait until they are dismissed. No one may simply walk away from the table: They must be excused by the father. This may be a good time to share the events of everyone's day, briefly inform the family about news, or to clarify a house rule.

A focus on comportment at the dinner table does not necessarily mean that you must have a quiet, serious atmosphere. Some meals could be this way, but many other times your family meals may be light-hearted.

Natural and Spiritual Parallels

Dinner should be special as the Mass is special. We may contemplate both as we ask for our daily Bread in the Lord's Prayer. Our Lord routinely uses the natural to reveal, and even to effect, the supernatural. Consider the sacraments as perhaps the best example of this: water, oil, bread, wine, vocalized words, and imposition of hands are physical realities that effect supernatural works. Your family dinner also has, in its own, lesser way, a spiritual significance for your family. You and your children may feel a certain peace of soul when the table is set. It is edifying to see an orderly, clean table with place settings and food nicely presented.

Food also tends to pull people together. The family is a community, a school of faith. There will be opportunity to reconnect during a main meal in which the family partakes together.

This doesn't mean that every instance of dinner need be extravagant. Using our Mass comparison, sometimes we may attend a weekday low Mass which barely lasts 40 minutes, but occasionally there is a Pontifical High Mass

complete with a deacon and subdeacon. Dinner, too, might be more formal or simple depending on the occasion.

Food can restore vitality or it could make a person sick. It may even be fatal due to grave poisoning. The Eucharist, as well, is a condemnation for one who dares to receive in mortal sin. St. Paul is very clear on this point in 1 Cor. 11:27.

Concerning meals, you'll want to consider the reality of your family life and adjust accordingly. Popular culture in America waxes eloquent about "Sunday dinner" as being a quite formal affair, but my wife and I discovered years ago that we usually don't have the energy to exert on a Sunday dinner after getting half a dozen small children ready for church, dealing with catechism lessons, Mass, and then the drive home. Many Sunday dinners at our house consist of leftovers and easy foods the kids prepare themselves. During the week, we plan more complex meals for dinner, some of which can get fairly complicated (and delicious).

Meals as a Family

Regardless of formality, however, there should be certain minimum standards for every dinner meal. This will be a lot easier when you delegate chores to your kids. For example, you may wish to always have a clean tablecloth. A child less than ten years old can shake out the old one, put it in the laundry hamper, and spread out a new tablecloth. Kids should have various chores to prepare for the meal according to their temperaments and ages.

You will, no doubt, want your family to be relaxed and comfortable in your home, but there should also be cleanliness and order. This is a balanced approach. Consider the papal household of St. Pius X. He worked hard at restoring all things in Christ, but when it came time for dinner, he did away with the custom of the pope eating alone. He enjoyed conversations with his meals.

In my own family, my wife is task-oriented and I am people-oriented. Thus, she prepares the meals (a lot of fancy, busy work that dazzles >

and overwhelms me) while I manage the kids' chores, and then follow up with making sure the table is set right. All of these tasks would exhaust one person, but together, we get it all done.

Children can also contribute to the meal by picking and rinsing food from your backyard garden. This garden can be as simple as one herb plant or you could have a whole working farm back there. The point is, your children will learn that food comes from the earth, which is a manifestation of the created goodness from a loving God.

There are also books on etiquette that will help you train your children in proper mealtime manners. *The Joy of Cooking* features a section on proper place settings. Catholic books on etiquette and the domestic life have been republished as well.

You may wish to consider having another table which will give you and your spouse the adult time you both need. A bistro table or a nicer small dining table in your bedroom, on the patio, or in a separate dining room works well for tea, coffee, desserts, and so on.

A Right Relationship with Food

We could compare the appetite for food to another human appetite which is properly satiated in marriage. St. Francis de Sales used food as an analogy throughout his *Introduction to the Devout Life*, so we will compare the appetites here. One does not go around constantly and mindlessly satisfying the amorous appetite. That would be animalistic and immoral. Neither does one need to constantly give in to hunger for food or put taste above all else. Mindless snacking is probably not advisable to one who struggles controlling the passions. Children are acutely observant and they model behavior of those around them. They may learn the virtue of temperance by your example.

Like many other things, food can be used for good or abused. The Church has always recognized this, but the modern world is catching up. The American Psychiatric Association lists two major eating disorders that warrant serious

intervention. There are lesser degrees of eating problems, of course, which pertain more toward gluttony and spiritual imperfection.

Conversely, a right relationship with food will help the family follow the Church year. The foods prepared can help remind each family member about the liturgical season. For example, a Lenten dinner on Friday would certainly be different from a Wednesday dinner during the weeks after Pentecost.

By making even little changes in your culinary routine, you can improve your health, draw your family closer together, and teach your children valuable lessons about their heritage and their Catholic Faith.



Michael J. Rayes is a lifelong Catholic, a husband, and father of seven. He has been published by Rafka Press, *Latin Mass Magazine*, and others.



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Seven secrets to obtain a vocation in your family

Mother of a Priest

by Fr. Hervé de la Tour, SSPX

For a Catholic mother to have one of her sons elevated to the holy priesthood is a great honor. Father Lharde put these words on the lips of a mother who one day happens to catch a glimpse of the possible vocation of her child:

*“My little boy would become so great...
Almighty God would be present in his
fingers...”*

*Troubled souls would come to him in order to
find peace...*

*God would borrow something of my own
flesh in order to continue the mystery of
His Incarnation!”*

The joys of the priest’s mother are immense: To attend the Holy Sacrifice celebrated by her own child and to receive Holy Communion from

his hands... To realize that her priest son loves her with a special tenderness which he is drawing from the Sacred Heart Himself, since a priest is “another Christ”... To know that he is praying and offering Masses for her so that she may safely reach Heaven where God is waiting for her. Yes, indeed, mothers of priests are some of the happiest amongst all mothers.

What can you do as mothers in order to foster a priestly vocation in your own family? In this article we would like to give some practical ideas which have worked very well for other mothers. We also call on those of our readers who already have the joy of having a priest among their children. Let them write to *The Angelus* and give us, for the benefit of all, the “little secrets” which have, by the grace of God, been successful for their own family.



Pray Often

Vocations are a gift from God's mercy. They will be obtained only through very many fervent prayers. Eliza Vaughan's daily prayer before the Blessed Sacrament was for God to take not just one but all her children as priests or nuns. In the event, even the two boys who kept this grand old Catholic family from dying out, tried their vocations in seminaries before getting married. They had several vocations among their own children. Of Eliza's thirteen children, six out of the boys became priests. All five girls entered the convent.

This wonderful result was due to a mother's persevering prayers for all the years of her married life. We would like to recommend to our readers the practice of the "Night Adoration in the Home," promoted by Father Mateo, the great apostle of the Enthronement to the Sacred Heart. Many families are faithfully doing their monthly holy Hour, and we are certain that many graces will be obtained through their prayers. If you have not yet joined the little company of "Night Adorers," would you consider doing it now?

Sacrifice Yourself

Prayer is not enough. You must join penance. Mrs. Stepinac had a consuming desire to see one of her eleven children ordained to the priesthood. She was prepared to win this grace from God by personal sacrifice. Early in her married life she had begun the practice of fasting three times a week. This she continued for 35 years. She persevered in spite of the discouraging fact that none of her son manifested a sign of a vocation.

Finally, however, her youngest son, Aloysius, expressed a desire to study for the priesthood. World War I broke out and the young man was drafted. Alas, after the war, all desire of entering the seminary was gone. A period of five years passed, and his mother continued to fast. Aloysius was on the point of getting married when he suddenly announced to his mother that he had decided to become a priest. He became the Archbishop Primate of Croatia who suffered

much at the hands of the Communists after World War II.

This success was due to the noble heart of his mother who was willing to fast for 35 years to win the grace of a vocation. Mothers, make effort to find little sacrifices which can be offered up to God for vocations.

Be a Source of Inspiration

In a very interesting study published in an American periodical for priests in the fifties, we find the results of a questionnaire given to 2,000 students in 8 seminaries. These young men were asked to state what influenced them in making the decision to enter the seminary. Believe it or not, in 1,593 cases out of the 2,000 (more than 3 out of 4) they admitted that their mother was one of the determining factors in the shaping of their vocation. The nursery of vocations is the Catholic home. If ears are not attuned to the whispers of God, vocations will never be answered. And ears are attuned by mothers who tell their little ones about God and His Love, who make the supernatural natural to their children because it is natural to themselves.

Ah, the power of the example of a saintly woman, like Margherita Sarto, the mother of St. Pius X! What a great influence on the heart of her boy! Catholic mothers who are reading this article, understand that "God's will is your sanctification" (St. Paul). Strive to perfection without getting discouraged by your own weakness. Your children will become familiar with God and talk with Him as easily and as intimately as they do to one another, if they first see you acting in this way.

Live the Mass

Our Catholic Faith tells us that during the Holy Sacrifice, Our Lord offers Himself to His Father just as He did on the Cross, though there is no longer a physical immolation but only a sacramental one. Jesus is the perfectly obedient Victim whose will is completely conformed to the will >

of His Father.

We are Christ's members and so we, too, have to offer ourselves in union with Him. It is only when we unite all our work, sufferings, disappointments, *etc.*, to the Passion of Jesus renewed on the altar that we are truly living the Mass. A mother has so many opportunities of practicing this spirit of generosity during the day. All the little unpleasant events of your life can become precious in the eyes of God if united with the immolation of the Most Holy Victim of Mass. A mother will also strive to communicate her love for the Mass to her own children. We need to help children to attend Mass.

We remind you that there exist many books designed to help us to appreciate the Mass. We cannot love what we do not understand, and we will not understand the Mass unless we study it, its ceremonies, its history, the vestments, the sacred vessels and linens, *etc.* In the questionnaire referred to earlier, the young men who listed as their main reason for entering the seminary "I wanted to say Mass" were the largest group (1,326 out of 2,000). I am certain that these boys had a mother who truly lived the Mass.

Reverence the Priesthood

Mrs. Olier, the mother of the saintly founder of the Sulpician Fathers, always strove to instill in the hearts of her children a great esteem for the priesthood. Her son declared that from the age of seven, in his simple childish mind, he believed them no longer human. When asked the source of this great esteem he indicated that it was his mother.

During the French Revolution, another mother did not hesitate to bring her son to the prison to visit the courageous priests who were interred there before their martyrdom. Later, the young man became a priest and a bishop.

Yes, dear mothers, you should always have feelings of reverence for your priests. They are "other Christs." "O exalted dignity of priests," exclaims St. Augustine, "in whose hands, as in the womb of the Virgin, the son of God is made flesh." Without the priesthood you would

have neither consecration nor absolution. Our gratitude towards priests must be very great indeed because of the many graces they obtain from Heaven for us. They are the bridge (*pontifex = pontum faciens*) upon which we must walk in order to reach Heaven.

A truly Catholic family should never forget to pray for priests in their daily Rosary. Some families have joined the Apostolate of Prayer for Priests. This is to be greatly encouraged and will be a source of vocations.

If you are able to invite the priest to your home (Enthronement, Blessing, sick child) make the most of his visit. Help your children to hold Father in great esteem. Never criticize him in front of them. If you can get your children to confide in him, to go to him for spiritual direction, then you can be certain that God's call will be heard when the time will come.

Love the Poor

This may seem out of place in giving advice on how to foster vocations. Yet it is a striking feature of the story of mothers who obtained vocations among their children that charity to the poor was always one of their favorite virtues. Anne McNabb was the mother of the great Dominican theologian Fr. Vincent McNabb. This mother of eleven had a difficult life since her husband was a sea captain. But God always came first in her home and, because of this, the poor were always welcome. Anne's charity was boundless. "When the door bell rang," wrote her son, "and we heard: 'There's a poor man at the door,' we felt that it was the poor babe of Bethlehem at the door." This charity she instilled into her children can be seen in the love for the poor which was a prominent feature of Father Vincent's character.

You can also read how Eliza Vaughan trained her children to give some of their best toys to less well-off little ones. Mothers living in 2012 can certainly teach their children to give alms, for instance, to the missions in India (and Gabon) during Lent. Maybe some visits of poor old people could be arranged through the Legion of Mary so that children learn to practice Christian



charity. In the American questionnaire quoted earlier, 1,306 boys out of 2,000 gave “I wanted to help others” as their main reason to be attracted to the priesthood. I am certain that, for most of these boys, it was in their own homes that they acquired this desire to offer themselves up for the salvation of souls, which is the greatest service we can render our neighbor.

Accept the Will of God

Mrs. Martin’s great desire was to give the Church a priest who could become a missionary and thus save many souls. A few days after the birth of her first son she was saying what a splendid figure he would present as he celebrated Mass, and she even began to think about making him an alb for his ordination. But little Louis lived for less than six months. The second boy, Jean Baptiste, died when he was nine months old. So the dearest wish of Mrs. Martin could not be realized.

Yet she fully accepted God’s will. Divine Providence had other plans for this exemplary Catholic mother. She became the mother of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus. Through her child, she was able to help thousands of priests who learned from the humble Carmelite of Lisieux how to love God and to suffer for him.

So, dear mothers who are reading these lines, if in spite of your prayers God does not seem

to grant your desire for a priest in your family, do not become discouraged. Trust His Infinite Goodness. Almighty God may have other plans for you. It may be that some of your children will have priests in their families. Or God may use your prayers to give a vocation to a young man whose mother is not praying for this grace. God’s ways are very mysterious indeed, and we should never question the wisdom of His decisions. In Heaven we will perfectly understand how all the events of our life were ruled by Providence. “To them that love God, all things work together unto good.”



Fr. Hervé de la Tour was ordained in 1981 by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre. He has been a seminary professor and was rector of St. Mary’s Academy and College from 1983 to 1989. He is now stationed in St. Mary’s where he consults the US District on educational matters

Q & A

by Fr. Peter Scott, SSPX

Are there such things as purely penal laws?

The question of the existence of purely penal laws is one that is debated. A distinction is made between a law which binds in conscience, a moral law, and a law to the infraction of which a penalty is attached, a penal law. All agree that the vast majority of laws are mixed, both moral and penal. The question here is whether there exist laws that are purely penal, that we must observe because there is a penalty attached to breaking them, which means that we ought prudently to keep

them if there is any chance of getting caught, but which we are not obliged in conscience to observe. This possibility of purely penal laws is spoken of concerning such civil laws as speeding laws, seat belt laws, parking rules, customs and gaming laws and the like. There is a frequent and common estimation among many people that such laws do not really bind in conscience and that, consequently, it is quite permissible to break them and not sin, but that simply if we are caught we must pay the penalty, whatever it is. If this were the case, it certainly would easily calm our



conscience in such cases

St. Thomas Aquinas did not consider purely penal laws as a possibility. As far as he is concerned, a law which is a law is by definition just, and consequently obliges in conscience. If it does not oblige in conscience, it is because it is not just, and consequently it is not a law. This is his teaching in the *Summa*, Ia IIae, Q. 96, Art. 4, answering the question as to whether or not human law binds a man in conscience: “Laws framed by man are either just or unjust. If they be just, they have the power of binding in conscience, from the eternal law whence they are derived.” Note that the power of binding in conscience does not come from the intention of the legislator, but from God’s eternal law. Consequently, even if the legislator does not intend to impose a moral obligation, and even if the majority of the people do not perceive a moral obligation, it does not at all follow that there is no such obligation. He then considers the two things necessary for a law to be just, namely that it is ordained to the common good, and secondly that the burdens of the law are laid on the subjects “according to an equality of proportion and with a view to the common good.” Hence his conclusion: “Such laws as these, which impose proportionate burdens, are just and binding in conscience, and are legal laws.”

However, the more recent (but traditional) moral theologians all speak at least of the possibility of purely penal laws. Their argument is that when the state makes such laws as customs, gambling laws, speed limits, hunting laws, laws to protect the environment, copyright laws and the like, it is not pretending to impose any moral obligation, but simply to impose a punishment if one gets caught. However, the argument is not convincing. Common sense indicates that if they are just laws, truly for the common good, then there is at least some kind of moral obligation to them, and if they are not truly for the common good, then they are not laws at all. Moreover, official government propaganda in every state certainly intends to present such laws as if they impose a moral obligation, with the implication that one would be considered a bad citizen for refusing to abide by them. Further, as

Merkelbach points out (*Summa Th. Mor.*, I, 258), even if it be maintained that there is a purely penal law, there will in general be accidentally or consequentially some fault on account of the scandal given, or danger of harm to other individuals and their rights. In practice, it really always comes down to the same thing as saying that there are no purely penal laws.

However, even if it be admitted that there are no purely penal laws, it must nevertheless be affirmed that the matter involved in such civil laws, even those that are just, is often very light, and insignificantly so. For example, speeding but doing it in a safe way is of miniscule importance. Frequently also such laws are unjust, since they are excessive. This would apply to some speed limits, parking limitations, customs duties for personal items, *etc.*, in which case there would be no fault in breaking them. The argument given in favor of purely penal laws is that this is the common estimation of the people. This I dispute. It is the common estimation of the people that unjust laws need not be observed (*e.g.* prohibition of reasonable cutting of trees on one’s own property), and that laws that are about very light matters or inconsequential matters are of no great moral importance. Moreover an equitable civil authority will allow a certain amount of tolerance for many such laws, such as speeding laws. Within the realms of civil tolerance there is manifestly no fault. However, laws prohibiting, for example, drunk driving are manifestly necessary for the common good, and it is certainly the common estimation of the people that they bind in conscience.

In conclusion, the concept of purely penal laws is one which empties out the fundamental relationship of all human laws to the natural law and to the Eternal law in God’s plan. A man of delicate conscience will not readily accept such a concept, as if it were possible to separate morality from civic duty, nor will he easily be influenced by the lax conscience of the common estimation of the people, which has lost all sense of the common good and considers as moral what can be done with impunity. Rather, striving for integrity in his life as a Catholic, he will unite his civil and moral life into one, and strive to >

accomplish what is most perfect for the common good, refusing to give scandal to those who rightly respect just civil laws.

Q&A

May one attend the funeral of a person whose will it was to be cremated?

Cremation is a practice that was well known in Roman and Greek pagan antiquity. However, the Jews always buried their dead, and did not allow cremation. The early Church firmly maintained this refusal of cremation, so much so that by the fifth century the practice of cremation had entirely ceased within the Roman Empire: “The Christians never burned their dead, but followed from earliest days the practice of the Semitic race and the personal example of their Divine Founder. It is recorded that in time of persecution many risked their lives to recover the bodies of the martyrs for the holy rites of Christian burial.” (Cath. Encyclopedia, IV, p. 481). Two reasons are given. Firstly out of faith in the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, which will take place at the end of the world—not because God cannot raise the body from the ashes, but as an expression of faith in this mystery. Secondly, out of respect for the body as the temple of the Holy Ghost: “Know you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you? ... Glorify and bear God in your body” (I Cor. 6:19-20). Reverent burial has consequently always been regarded as an act of religion, which honors the deceased. “The Church...holds it unseemly that the human body, once the living temple of God, the instrument of heavenly virtue, sanctified so often by the sacraments, should finally be subjected to a treatment that filial piety, conjugal and fraternal love, or even mere friendship seems to revolt against as inhuman” (Cath. Encyclopedia, s.v. “Cremation”).

This being said, cremation is not intrinsically evil, and has always been permitted in cases of necessity, such as pestilence, in which a quick disposal of the bodies to prevent the spread of infection is required. The Church’s laws on burial date from the early Middle Ages, at which time they concerned the place of burial rather than the fact of burial, which was not then disputed. The present legislation against cremation dates from the nineteenth century, during the second half of which Freemasons obtained official recognition of cremation from various governments as a part of their materialism and denial of the resurrection of the body (Bouscaren & Ellis, *Canon Law*, p. 608). Consequently we read in the Catholic Encyclopedia of 1908: “Cremation in the majority of cases today is knit up with circumstances that make it a public profession of irreligion and materialism.”

The traditional law of the Church is summarized in Canon 1203 of the 1917 Code: “The bodies of the faithful deceased must be buried; and their cremation is reprobated.” This is a clear statement of the obligation to bury, and the forbidding of cremation. The Canon continues: “If a person has in any way ordered that his body be cremated, it is illicit to obey such instructions; and if such a provision occur in a contract, last testament, or in any document whatsoever, it is to be disregarded.” It is consequently strictly forbidden for a relative or an executor of a Last Will to allow the cremation to be done. He must use all his influence to bring about a rapid burial, regardless of the order given by the deceased, or the cost involved, or the opinions of other family members. One must refuse to act as the executor of a Will of someone who has ordered his body to be cremated if one does not believe it possible to overrule this order after his death.

Alas, in 1963 Pope Paul VI permitted cremation, and the new practice is summarized in the 1983 Code of Canon Law, Canon 1176, §3: “The Church strongly recommends that the pious practice of burying the bodies of the deceased be maintained. It does not, however, forbid cremation, unless it be chosen for reasons contrary to Christian doctrine.” This is typical of the ambiguity of the post-conciliar church. It



forgets that it was only for reasons contrary to Catholic doctrine that cremation was introduced in the first place, in particular as a consequence of the denial of the resurrection of the body. The often alleged reason of saving money is but a manifestation of the lack of reverence for the body, temple of the Holy Ghost, in comparison to which the little extra money required for a burial is insignificant. When people and society were much poorer than we are now, they always managed to bury the faithful departed. The allegation of cost as a reason for cremation is consequently but a sophism for saying that we do not care that much about the bodies of the faithful departed. How different this is from the attitude of faith that characterized the time of the martyrs of the first centuries. This new Canon cannot, therefore, be followed in conscience, outside of cases of necessity.

The will of the Church in making a law obligatory is measured by the gravity of the punishment imposed for the breaking of the law. In Canon 1240 of the 1917 Code the punishment prescribed is to be deprived of ecclesiastical burial. "Those who gave orders that their body be cremated" are to be counted amongst those who are to be refused Church burial services, including the funeral Mass and graveside ceremonies, along with public sinners, excommunicated persons, apostates from the Faith, and those who have committed suicide. Clearly, this is a very grave punishment, suitable for a person who has committed a grievous and scandalous crime against the Church's discipline. Note, however, that there is an exception in the Canon, namely "unless before death they gave some sign of repentance." This sign of repentance could be any sign that might implicitly contain repentance, such as asking for a priest, kissing a crucifix, requesting the sacraments. If any such sign be given, the person can then be given ecclesiastical burial, even though he may have previously ordered his body to be cremated (provided that the cremation does not actually take place).

The 1983 Code modifies the punishment for ordering the cremation of one's body, listing likewise under those to be deprived of

ecclesiastical burial (unless before death they gave some signs of repentance) "those who have chosen cremation of their own body on account of reasons opposed to the Christian faith" (Canon 1184, §1, 2). The same ambiguity exists here. Few, if any, will request cremation because they deny the resurrection, and many choose it simply because it is permitted and cheaper and has become a custom in our pagan society. In such a case, the ceremonies of church burial are permissible according to the new law, and this despite the fact that ultimately the reasons for the cremation, although not clearly understood by the person, are truly reasons opposed to the Faith.

How is a traditional Catholic to navigate amongst all the confusion caused by the *carte blanche* for cremations given by the post-conciliar church? Can he follow the traditional law in all things? It goes without saying that he ought not to assist at the *Novus Ordo* ceremonies since they greatly undermine the reality of judgment, the gravity of sin, the sufferings of Purgatory, and the duty to pray for the repose of the poor souls who are punished and purified there. Moreover, with respect to the cremation, he ought not to assist at any funeral at which there is a cremation, whether it be in the presence of the body before the cremation or in the presence of the ashes after the cremation. The only exceptions to these will be when it is a very close relative, and he is forced to be present by family necessity, in which case he must not actively participate in the ceremonies in any way.

According to the traditional law (Canon 1240), if a person ordered his body to be cremated, he was not to receive ecclesiastical burial at all, even if the cremation was not done. However, at the present time, this would be an excessive reaction. For many persons in ignorance have ordered their bodies to be cremated because they have been told that it is now permitted, believing in good faith that they still have a right to the ceremonies of ecclesiastical burial. To refuse a traditional Catholic funeral Mass and burial to such persons would fail to take into account the confusion of the present crisis. Consequently, any traditional Catholic who is the executor >

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of the Last Will of a Catholic who has ordered his body to be cremated, must use his authority to overrule this order and procure both a burial and the traditional ceremonies of ecclesiastical burial, including a Requiem Mass.

The contrary can also happen, namely that a person is cremated without having given specific orders for this. Can a Requiem Mass be celebrated for the repose of his soul, and the ashes buried in a cemetery? The Holy Office answered this question in 1926: "In all these cases in which it is forbidden to hold the ecclesiastical funeral rites for the deceased, it is not even permitted to honor his ashes with ecclesiastical burial, nor in any way to preserve them in a blessed cemetery" (Bouscaren & Ellis, *Canon Law*, p. 608). It would certainly be a scandal to allow a public funeral Mass for such a person in a traditional church, or the burial in a cemetery run by a traditional order. However, given that it has now become common place for ashes from cremations to be buried in consecrated ground, it would seem no longer inappropriate to allow the burial of the ashes in a post-conciliar run

Catholic cemetery. Moreover, private Requiem Masses for the repose of the souls of such persons would seem now possible, since they could no longer be considered as equivalent to public sinners.

Finally, the reasons against cremation are of such a grave nature, and the traditional practice of burial so sacred, that it is incumbent on every one of us to insure that we receive the ecclesiastical burial. It is not enough for this to be stated in our Last Will, but we must inform our close relatives in writing in an explicit way that we refuse cremation, just as we refuse the post-conciliar burial service. The best way to be sure is to make the funeral arrangements ahead of time. We ought likewise to encourage our parents and relatives to take care of this in a clear way, without ambiguity.



Constant Decline in Religious Practice by Catholics Worldwide

The number of practicing Catholics in the world is still decreasing, says the American Catholic weekly *National Catholic Reporter*, based on the latest statistical data gathered by the Vatican.

In 2010 the total number of Catholics worldwide reached 1.2 billion. There was a 29% increase over the past 20 years. Europe is the only continent to register a decrease of 1%. The data concerning sacramental practice show a much weaker increase than it ought to have been, taking into account the growth in the number of Catholics. The figures concerning First Communion and Confirmations, in particular, clearly show a decline in the practice of Catholicism throughout the world, especially in Europe with an 18% decrease in confirmations over the last 20 years.

The Vatican's numerical data come from different sources, but mainly from the statistical yearbook of the Church. Enrico Nenna, director of the Central Office of Church Statistics at the Vatican, emphasizes that it is "very difficult to quantify the practice of the Catholic faith. The only way to get a precise idea of the matter would be to take a sampling of a population, to carry out a census, and to survey that group of persons regularly over the long term." In his opinion, "the statistics that have been gathered illustrate long-range trends, but many different factors influence the variations." He notes for example that the decline in the number of marriages may also be due to economic uncertainty. A decrease in the number of baptisms may be the result of a reduction in the birthrate in a specific region. Despite these uncertainties, Enrico Nenna thinks that the latest recorded data reveal a distinct weakening in Catholic practice worldwide.

This trend is confirmed by the report drawn up in preparation for the upcoming World Synod of Bishops on the new evangelization, which will take place in Rome in October. The answers to the

questionnaire submitted to 114 bishops throughout the world contain many remarks about a "decline in practice" and a "withering of the faith."

By way of example one can cite the worldwide Gallup poll cited by the Irish media on August 8, according to which the proportion of those who call themselves a "religious person" in the Republic of Ireland had dropped from 69% to 47% in seven years. That makes Éire the country with the second-steepest rate of secularization, just after Vietnam.



Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin explained in the daily *Irish Independent* that these findings "highlighted the challenges facing the Catholic faith in a changing Ireland," underscoring the fact that the Church cannot presume that the faith will automatically be passed from generation to generation. Even for elderly persons, religious education is necessary in order to prevent their falling away from the Church.

Comment: It is odd that the Central Office of Church Statistics and the bishops of the whole world note the data supporting the fact of this generalized de-Christianization without for one moment considering that it could be the effect of a disastrous pastoral approach promoted by a council that claimed to be only pastoral and certainly not doctrinal.

(Source: DICI)

Scotland and Poland: Different Directions

On July 25, 2012, the Scottish authorities announced their plan to introduce this year a law authorizing homosexual “marriage.” Following a public opinion poll in which 65% of the opinions expressed (out of a total of 80,000 persons asked) were in favor of homosexual “marriage,” the Scottish Deputy First Minister Nicola Sturgeon asserted that “in a society that aspires to be egalitarian and tolerant, this legalization is the right choice [sic].” The Scottish authorities, however, gave assurances that no Church would be forced to organize ceremonies for these “marriages.”

“The [Scottish] Government is embarking on a dangerous social experiment on a massive scale. The Church looks much further than the short-term electoral time-scales of politicians,” was the reaction of a spokesman of the Catholic Church in Scotland.

If the law is actually promulgated, Scotland will become the first province of the United Kingdom to allow homosexual “marriages.” Scotland, led by the Scottish National Party that seeks independence, enjoys a wider autonomy that allows it to make its own laws in many areas, except for Defense, Foreign Affairs, and fiscal and economic policies. The government of the United Kingdom, led by the “conservative” David Cameron, for his part has committed himself to legalizing homosexual “marriage” by 2015.

On August 25, more than 500 Catholic priests in Scotland read to their parishioners a letter in protest against the proposed law, the British news website Mail.online reports. They declared: “The teaching of the Church about marriage is unambiguous: it is exclusively the union between one man and one woman. It is deplorable that governments, politicians, and parliaments are seeking to alter or to destroy this reality.”

The Scottish government responded by restating its intention to legalize “marriage” for persons of the same sex and to allow these civil unions to be celebrated also with religious ceremonies; it reaffirmed, however, that no cleric would be forced to celebrate such ceremonies.

The primate of the Catholic Church in

Scotland, Cardinal Keith O’Brien, described homosexual “marriage” as “the grotesque subversion of a universally accepted human right.” He then broke off his discussions with Alex Salmond, the Scottish First Minister.

On July 25, 2012, the Catholic Church in Poland saluted Parliament’s rejection of a proposed law in favor of a “registered partnership” (“civil union” in the United States) for homosexual couples. The majority of the deputies thus defended “the dignity of marriage and the family,” a pleased president of the Commission on the Family of the Bishops’ Conference, Bishop Kazimierz Górny, said in a letter to the Polish president and the lower house of Parliament.

The previous day, July 24, the Polish Parliament had refused, by a three-quarters majority, a proposed law in favor of homosexual partnership that had been submitted by the leftist opposition. The parties of the conservative-liberal governing coalition as well as the conservative opposition argued for this rejection based on Polish constitutional law. The Palikot movement and the social democrats wanted a registered partnership with extended rights for heterosexual and homosexual couples.

This could only be a postponement, however. Indeed, the party of Prime Minister Donald Tusk announced that he was preparing for September another bill authorizing a registered partnership. According to the Polish media, this bill aroused no opposition within his parliamentary group and thus could receive the approval of a majority of the deputies. The bill is a little more restrictive than the one drawn up by the left: it provides for a right of inheritance, but no tax advantages. It also foresees a duty of support in case of separation. This partnership would be open to heterosexual couples as well as homosexuals.

However, according to a statistical study, two-thirds of Polish citizens are opposed to a registered partnership for homosexual couples. It is said that only 23% support that proposal.

(Source: DICI)



Italy: The Posthumous Interview of Cardinal Martini

The Italian cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, a Jesuit, former Archbishop of Milan and a representative figure of 20th-century Catholic progressivism, died on August 31, 2012, at the age of 85. He had been afflicted for several years with Parkinson's disease. Retired as of 2002, he spent six years in Jerusalem before being forced to return to Italy because of the deterioration of his health.

On the day after his death, the Italian daily newspaper *Corriere della Sera* published a posthumous interview with the former Archbishop of Milan conducted by a Jesuit confrere on August 8 of this year. In it the prelate described a "tired" Church that was out of step with the times and called to "conversion." "The Church," he explained, "must acknowledge its errors and take the radical path of change, starting with the pope and the bishops." In this final interview with Fr. Georg Sporschill, Cardinal Martini called the Catholic Church to reconsider in particular its approach with regard to divorced and remarried people; he likewise invited the Church to ask itself whether people were still listening to its advice in matters of sexuality. And thus he concluded this final intervention in the form of a testament: "The Church is 200 years behind the times. Why does it not wake up? Are we afraid? Do we have fears instead of having courage?"

A theologian who was audacious to the point of temerity, Cardinal Martini liked to talk about the possibilities for the "development" of Catholic doctrine. Thus, in Autumn 1999, during the Synod for Europe at the Vatican, he had asserted that it was necessary to rethink the primacy of the pope, and he had called for the creation of an organization allowing the bishops to resolve together, that is to say collegially, the problems of the day. In April 2006, in an Italian magazine, the cardinal had described the condom as "the lesser evil" in some cases. He had also taken a favorable view of assisted fertilization and the adoption of frozen embryos by single women. In January 2007 he had intervened once again

when the Italian Church declared its opposition to euthanasia and had just refused a religious funeral to a man whose death a physician had hastened at his request. Cardinal Martini had not hesitated then to call the Church to show "more pastoral attention" to this question.

Hence one can only be shocked to see the life of a prelate whose doctrine was so suspect, praised now in exalted language by the Roman authorities, without the least misgiving about his many errors and incessant provocations. Thus Fr. Federico Lombardi, the spokesman of the Vatican, did not hesitate to mention "the precious legacy" of Cardinal Martini, on which one must "reflect seriously when one looks for the paths of the 'new evangelization'....In his words, his many writings and his innovative pastoral initiatives, he was able to witness to the faith and to announce it effectively to the men and women of our era."

The French cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran declared irenically that his Italian confrere "was too intelligent to be either progressive or conservative" because "those are reductive categories." And in a message read during the funeral in the Cathedral of Milan on September 3, Benedict XVI saluted Cardinal Martini's "great open-mindedness." Two days prior to that, in a telegram expressing condolences, the pope had paid homage to the generous service rendered to the Gospel and to the Church by that bishop, whom he described as "wise."
(Source: DICI)



Disappearance of Churches and Official Inauguration of a Mosque

In Germany, de-Christianization is coming about through architecture, according to the Catholic news website Kreuz.net quoted by the Italian newsletter *European Correspondence* dated August 31, 2012. We are told that there is no longer room for churches in the new districts of German cities. They are no longer planned for or designed, as if they had been excluded from the cities. An article by journalist Dankwart Guratzsch, in *Die Welt*, gives concrete examples: In Stuttgart, a district with 12,000 inhabitants was built without a church; in Hamburg, a new locale of 12,000 people is also without a church; moreover 19 churches were closed, probably because they were an obstacle to the realization of the new plan for urban development. Suddenly, churches have disappeared under the pretext that there was no demand for them.

However, because certain inhabitants complained nonetheless, a solution was found to appease them: set up a rough little chapel with some thirty chairs on the ground floor of a gray building where there is nothing but offices. In fact, you can't tell yourself that this was a simple case of carelessness; it is obvious that everything

was carefully arranged with the purpose of removing all visible signs of the Faith. And this is done methodically, harshly, and mercilessly, comments the news agency Correspondance Européenne.

“To build a church means to build a community,” writes Dankwart Guratzsch, “whenever the faithful are deprived of a visible testimony, public recognition of their values weakens and loses its efficacy, even in their own view.” This journalist recalls the era of the GDR [German Democratic Republic], communist Germany, when the same thing happened: churches were demolished in order to demean, oppose, and isolate religion and inculcate atheism. With one significant difference: then it was ideology that governed, the power was entirely in the hands of the persecutors of Christians. But today, why are there no dissenting voices? Where are the voices of the faithful? where are the voices of our pastors, so often sensitive to many other questions but not, apparently, when dealing with the House of God—Correspondance Européenne wonders about this silence, and in the same issue supplies

some information which offers some answers.

In France, on August 14, 2010, the Algerian minister of worship, Bouabdallah Ghlamallah, had come to inaugurate the new mosque in Torcy, Bourgogne. This was an official appearance that shows the growing importance of the Algerian community in this commune of France.

Bouabdallah Ghlamallah, accompanied by Abdelkader Kacimi El Hassani, the consul general from Lyons, and





by Abdallah Zekri, the president of the Southwest regional Federation of the Great Mosque of Paris, was welcomed by the socialist mayor of Torcy, Roland Fuchet.

The presence of this Algerian minister in France was particularly shocking since this is the same Bouabdallah Ghlamallah who, the year before, had had ten churches in Algeria

closed and justified himself in the newspaper *L'Expression*, saying: "I equate evangelization with terrorism." And *Correspondance Européenne* concludes: "'Reciprocity' and 'tolerance' do not yet seem to be of current interest."

(Source: DICI)

42 first-year seminary entries for the Society of St. Pius X!

LaPorteLatine (the French District) has reported that for the academic year of 2012-2013 at the SSPX's seminaries of Winona, Zaitzkofen, Flavigny, and Albano, there are 42 entries for the first year (of Spirituality), 16 pre-seminarians (Humanities) and 8 postulants to study for the religious brothers. Here break down by seminary the origin of the new entries.

St. Thomas Aquinas Winona Seminary, Winona, Minnesota

15 in Spirituality:

- 14 American
- 1 Canadian

14 pre-seminarians in Humanities:

- 12 American
- 1 Irish
- 1 Canadian

3 postulants in Brothers' Novitiate:

- 2 American
- 1 Canadian

Sacred Heart Seminary, Zaitzkofen, Germany

10 seminarians:

- 4 German
- 2 Swiss
- 2 Polish
- 1 Russian
- 1 Argentinean

2 postulants:

- 1 German
- 1 Swiss

Holy Cure d'Ars Seminary, Flavigny, France

17 seminarians:

- 10 French
- 2 English
- 2 Canadian
- 2 Swiss
- 1 Italian

3 postulants:

- 1 French
- 1 Swiss
- 1 Canadian

Fraternita San Pio X (pre-seminary at District Office), Albano, Italy

Pre-seminarian:

- 1 Italian

Please keep these seminarians and postulants in your prayers throughout the academic year, that they may persevere in their vocation.

The new academic class at Flavigny, minus two seminarians



Magisterium and Faith

By Fr. Jean-Michel Gleize, FSSPX

Prologue

The Church's end is to bring about the salvation of souls, notably by ensuring the transmission of the truths of faith that must be believed and professed for salvation. It is the Church's end that explains the definition of the Church: The Church is the hierarchical society in which men come to the knowledge of the soul-saving truth. This definition appears in the sources of revelation in a phrase expressing the purpose of the Church: She is "the guardian and teacher of the revealed word." This phrase is used by Vatican Council I in the Constitution *Dei Filius*.¹ Pope Leo XIII in the Encyclical *Satis Cognitum* of 1896, though not using the same words, expresses the same idea. And St. Pius X in the Oath against the Errors of Modernism again took up these hallowed terms: "I believe that the Church, guardian and mistress of the revealed word, was instituted proximately and directly by the true and historical Christ..."²

So that the Church might fulfill this role, Christ entrusted her with His own teaching authority. In the conclusions of the Gospel according to St. Matthew (28:18-20) and of St. Mark (16:15-16), we see that Christ established in the Church the power to teach, in the

name of God, the divinely revealed doctrine necessary for salvation; the power established by divine authority is a power duly laying claim to the submission of every man. This is the Church's authentic *magisterium*, or teaching authority. In the Gospel according to St. John (20:21, 17:19-20), Christ's mission consists in teaching with authority in the name of God these same truths, and since the apostles and their successors were established by Christ as those who exercise in His name the mission that He himself received from God the Father, it follows that the apostles received the function of the authentic magisterium. St. Paul asserts that preaching the truths of faith is necessary (Rom. 10:13), that Christ made provision for this need, that the apostles received from Christ responsibility for preaching (1 Cor. 1:17), that this preaching constitutes an exercise of authority (Rom. 1:5 and 2 Cor. 10:4). The same idea recurs in the writings of the Fathers of the Church.³

In the etymological meaning of the word, *magisterium* denotes a function the purpose of which is instruction.⁴ Furthermore, the meaning of the word must be distinguished according to two different senses: that of a "scientific" magisterium and that of an ecclesiastical



magisterium, which is a particular instance of attesting magisterium. The ecclesiastical magisterium in effect proposes divinely revealed truths which are obscure and not evident, and that is why it is incapable of establishing cogent or compelling scientific demonstrations of the truth of its teaching. The ecclesiastical magisterium causes not knowledge, but faith. Being unable to provide demonstrations, it bears witness: it is a witnessing or attesting magisterium. The divinely instituted ecclesiastical magisterium is that which causes faith by means of its authoritative testimony. And it is the only one able to fulfill this role: an act of faith regarding an obscure, attested object. Only the magisterium of the Church is able to speak in the name of God in order to point out to the faithful the truths to which they must give the adherence of their Catholic faith.

This being said, the expression “to cause faith” may be understood in quite different ways. The magisterium causes the act of faith at its level. But the action of divine grace intervenes also, no less than the activity of the intellect and will of the believers who give their adherence. Thus it behooves us to form a more precise idea of the role of the magisterium in the act of faith, all the more so that this idea has serious ramifications. One of the most important is undoubtedly the manner in which one will be inclined to justify the attitude of the Society of Saint Pius X (and more generally, of all perplexed Catholics) in the post-conciliar context. Should one wish to explain this attitude, the pertinent question is whether the mind of believers is capable of recognizing what in the teachings of Vatican Council II contradicts truths of faith.

1. The Negative Argument

First: Discernment of what is contrary to the object of faith in light of one’s own individual intellect is characteristic of Protestant freethinking or private judgment. Since only an act of the magisterium is able to indicate what the objects of faith are, it alone can tell what is contrary to it, and believers cannot make this judgment without ceasing to be Catholic and becoming Protestant.⁵

Second: Discernment of what is contrary to the object of faith amounts to exercising a certain understanding of the object. Since the supernatural object of faith revealed by God cannot be evident to the merely natural powers of a created mind, then, firstly, the Church’s supreme teaching authority can alone put that object before believers as being revealed by God, and secondly, the merely natural reasoning power of believers is incapable of itself of knowing what is an object of faith

and what is not.

Third: Vatican II is the living magisterium such as it is exercised today. Now, continuity of the teachings of the magisterium is a necessary presupposition of any reading, for the proximate rule of faith is the living magisterium, which gives the correct understanding of past teachings. When the mind of believers experiences some difficulty grasping this continuity, they must rely upon the explanations of the current living magisterium rather than prefer their own reading of past teaching. And this leads to the same conclusion as the preceding argument.

Fourth: The magisterium of Vatican II is not infallible. Now, discerning what is contrary to the object of faith in the acts of the non-infallible magisterium jeopardizes the authority of these acts. Since the chief arguments we use to support our rejection of Vatican Council II are acts of the non-infallible magisterium prior to this council, one cannot discern anything in the teachings of Vatican II that would be contrary to the object of faith without begging the question and sawing off the branch upon which one sits.

2. The Affirmative Argument

Fifth: Discernment of what is contrary to the object of faith in the acts of Vatican II is possible precisely because this council expressed an intention incompatible with the exercise of the veritable magisterium. Popes John XXIII and Paul VI in effect wanted to present the doctrine of the Church in conformity with the categories of liberal, humanistic modern thought. The minds of believers can rely on the teachings of the magisterium prior to Vatican II to judge its questionable teachings owing to the fact that they are of no magisterial worth in the traditional sense of the term.

Sixthly, discernment of what is contrary to the object of faith appertains to divine authority. Since all of the faithful benefit from the light of this authority thanks to the sense of the faith, they are able to discern what is contrary to the object of faith.

Seventh, discernment of what is contrary to the object of faith is an attribute of the act of the intellect. Since faith is an intellectual act, faith can discern what is contrary to its object.

3. Archbishop Lefebvre Has Legitimized This Approach to the Acts of Vatican Council II

“It is up to every Christian, every Catholic, to judge what is true. He is taught the truth; he knows the truth—it is in the catechism. He knows how to read like >

everyone else; he is quite capable of reading the Acts of the Councils; he is quite capable of understanding and knowing what the truth is that is taught in the catechism and in his Bible and to realize that what is now being preached by his parish priests, or even by the bishop, is not in conformity with what is said in his old catechism or with what he was taught. It is up to every Catholic to defend his faith when it is attacked" (September 11, 1976).

"Whereas for me, for us, I think that to say the conciliar documents should be judged in light of Tradition obviously means that what contradicts Tradition should be rejected, what is ambiguous should be interpreted in accordance with Tradition, and what is in conformity with Tradition should be accepted" (December 2, 1982).

The term *judge* used here must be understood in a very precise sense. In the act of judging, one can judge with authority, as a superior judges whether his inferior is mistaken or not. But one can also judge by exercising the second operation of the mind, and verify by the light of right reason enlightened by faith that a statement of the magisterium is coherent, and that, for example, what the Catechism of St. Pius X says confirms what is said in the Catechism of the Council of Trent. Neither Archbishop Lefebvre nor the SSPX has ever presumed to claim an undue juridical authority. But no one can deny anyone the legitimate use of his reason enlightened by faith.

4. Explanation and Response

Every act of the intellect discerns what is contrary to its object. Now, the act of faith is an intellectual act. Hence the act of faith discerns what is contrary to its object.

4.1 Explanation of the First Premise

Every act of the intellect discerns the contrary of its object. The intellect is measured by reality, for its proper object is being. Truth is defined rightly as the matching ("adequation") of the mind and the real by means of the being of reality. Of course, the human intellect has a mode, a particular manner of understanding, and there is an important distinction to be made between this mode of understanding (thanks to which it arrives at an idea of things) and the mode of being (by which the things known by the intellect exist in reality independently of the intellect). The intellect does not attribute its mode of understanding to the things that it understands.⁶ "Since it is clear," says St. Thomas, "that our intellect understands material things below itself in an

immaterial manner; not that it understands them to be immaterial things; but its manner of understanding is immaterial." Our human manner of knowing comprises immateriality, even when our intellect is applied to understanding material things. "Likewise, when it understands simple things above itself, it understands them according to its own mode, which is in a composite manner; yet not so as to understand them to be composite things."⁷ Composition is linked to the very nature of the knowing mind and not to the nature of the thing known. Even if the manner by which the intellect proceeds in order to know things is not the manner in which the things really are, it remains that the intellect indeed knows what things really are.

Since the mode proper to intellectual understanding results in placing the intellect in contact with things as they are in reality, this mode has to obey the laws that govern reality. The first of all these laws is the principle of non-contradiction, an absolutely necessary metaphysical principle, which can be verified in the exercise of every intellectual act, whatever it may be.⁸ St. Thomas discusses it in Lesson 6 of his Commentary of Book IV of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. This principle is not demonstrable, even if it presupposes a certain element of sensible experience. It is absolutely first and represents the natural law inscribed in the correct exercise of human intelligence.⁹ It is formulated thus: One and the same thing cannot be at the same time and in the same respect what it is and what it is not. One of the possible applications of this law is that an individual cannot be at the same time located and not located in the same place. Peter cannot be at the same time at Paris and elsewhere than Paris, for example, at Rome. If there happened to be credible and concordant testimony attesting to the presence of Peter at Paris and at Rome at the same moment, we should conclude that our senses are the victim of an illusion, at least at one place, and hold fast to the principle of non-contradiction.¹⁰

The judgments by means of which our intellect knows and expresses reality obey the principle of non-contradiction. A judgment is an intelligible statement and takes the form of a logical proposition in which a predicate is attributed to a subject. The metaphysical principle of non-contradiction, because it is universally necessary, has logical consequences. As St. Thomas explains,¹¹ logical contradiction is an opposition that takes place between two propositions one of which affirms and the other denies the same predicate of the same subject. The principle of non-contradiction requires that if this opposition occurs, both propositions cannot be true at the same



time. For example, there is not a logical contradiction between stating that “Every human creature has been redeemed by Christ” and stating that “Some human creature is conceived without sin,” since the predicate is not identical. These two propositions can thus be true at the same time. Logical contradiction would occur between two propositions one of which stated that “Every human creature is redeemed by Christ” and the other that “Some human creature has not been redeemed by Christ.” The dogma of the Immaculate Conception defined by Pius IX does not at all state that “The Mother of God is not redeemed by Christ”; it even states the exact contrary: “The Mother of God is redeemed by Christ,” even if it is in a manner more sublime, “*sublimiori modo*.” St. Thomas did not refuse ahead of time the dogma of the Immaculate Conception as it was to be defined by the infallible magisterium of the Church. Not seeing how this conception would not have withdrawn the Mother of God from Christ’s redemptive act, he refused to affirm a truth that would have contradicted the dogma of Redemption.¹² But he would have admitted without reservation the authority of Pius IX defining a truth of faith the carefully weighed terms of which implied nothing contrary to the dogma of Redemption.

In light of these clarifications, it is easy to justify the first premise: “Every act of the intellect discerns what is contrary to its object.” Since it obeys the principle of non-contradiction, from the very fact that it states a proposition as true, the intellectual judgment affirms implicitly as false the contradictory proposition. Since the object of the act of the intellect is the truth of a proposition, the negation of this truth is contrary to this object. By acting in conformity with the principle of non-contradiction, the act of the intellect thus discerns both its object and its contrary.

4.2 Explanation of the Second Premise

The act of faith is an intellectual act. The act of faith is an act of the intellect having for its proper object as such (in Scholasticism one speaks more precisely of the formal object *quod*) the truth of the mysteries divinely revealed by God and proposed as such by the magisterium of the Church.¹³ This act of the intellect is a judgment that states as true an intelligible proposition, wherein one predicates something of a subject, because of the authority of God revealing. Although the link connecting the predicate to the subject is not obvious by the natural light of human reason, the mind is certain the link exists because of God’s authority.

4.3 Explanation of the Conclusion

The act of faith discerns what is contrary to its object. If the intellect of the faithful judges that a statement proposed by the Church as revealed by God is true, it judges by that very fact that the contradictory statement is false since God cannot contradict Himself. The principle of non-contradiction must hold good in the exercise of an act of faith as it does in any act of the intellect. The object of the act of faith is doubtless obscure or less than obvious, because in the proposition setting forth the truth of a revealed mystery the intellect cannot clearly apprehend the link between the predicate and the subject.¹⁴ But the object of the act of faith remains intelligible, as does every object of an act of the intellect, because the terms that enter in composition in the proposition stating the truth of the revealed mystery (the subject and predicate) are intelligible;¹⁵ the intellect can grasp their import up to a point. A proposition denying the same predicate of the same subject would appear as contradicting the object of the act of faith and hence false. In this way the mind of believers can discern a contradicter to the act of faith by distinguishing it from the object of that act.¹⁶

The magisterium of the Church enters into this discernment, for it fulfills the role of an indispensable condition in the intellect’s act of faith. It is only one condition, and in this sense the Church is only the minister that proposes in the name of God the material object of faith; it indicates what must be believed, but it is not the formal motive of belief.¹⁷ Nevertheless, it is an indispensable condition, and in this sense the objective proposition of the Church is required for the concrete integrity of the formal object of our faith as it is ordinarily exercised in the economy willed by God.¹⁸ The act of faith bears upon an attested mystery, and only the magisterium of the Church can speak in the name of God in order to point out to the faithful which truths they must believe. This point is not debatable. Even if the faithful Catholic is led to give his assent to the teaching of the Church by the interior virtue of faith, the certitude of this profession of faith depends formally on criteria by means of which the party can recognize the proposition of this same teaching authority coming from the Catholic hierarchy. The crux of the question is to know what these criteria are. We think that one of the main ones is the objective continuation of the teaching of the magisterium, and that the intellect can ascertain it by applying the principle of non-contradiction simultaneously with the act of faith.¹⁹ Insofar as it is something already proposed by the continuous and infallible magisterium, the revealed >

truth indubitably appears as the necessary object of the act of faith. And consequently, the statement opposite to this truth indubitably appears as contrary to the object of the act of faith, were it (by any remote chance²⁰) set forth in the framework of an act of infallible Church teaching.

5. Replies to Objections

Reply to Objection 1. The Protestant presumes to discern by the light of his own reason independently of the magisterium—and even against it—what is contrary to the object of faith as it is stated in Sacred Scripture.²¹ The faithful Catholic discerns what is contrary to the object of faith as stated in the Word of God written and transmitted, and as such already proposed infallibly by the ecclesiastical magisterium. The discernment of faithful Catholics is not autonomous, but is dependent on the infallible proposition of God and the Church.

Reply to Objection 2. The object of faith is obscure, but it is intelligible, and that is why the act that attains to this object is not blind, but intellectual. As every act of the intellect, the act of faith can ascertain a contradiction between two propositions one of which is infallibly proposed as true by God through the ministry of the ecclesiastical magisterium. The other, contrary proposition appears then as contradictory to the object of the act of faith and therefore false.

One might object that it is often difficult to gauge a contradiction because in order to do so the meanings of the terms entering into its formulation (subject and predicate) must be grasped. The contradiction may be only apparent and may disappear if it is shown that the meaning of the terms is not the same in both propositions. And in theology, this is not always easy. For example, Peter of Bergamo's *Tabula Aurea* enumerated 1,208 apparent contradictions in the works of St. Thomas Aquinas; and for many of them, it is not easy to establish that they are merely apparent. The famous question of "the natural desire to see God" remains emblematic of this kind of difficulty. At this stage, we would answer that difficulty does not necessarily mean impossibility. The pertinent question, to word it precisely, is whether the intellect of the faithful Catholic in general (and not the intellect of any one in particular) can always make the distinction. The answer is yes, even if this discernment may prove to be more or less easy and in some cases to be beyond some people not sufficiently trained in theology. Quite often in the Church, those whose intellect is capable of discerning discern for the rest.²² And we see

that in the context of Vatican II, it is the pastors and theologians who have preserved the faith of the simple faithful. At the time of the Council, the Council Fathers who were members of the International Group of Fathers denounced the errors and ambiguities present in the documents, and subsequently some priests were opposed to their implementation in their parishes. But we also see that this was not always the case, and that often faithful Catholics reacted spontaneously in order to contest the errors the seriousness of which they recognized quite well on their own. For if there are contradictions that are hard to establish, others are flagrant. In fact, the three major difficulties presented to the Catholic conscience by the last council (religious liberty, collegiality, and ecumenism) flow from flagrant contradictions. And these contradictions can be so either directly in the documents themselves or indirectly in the practical consequences that result from their implementation. The tree can be judged by its fruits. Indeed, the fruits of the last council have been and still are sufficiently eloquent facts for many among simple Catholics to remain perplexed.²³

One might make a new objection to this last point, and retort that these results are not fruits of the Council, but abuses. They would have happened because the documents of Vatican Council II were badly understood and badly applied. We would answer that the abuses are the effects of bad accidentals and that they are defined as such in contradistinction to their good, essential effects. Now, one is obliged to acknowledge that the post-conciliar period has not enjoyed any positive results comparable to those of the post-Tridentine period. Rather the opposite seems true: dechristianization and religious indifferentism have only gained ground.²⁴ The good essential effects are thus far from being obvious. Moreover, what is accidental should be exceptional. An exception is always possible (even the best expert can make a mistake), but if it is an exception, by definition it remains rare (an expert may make a mistake once in a long while in an unusual case). Frequent occurrence would establish the likelihood that one is not dealing with an exception (someone who is frequently mistaken is probably not an expert). Now, the baneful consequences of the Council have not ceased to make themselves felt on a large scale for nigh on fifty years. And if a few happy initiatives have succeeded in neutralizing their impact, they proceed from traditional principles, in what they have contrary to the teachings of Vatican II.

Reply to Objection 3. An act of the magisterium is not defined as the exercise of a present magisterium as



distinguished from the exercise of a past magisterium, and this is precisely why it cannot be said, in speaking of the magisterium, that the present is the sole judge of the past. For if the magisterium judges, it is not inasmuch as it is present or current, but it is inasmuch as it expresses the truth more precisely. The magisterium is in effect governed by its object, which is the truth of faith divinely revealed, and its act consists in proposing the same object while preserving the same meaning even when it gives a more exact understanding of it by means of more explicit concepts and verbal expressions. This object, with the explanation that accompanies it *in eodem sensu*, is of itself timeless. On the other hand, we do not deny that the ecclesiastical magisterium is living or that as such it is the proximate rule of faith in the sense that it amounts to an act exercised by persons acting as living and intelligent individuals when they use their authority to safeguard and set forth dogma. But this holds true for every epoch of history. In this sense, the living magisterium is not reduced to the present magisterium, in contradistinction to the past magisterium, which would be classified as non-living or posthumous.²⁵ If the present magisterium is living, so was the past magisterium. Both remain the rule of faith. Time has no direct and immediate influence upon the object or the act of the magisterium. Time only pertains to the subject who exercises the act of the magisterium, and in this sense a distinction can be made between a remote rule of faith (the past magisterium) and a proximate rule (the present magisterium). The question is to know which point of view should prevail: that of the subject or that of the object. Before the last Council theologians did not speak of the "continuity" of Tradition, but rather of its "constancy." One speaks exactly of continuity in regard to a subject that remains identical over the course of time and change, and this expression indicates the primacy of subject over object.²⁶ It is not the subject that adapts itself to the object, but it is the object that is said to be continuous because the subject teaching it remains the same. To speak of constancy, on the other hand, is to indicate the priority of object over subject. The necessary presupposition of every reading is the constancy of the teaching of the magisterium and not its continuity. For the magisterium is defined first and foremost, that is to say, formally and specifically, by its object. This necessary law of objective constancy amounts to the principle of non-contradiction applied to magisterial teaching. A statement contradicting the established teaching of the magisterium is unacceptable, and the Catholic mind, sufficiently enlightened by the living magisterium of the

Church, has the means to perceive this contradiction, whether it arises in the past or in the present.

Reply to Objection 4. When a faithful Catholic discerns in the non-infallible acts of the magisterium a statement contrary to an object of faith, this contradiction can occur in regard to a statement infallibly defined by either the preceding or the current magisterium. In both cases, the properly magisterial value of the acts contradicting the infallible definition is null. But the magisterium as such (and hence the magisterial value of all its other acts) is not called in question. There is a difference between remarking that an isolated act emanating from the authorities is null and systematically casting doubt on the value of all the acts of the authorities. Faced with the above-named contradiction, the attitude of the faithful Catholic is the first, but never the second. Furthermore, when the faithful Catholic discerns in the non-infallible acts of the magisterium a statement contrary to the object already proposed by an isolated act of the non-infallible magisterium, recourse to the authorities is indispensable for resolving one's doubts. But we deny that this is the situation in which the faithful find themselves as regards the teachings of Vatican Council II, for the non-infallible teachings of the magisterium that are contradicted by Vatican II, far from being isolated, benefit from a constancy and unanimity which confer upon them an authority if not equal to, then at least very near to that of the ordinary and universal magisterium.

Reply to Objection 5. In order to establish that Vatican Council II presented its teaching as open to discussion because it deliberately refrained from engaging a magisterium properly so-called, one should begin with the observation that the statements in which Vatican II teaching is presented as discussable are in contradiction with all the statements of the preceding magisterium in which its teaching is presented as not subject to discussion. In other words, everything the magisterium of the Council can say about itself and its intentions is already part of its magisterial teaching. To identify the theological note of the teachings of Vatican II, Pope Paul VI said: "In view of the pastoral nature of the Council, it avoided any extraordinary statements of dogmas endowed with the note of infallibility, but it still provided its teaching with the authority of the Ordinary Magisterium, which must be accepted with docility according to the mind of the Council concerning the nature and aims of each document."²⁷ That having been said, on the one hand, even when non-infallible, the ordinary magisterium >

retains its authority. On the other hand, in order to know precisely what is “the mind of the Council concerning the nature and aims of each document” and to establish whether this mind is compatible or not with the exercise of a true magisterium, it is already necessary to judge the documents of Vatican II and discern what may be found therein to be contrary to the object of the act of faith already proposed by the magisterium.

One might object that official statements of intention concerning the theological note of the teachings of Vatican II are much more forthright than the teachings of the Council strictly so-called. We would reply that this does not seem to us to be established. Everyone was able to ascertain readily that ecumenism and religious liberty are contrary to what Pius IX and Pius XI said and to what the Church had done till then. Undoubtedly, the declarations of Cardinal Ratzinger explaining the intentions of Vatican II in his book *Principles of Catholic Theology* are quite clear. But they were made more than fifteen years after the Council ended, and cannot be adduced to confirm an already clear analysis. In order to determine the intention of the Council while it was still happening, one need only confine oneself to John XXIII's declarations about the pastoral character of the Vatican II (Pope John's Opening Speech to the Council on October 11, 1962, and the Allocution to the Sacred College of December 23, 1962) and to those of Paul VI (in the Encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam* of August 6, 1964, and in the Closing Speech of the Council on December 7, 1965). What did John XXIII mean by the term pastoral? What did Paul VI mean when he said, “dialogue must characterize our apostolic charge”? What is meant by “characterize”? Is this statement meant to define the magisterium as such, or is it intended as a benevolent way to approach the unschooled minds of the modern era? Do terms such as these used in the statements of these modern popes contradict other statements of other popes? We do not pretend that it is impossible to respond to these questions and to make sufficiently clear the intentions that presided over the elaboration of the Council documents and their implementation.²⁸ Neither do we deny that these frank intentions have their importance, and that their incompatibility with the exercise of Catholic magisterium furnishes a decisive argument. But on the one hand, it seems to us that clarifying these intentions is not easier, nor less difficult, than establishing the opposition between religious freedom, collegiality, or ecumenism and the prior teaching of the magisterium. On the other hand, it seems to us that in order to clarify these intentions, the mind of the

faithful Catholic must already be up to discerning what is contrary to the object of his faith in the teachings of Vatican Council II since these intentions form an integral part of these teachings.

Reply to Objection 6. The sense of the faith is a discernment produced in the faithful's intellect by the formal motive of the virtue of faith, which is the supernatural authority of God revealing.²⁹ In an act of discernment, the faithful thus act in dependence on the authority of God as it has already been manifested to them by means of the condition of infallible teachings of the ecclesiastical magisterium. If one grants that the faithful can discern what is contrary to the object of faith, that does not amount to investing the faithful with any authority in relation to the magisterium of the teaching Church.

Reply to Objection 7. We grant the seventh objection, taking into account all the clarifications given thus far.

Epilogue

By definition, the ecclesiastical magisterium is the organ of Tradition, and it fulfills the indispensable condition required for the visibility of the object of our faith. It is signaled by the objective constancy of its teachings. The mind of the believer can always ascertain this constancy by exercising the operation of judgment in docile dependence on the magisterial teachings. In effect, Vatican Council I taught: “And, indeed, reason illustrated by faith, when it zealously, piously, and soberly seeks, attains with the help of God some understanding of the mysteries, and that a most profitable one, not only from the analogy of those things which it knows naturally, but also from the connection of the mysteries among themselves and with the last end of man.”³⁰

Vatican II represents a singular, unique, unprecedented event. In effect, unlike the others, this council did not engage the infallibility of the solemn magisterium, and it manifested a new intention extraneous to the purposes of Catholic teaching authority and openly opposed on several points the teachings of the earlier Tradition. These three facts can be readily apparent to the eyes of faithful Catholics. This is understandable because the act of faith is a mental act of judgment. The principle of non-contradiction holds true there as for every act of intellect.

The faithful Catholic, then, can rely upon the objective constancy of traditional teachings as a legitimate criterion by which to judge the authenticity of the teachings of Vatican II. While fully recognizing in the pope and bishops of today as in those of yesterday the subject of the ecclesiastical magisterium, one can neverthe-



less deem that the exercise of this authority since the council inclusively does not impose itself indubitably on the adherence of the faithful, precisely insofar as it manifests a new pastoral intention and arrays itself in opposition to the constant teaching of the prior teaching authority.

¹ DS 3012 (Dz. 1793).

² DS 3540 (Dz. 2145).

³ Of St. Clement of Rome in the Letter to the Faithful of the Corinthian Church; of St. Ignatius of Antioch in his Letter to the Faithful of the Church of Philadelphia; of St. Irenaeus in the *Adversus Hæreses*, Bk. III, Ch. 3, §1, and Bk. IV, Ch. 33, §8; and of Tertullian in *De Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, §21.

⁴ Salaverri, *De Ecclesia*, Thesis 12, §503.

⁵ For example, this is the reproach made by Cardinal Garrone, when during a meeting with Archbishop Lefebvre on March 3, 1975, he challenged the soundness of the Archbishop's Declaration of November 21, 1974, in which the founder of the seminary of Ecône had clearly expressed his rejection of the direction taken by the Council: "Your manifesto is unacceptable. It teaches your seminarians to depend on their personal judgment and on Tradition such as they understand it. This is freethinking, the worst of all liberal doctrines!" (Tissier de Mallerai, tr. Brian Sudlow, *Marcel Lefebvre* [2002; English version—Angelus Press, 2004], p. 480). This reproach also crops up in the review of this biography by Fr. Serge Bonino, O.P., published in the *Revue Thomiste*, Vol. 102 (2002), p. 692. The position of the SSPX is judged to be "untenable." According to him, "the subject that judges the magisterium in the name of Tradition is, finally, an individual conscience that is not without a somewhat rash self-confidence in order to assert that it has discovered an obvious 'discontinuity' in the teaching of the magisterium."

⁶ *Summa contra Gentiles*, Bk I, Ch. 36.

⁷ *Summa Theologica*, I, Q. 13, Art. 12, ad 3.

⁸ Garrigou-Lagrange, *Dieu, son existence et sa nature* (Beauchesne, 1938), p. 149 ff. (See No. 2 of this article.)

⁹ St. Thomas, *ad locum* Nos. 566 and 607 (Marietti edition). At No. 605, St. Thomas shows that each of the two principle operations of the understanding, simple apprehension and judgment, presuppose a first principle. Simple apprehension cannot ascend infinitely in a series of concepts, and their analysis leads by degrees to a first concept, which is the concept of being. From this first concept flow, first, judgment, which is said of being qua being: being cannot at the same time and in the same respect be and not be.

¹⁰ St. Thomas teaches that bilocation is metaphysically impossible (*Supplementum*, Q. 83, Art. 3, ad 4). In the lives of saints, there has never been veritable bilocation, but rather a simple apparition (produced miraculously by God) of the saint at one place and the physical presence of the saint elsewhere. The same individual is thus present at the same time in two different places, but not in the same respect: there is a physical presence in one place and an apparent presence, or apparition, in another.

¹¹ In his Commentary on Aristotle's *Peri Hermeneias*, Bk. I, Lesson 9, Nos. 116-117.

¹² *Summa Theologica*, III, Q. 27, Art. 2.

¹³ St. Pius X, motu proprio *Sacrorum Antistitum* in DS 3542: "...

faith is...the true assent of the intellect to the truth received extrinsically ex auditu, whereby we believe that what has been said, attested, and revealed by the personal God, our Creator and Lord, to be true on account of the authority of God the highest truth." Vatican Council I, constitution *Dei Filius* in DS 3008: "...faith, which is the beginning of human salvation, is a supernatural virtue by which we, with the aid and inspiration of the grace of God, believe that the things revealed by Him are true, not because the intrinsic truth of the revealed things has been perceived by the natural light of reason, but because of the authority of God Himself who reveals them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived." Vatican Council I, Constitution *Dei Filius* in DS 3011 (Dz. 1792): "By divine and Catholic faith, all those things must be believed which are contained in the written word of God and in tradition, and those which are proposed by the Church, either in a solemn pronouncement or in her ordinary and universal teaching power, to be believed as divinely revealed."

¹⁴ Cf. Vatican Council I, Constitution *Dei Filius*, in DS 3008, quoted above in the preceding note.

¹⁵ Garrigou-Lagrange, *De Revelatione*, 3rd ed. (1929), I, 178-180. Revealed mysteries are intelligible "analogically," for the terms in which they are expressed are analogically intelligible.

¹⁶ One could even go so far as to say that the contradiction in some cases is already ascertainable by reason alone, for it suffices to apply the simple rules of logic: a journalist (even non-Catholic) is perfectly capable of recognizing whether the pope is innovating by his contradiction of his predecessors. In a book entitled *L'Église: Questions aux protestants et aux catholiques* (Labor et Fides, 1978), pp. 16-17, the Protestant Franz J. Leenhardt, professor at the College of Geneva, establishes the contradiction between the traditional dogma "outside the Church, no salvation" and the ecumenism of *Unitatis Redintegratio* (the paternity of which he attributes to the new theology of Yves Congar in his book *Chrétien désunis*). This example is interesting because it is clear that this man doesn't have the Catholic faith, yet he retains right reason, and he can make use of it to ascertain a lack of uniformity between the two teachings. The difference between him and us is that we also know that, if it takes place, this contradiction occurs between the teaching of the past magisterium and the current one, which though being the magisterium cannot be magisterial. Even a new explanation cannot contradict what has already been explained. For example, in vain do they tell us that *Dignitatis Humanae* 2 is an explication of the natural law that has never been made till now; it is a fact duly established by the infallible tribunal of logic that DH 2 contradicts *Quanta Cura*. The obviousness of that fact becomes blinding when they speak to us about a "counter syllabus."

¹⁷ Cajetan, *Commentary on the "SummaTheologica"*, II-II, Q. 1, Art. 1, No. 10-11; Garrigou-Lagrange, *De Revelatione*, I, 510.

¹⁸ Cajetan, *Commentary on the ST*, II-II, Q. 5, Art. 3, No. 1.

¹⁹ Garrigou-Lagrange, *De Revelatione*, I, 442-443. The attestation of the Church can be compared to the teaching of a professor. At first this teaching is requisite as the necessary condition enabling the disciple's intellect to know its object. But once the object is known, the disciple's intellect retains it by itself without further help from the professor. And if his professor were to fall into error by denying the teaching given formerly, his old student would be in a position to correct him by relying on the teaching once given by the professor himself (and not by his own personal insight). Thus did St. Paul with regard to St. Peter in the incident at Antioch.

²⁰ It is impossible for the magisterium to be engaged as such in the proposition of something contrary to a thing to be believed. Were that to happen, one would have to conclude that the act of this proposition is bereft of any magisterial value strictly speaking.

²¹ Quite often the text of Holy Writ calls for an interpretation. Con-

sequently, before ascertaining a contradiction between the current magisterium and Scripture, the Protestant is obliged to substitute himself for the magisterium in order to judge in its place what the Scripture must mean: and so it is indeed he (and not the past magisterium) that judges the current magisterium in the measure that he judges the meaning of Scripture.

²² St. Thomas makes a similar distinction, when he speaks of majores and of minores in regard to the notoriety of the Messiah among the Jews (*Summa Theologica*, III, Q. 47, Art. 5). The former had an explicit knowledge, whereas the latter had only an implicit knowledge, dependent on the explicit knowledge of the majores.

²³ As Archbishop Lefebvre pointed out in his book *They Have Uncrowned Him* (1986; Angelus Press, 1988), p. xv, it was mainly by starting with the fruits of the Council that one could trace them back to the poisoned fount of its teachings.

²⁴ Cf. the lecture of Professor Matteo d'Amico, "From Christian Humility to the Humiliation of the Church" in the *Acts of the Eighth Theological Congress of 'Si Si No No'* (January 2-4, 2009), p. 242: "A recent poll by the Italian Federation of Scouting with a sampling of 2,500 scouts between the ages of 16 and 21 coming from 25 European countries (but for the most part Italian), two-thirds of whom are Catholic, yielded the following results: 90 percent of them approve of premarital sex; 39 percent accept abortion; 82 percent do not think it is wrong to get drunk; 47 percent see nothing wrong with smoking marijuana; a significant percentage do not disapprove of extramarital affairs (*Corriere della Sera*, March 16, 2008). I think that little commentary is called for here; such are the results of the 'New Springtime' of Vatican II: the destruction of Catholicism." See also pp. 254-56.

²⁵ Posthumous magisterium can moreover be a present magisterium, since it is defined as the simple repetition of a past teaching before the cessation thereof.

²⁶ Pope Benedict XVI's Address to the Roman Curia of December 22, 2005, in fact speaks, not of "continuity," but of "renewal in continuity," and it is question of "renewal in the continuity of the one subject-Church...which increases in time and develops, yet always remaining the same, the one subject of the journeying People of God."

²⁷ Allocution during the Audience of January 12, 1966, *La Documentations Catholique*, No. 1466, col. 418-420 [English version in Michael Davies, *Pope John's Council*, 2nd ed. (Angelus Press, 2007), p. 218].

²⁸ It can be proved that Vatican II set itself the goal of harmonizing the teaching of the Church with the principles of liberal and modern thought of the world that came to be after 1789.

²⁹ Garrigou-Lagrange, *De Revelatione*, 3rd ed. (1929), I, 180.

³⁰ DS 3016.



Dear Angelus Press,

I was always told it's best to offer praise and criticism together, so here goes. Praise: I really like the new layout of *The Angelus*, and I think that it's something that is attractive to Catholics outside Tradition, and a nice change for those of us who have subscribed for years. Apart from some of the font sizes, I think the design is a huge improvement. So, great work, and thanks for that.

Now to the criticism: I really like the articles, but am concerned that too often they focus on doctrine, or theology, or philosophy. Basically, I think we need more articles on goings on in the SSPX, of various parish activities, nice stories about Tradition, etc. Is there any way *The Angelus* can "tone it down" a little?

Marjorie, Ohio

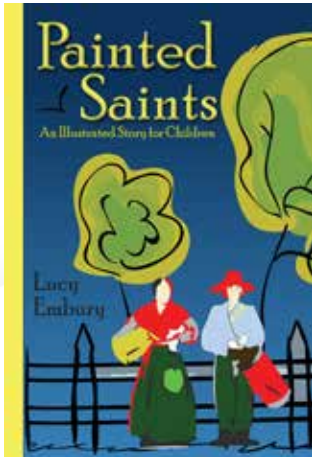
Thank you for your letter. First, to address your "praise," we greatly appreciate it. I also want to let you know that we will be working with the fonts to make them more readable for all of our readers. I think you will notice an improvement in this issue, as well as in the last issue.

Regarding the tone of the articles, we appreciate your feedback. Balancing doctrinal-type articles with more practical articles is always a challenge, but there is no doubt that both doctrinal and practical articles are important to the mission of *The Angelus*. That's why we have striven to change between themes with a clear doctrinal emphasis (Fifty Years Since Vatican II, Christophobia) and those with a more practical focus (Music, Education). That alternation will continue as we move forward, and we hope that this allows our readers to gain an increased knowledge of our Catholic Faith, while helping those same readers to live the Faith in the modern world.

That being said, our emphasis will always be a bit more on the level of ideas, primarily because the present crisis in which we find ourselves is a doctrinal crisis. Action always follows thought, and the primary mission of *The Angelus* is to present clear and orthodox doctrinal content so that our readers, having been educated, may apply sound thinking to their daily actions.

Angelus Press

164pp – Softcover – STK# 8551 – \$12.95



New Title: Painted Saints

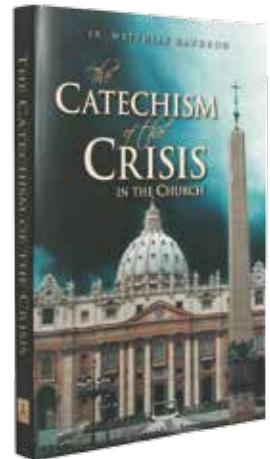
Your children will love *Painted Saints*, the illustrated story of young Marcel, an orphan boy in Marseilles who is taken in by the kindly older priest, Father Serrano. The exciting and bustling world of Marseilles comes to life against the backdrop of the culture, history, and people of the region as told through the tales of the good Father. This experience with Father Serrano will become the most formative of his lifetime, especially as he teaches young Marcel about the heroes of the Faith through the modeling of the small clay statues known as the painted saints.

248pp – Color Softcover – STK# 8471 – \$16.95

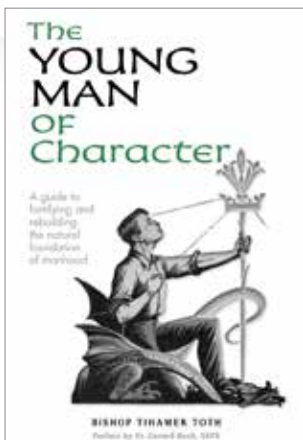
The Catechism of the Crisis

What can faithful Catholics do in the midst of an unprecedented crisis in the Church and in the world, and especially today in the midst of more blatant and open Christophobia? The first thing we have to do is understand the truths of the Catholic Faith, and to understand the errors, both inside and outside the Church, which threaten that same Faith.

This excellent work by Fr. Gaudron will help us to grasp the true roots of the modern crisis and the gravity of the problems affecting us. Originally published in order to solidify our understanding of the principles behind the crisis and as an aid to help those who do not see the gravity of the current situation, this work follows the traditional catechetical format: Each question is followed by a succinct response, and then by a series of more detailed questions and answers that justify and elaborate the general answer.



176pp – Softcover – STK# 8549 – \$9.95



The Young Man of Character

“Few men are born to be conquerors. Few men are born to be leaders of countries. But to conquer the realm of the soul, and to gain the crown of manly character, this lofty task awaits each one of us.”

These short words from Bishop Toth sum up the aim of this book: to create real, manly character in the souls of the young. In this excellent work for young men, the good bishop examines, point by point, each aspect necessary to develop that character. Though written over 75 years ago, the book is perhaps more timely than ever in our modern world.

84pp – Softcover – STK# 8553 – \$5.95

Compline



Pray the Night Prayer of the Church

Our newly printed compline book will help you to enter deeply into the official prayer of the Church. With Latin-English text, and the propers for every night of the week, plus the tones for various seasons and feasts, special rubrics, and compline for Holy Week, this is the most complete Compline book available for the faithful.

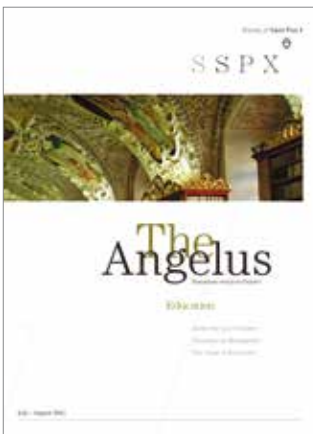
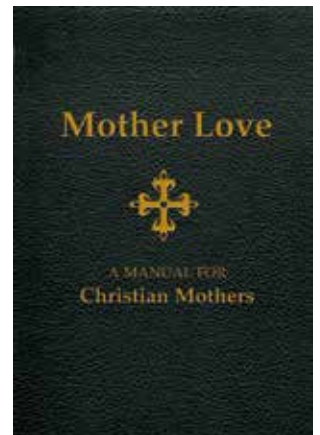
Join in the prayers of the Church, while you unite those prayers to the countless priests and religious who are also praying this ancient office each night. Perfect for enhancing your family's prayer life!

362pp – Softcover – STK# 8554 – \$24.95

Mother Love

Newly Reprinted: Traditional Mother Love Prayer Book for Christian Mothers

A complete prayer and devotional book specifically for moms! This "manual for Christian mothers" contains almost everything a mother needs to nurture and grow her spiritual life, so that she may truly be the heart of her Catholic home. Contains prayers to be said each day, various prayers specific to the needs of a wife and mother, as well as a section of instruction for Christian Mothers and instructions on Christian Education. This book is perfect for the mother or grandmother in your life!



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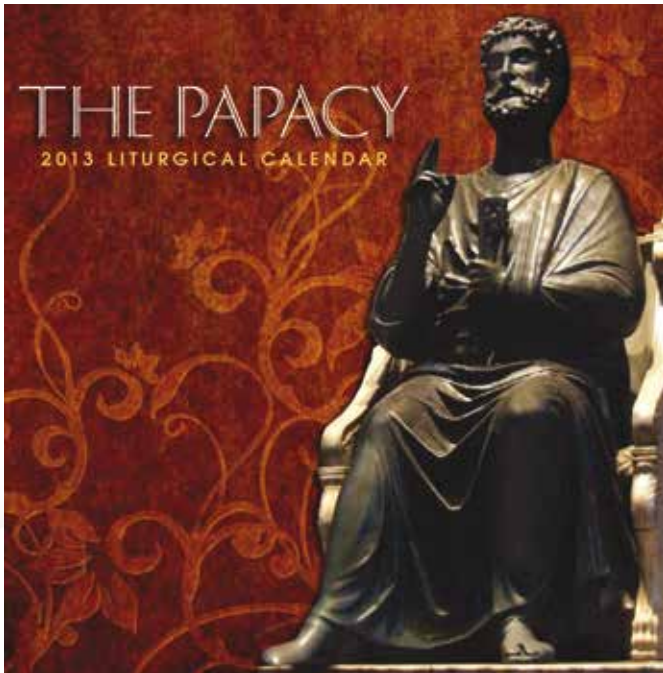
Until Christmas Day, 2012, you may add a gift subscription to *The Angelus*, America's premier journal for Catholic Tradition, for only half price! This makes an excellent gift for family and friends who have already discovered Tradition, or for those who may be interested.

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The Last Word

A year ago, Pope Benedict XVI stood before a huge crowd at St. Peter's Basilica and announced his plans for a "Year of Faith." This event started just a few days ago on October 11, 2012, coinciding with the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council (1962), and with the twentieth anniversary of the promulgation of the new Catechism of the Catholic Church (1992).

During the initial decades following Vatican II, the Catholic hierarchy in Western countries exhibited what can only be called a foolhardy optimism. Time went by and their enthusiasm disappeared, for the great revival in the Church never materialized. Instead, the Church has suffered crisis after crisis, especially a widespread loss of faith in the formerly Catholic countries of Western Europe. With the opening of the Year of Faith, cardinals and bishops met at Rome for a synod. The name given to the synod speaks for itself: "Synod on the New Evangelization." With a much more sober approach, the synod has identified secularism, both inside and outside the Church, as the key factor destroying the faith today.

Cardinal Wuerl, with Pope Benedict's blessing, presented an alarming introductory report before the new synod. In it, he laments: "The current situation is rooted in the upheavals of the 1970s and '80s, decades in which there was manifestly poor catechesis—rather miscat-echesis—at so many educational levels."

Cardinal Wuerl then describes the consequences of this faulty teaching: "Entire generations have become disassociated from the support systems that facilitate the transmission of the Faith."

The resulting ignorance, explains the cardinal, has drastically affected private and public life: "It is as if a tsunami of secular influence has swept across the cultural landscape, taking with it such societal markers as marriage, family, the concept of the common good and objective right and wrong."

Cardinal Wuerl then darkly concludes: "Secularization has fashioned two generations of Catholics who do not know the Church's fundamental prayers. Many do not see any value in Mass attendance, they fail to receive the sacrament of Penance, and they have often lost the sense that mystery or the transcendent have any real or verifiable meaning."

A great crisis of faith is manifest! Many churchmen, since the closing of Vatican II, have attributed this crisis to the spirit of the times, or to false interpretations of the conciliar texts. The SSPX, however, has consistently identified the main cause of this crisis to be the Council itself (including its problematic teachings). The SSPX still insists that, in order to solve this dire problem, its true roots must first be exposed and acknowledged.

The declaration of the General Chapter of the Society repeated that its "paramount duty" is "to profess the Catholic Faith in all its purity and integrity," and that "the Society continues to uphold the declarations and the teachings of the constant Magisterium of the Church in regard to all the novelties of the Second Vatican Council which remain tainted with errors, and also in regard to the reforms issued from it."

May this Year of Faith be for us an occasion to redouble our efforts in defending and spreading God's unchanging truth.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Father Jürgen Wegner

Society of Saint Pius X



S S P X

The Society of St. Pius X is an international priestly society of common life without vows, whose purpose is the priesthood and that which pertains to it.

The main goal of the Priestly Society of Saint Pius X is to preserve the Catholic faith in its fullness and purity, to teach its truths, and to diffuse its virtues. Authentic spiritual life, the sacraments, and the traditional liturgy are its primary means of bringing this life of grace to souls.

The Angelus aims at forming the whole man: we aspire to help deepen your spiritual life, nourish your studies, understand the history of Christendom, and restore Christian culture in every aspect.

\$ 7.00