



ROSARIUM



LETTER FROM THE FRIARS OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY



Nr. 2 – Winter 2019

In Sinu Mariæ

ON 13TH OCTOBER 2017, we renewed at the Cova da Iria, at the feet of the Madonna of Fatima, the consecration of our Dominican community to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, begging Our Lady of the Rosary to take charge of our definitive settlement in France. In October this year 2018, i.e. in the month dedicated to the rosary, she granted us a house adapted to our Dominican life, in a secluded and silent valley, but at the same time close to the main routes of communication. In this way we will be able to respond to the call of the Church and souls, after having prepared ourselves in a contemplation nourished by prayer and study.

To all those among you who for a long time have prayed for this foundation and made a contribution to it, we express our deep gratitude.

This house is placed under the patronage of Saint Paul, pillar of the Church and herald par excellence of the faith in the divinity and kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It is reported from our Blessed Father Dominic that he always carried with him the epistles of the great Apostle, in order to study and meditate on them. Saint Paul accompanied Saint Peter when he appeared to Saint Dominic in Rome to entrust him with the restoration of apostolic life, the apostolate of preaching: "Go and preach", they said to him, "for God has chosen you for this ministry."

With the help of God, under the protection of Our Lady, we will be able to exercise the Order's apostolate more easily in France, without abandoning the faithful from abroad who have called on the ministry of the community's Fathers.

Happy and holy New Year. God bless you!



Fr. Raymond O.P. +
Superior

Stained glass window of the Parish church of St-Paul-de-Serre

Considerations on the Notion of Law

CATHOLICS, who today live in a society where almost nothing functions normally, have the greatest difficulty, not only in fulfilling their duties, but even simply in knowing them¹. Faced with incompetent or tyrannical human authorities, they tend to reject a priori any civil or ecclesiastical law. This is certainly one of the most subtle temptations for a Christian in times of crisis. It is, however, in God's plan that man saves himself by obeying the laws, both civil and religious. But they must not be counterfeit laws. Returning to a clear notion of the law will be of great help to us in discerning our duty as Catholics and citizens.

A universe governed by laws

God, by regulating from all eternity that the world would be created and by creating it in time for the manifestation of His glory, wanted order to reign in it, physical order for irrational beings, physical and moral order for rational beings. Thus the stars praise God in silence by their harmonious course in space²; the waters of the seas by not crossing the limits that God assigns them³; the earth by keeping the laws of its stability⁴; the plants by producing the flowers and fruits of their essence; the animals by following the instinct that the creator has deposited in them. Man himself praises God by using his intelligence and will to know His creator and love Him above all else.

In the consciousness of every man, the creator has inscribed a law that in-

dicates, at least summarily, the good to be done, the evil to be avoided. This divine law is called "natural" because it was inscribed by God in the very structure of the nature He gave us. God's commandments are as "connatural" to us. They lead us to the good to which our nature aspires and which makes it happy. Thus we are naturally religious, driven by our nature as men to penetrate the mystery of God, to adore and love Him; to live in society and in harmony with our fellow men, through the exercise of social virtues. Nothing could be more contrary, not only to natural law, but to the essence of man, than this so-called "return to nature" where knowledge and worship of God are excluded, where individual pleasure in all its forms is sought at the expense of fraternal charity and justice. Saint Paul, writing to the Romans, explains to them:

When the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature those things that are of the law; these having not the law are a law to themselves: who shew the work of the law written in their hearts (Rom 2, 14-15).

But the same Saint Paul presented the difficulty that every man, Jew, Christian or pagan, faces:

I see in my members another law that fights against the law of my reason, and that makes me captive of the law of sin that is in my members (Rom 7, 23).

It must be recognised that individual consciences, wounded by original sin and obsessed with passions, often judge morally incorrectly, taking for good what is evil and evil for what is good. And even if man were to judge straightforwardly, the

1 In fact, the problem includes every man, but we limit our remarks to Catholics.

2 "Coeli enarrant gloriam Dei" (Ps 18, 2).

3 "Terminum posuisti quem non transgredientur" (Ps 103, 9).

4 "Fundasti terram et permanet" (Ps 118, 90).

weakness of his will would often thwart the lights of his reason. Then God “who wants all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2, 4), offers us two means: His written law and His grace. His law teaches us and prescribes our duty, His grace helps us to fulfil it. Saint Thomas defines the law as

*an ordinance of reason for the common good, made by him who has care of the community, and promulgated*⁵.

Three elements thus enter into the essence of the law. The first is borrowed from reason, the second from the authority responsible for the care of the multitude, the third from the common good. Let us simply analyse the first of these elements here, reserving the study of the next two for later.

Above all a work of reason

It belongs to the law to command and to forbid. But it belongs to reason to command. Therefore law is something pertaining to reason : it is in fact the reason that establishes the order of the operations to be carried out to achieve the desired end. For example, a family undertaking a move will have to think carefully: possible dates, division of tasks, choice of company and means of transport, etc. The law is therefore a matter of reason, at least the right law, and not what is a law in name only. It is not a matter of speculative reason - the one that seeks truth for its own sake - but of practical reason, which seeks truth for action.

Law, explains Saint Thomas Aquinas, is a rule and measure of acts, whereby man is induced to act or is restrained from acting: for “lex” [law] is derived from “ligare” [to bind], because it binds one to act. Now the rule and measure of human

*acts is the reason, which is the first principle of human acts, since it belongs to the reason to direct to the end, which is the first principle in all matters of action*⁶.

The young man who aims to enter the Naval College to become a naval officer submits to a whole physical and intellectual preparation, he imposes a discipline of life on himself. His reason allows him to discern and choose the most appropriate intellectual and physical means to be received at the competitive examination. He knows that this self-imposed “law” will have to be strictly followed, otherwise he will fail. Applied to society as a whole to achieve the common good, this example shows us the fundamental importance of reasoning in making laws. The will of the prince has the force of law, provided that it is itself regulated by reason. Greek antiquity gives us some good lessons in this respect. The Greeks assigned to laws and authority a celestial origin. They entrusted the elaboration of the laws of the city only to men who were the most thoughtful, impartial, master of their passions, the most divine in a way. How could stupidity, anger, a spirit of revenge, greed and thirst for power ever be good guides for legislating for the common good of citizens? These are the influences to which a legislative assembly is subject to after excluding the God of all wisdom.

By me, said the supreme legislator, kings reign, and princes command what is right (Prov 8, 15.).

Can the law be the expression of the general will?

Rousseau is credited with the modern conception of the law as the “expres-

⁶ *Summa Theologica*, I-II, 90, 1. “Lex dirigit sicut ostendens qualis debet esse actus proportionatus fini ultimo.” *2 Sent. dist. 41, q. 1, a1, sol.4.*

⁵ *Summa theologica*, I-II, 90, 4.

sion of the general will", although in reality Jean-Jacques borrowed it from the article "Droit naturel" in Diderot's Encyclopedia. We learn there that the general will is "always good; it has never deceived, it will never deceive" and that it must "set the limits of all our duties". Certainly the will, which is the impulsive faculty, plays its role in the law, but if it precedes reason or frees itself from it, it is no more than a blind force. It cannot draw its orientation or its rule from itself. It must borrow them from reason or risk falling into arbitrariness. The general will – or the sovereignty of the people – will not solve the problem, because one does not shed light by accumulating darkness; the general will is, by itself, essentially blind like the particular will. Besides, this general will does not exist. And Rousseau had to admit that it was confused with the will of the majority: "the voice of the greatest number always obliges the others". Cicero had already denounced the evil:

That if the will of the peoples, the decrees of the Heads of State, the decisions of the judges, founded the Law, then theft, adultery, false wills would be right as soon as the multitude had given the support of its vote⁷.

And Cicero was ignorant of modern techniques of mass manipulation, which further accentuate the reign of arbitrariness in matters of law.

The weakening of the Thomist notion of the law, "ordinance of reason," had been given as early as the 14th century by the theologian Duns Scotus, who taught the primacy of will over intelligence, and freed it from it. As a consequence of his philosophical error; his politics are an

intimate mixture of social atomism and unbridled authoritarianism that reflects in society his vision of the universe: men are first of all equal; but they have voluntarily sacrificed their independence to an authority which they have given to themselves in order to limit the dangers which their selfishness caused them to run to each other; this authority is therefore all-powerful and without counterweight; the head institutes, distributes and revokes the properties at his own discretion; there are no laws other than the positive laws instituted by him...⁸

We should also mention the thought of William Occam (+1349). For him, the commandments of the Decalogue are pure acts of the will of God, to whom we owe obedience without any other reason than this will. John Locke (+1704) argued that laws and constitutions were created by a free and arbitrary agreement of wills.

Rousseau is therefore in fact the heir to an anti-rational philosophical trend. He himself was the main instigator of the political ideas of the French Revolution⁹, which inspired most modern legislation. To take only the example of school laws, they almost systematically respond to the desire to impose an ideology, much more than to the preoccupation of implementing a work of reason: the use of the global method in reading; compulsory teaching of evolution and sexuality; suppression of ancient languages...

These few considerations allow us to begin to discern. We still have to study which authority can make laws, and what the common good of society consists of, to be sought by the legislator.

⁸ Emile BRÉHIER, *Histoire de la Philosophie*, librairie Félix Alcan, Paris 1928, t. 1, p. 714.

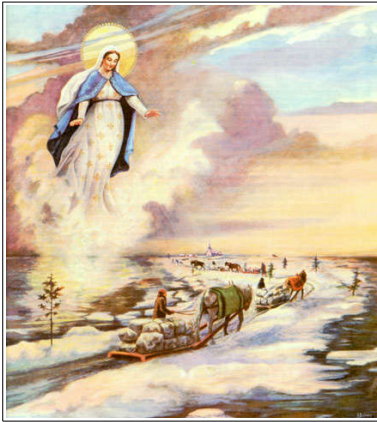
⁹ Robespierre knew by heart Rousseau's *Social Contract*, which he always bore with him.

⁷ CICERO, *De Legibus*, 1, 16.

The Victories of the Rosary

The Miracle of the Bridge of Ice

THE PARISH of the Cap de la Madeleine, on the North side of the Saint Lawrence river in Quebec was, in 1878, a growing parish. To accommodate his flock, Father Désilets, a zealous parish priest, decided to build a new church and made himself an apostle of the rosary and its confraternity. The necessary stones were on the south side of the river and it would do to wait for the ice of winter to carry them over. But God, wishing to put the faith of His flock to the test, did not permit any ice to form that winter. March 1879 arrived and still no ice!



Fr. Désilets, putting all his hope in God, obtained permission from his bishop to spend an uninterrupted vigil to the Blessed Virgin: he made a vow not to destroy the existing church and to consecrate it to Her under the title of Our Lady of the Rosary.

The response was unexpected. On the 14th of March a violent wind pushed blocks of floating ice to the Cap de la Madeleine. A team of volunteers, led by the curate of the parish, succeeded in jumping from block to block to gain the other side, a distance of more than a mile. Now to construct a bridge of ice for the sledges. The men worked day and night using buoys to mark a way on the river and to assemble the ice, while the women and children prayed the rosary in their homes, urged on by Father Désilets.

What immense faith it took these people so to spend eight days while, on this frail causeway of snow and ice of 15 to 20 cm thickness, more than 2,400 tonnes of stone were carried on sledges of 800 to 1500 kg, at a rate of 300 return trips a day!

One of the pontooneers concluded rightly: "It's not the ice which sustained us; it's the rosaries of our parish priest." And above him, the Queen of Heaven and earth!



Chronicle of the Community

* 2-7 July: From Steffeshausen in Belgium, we went to Merigny (France) to preach a ladies' retreat, crowned on Saturday by the attendance at the first Mass of Father Alban-Marie, of the Fraternity of the Transfiguration.

* 23-27 July: Fr. Thomas was chaplain of the young and dynamic Summer School of the Royalist Circles taking place in the Dominican school of Saint-Macaire (near Bordeaux).

* August 2nd: Fr. Raymond received into the Catholic Church the dying mother-in-law of one of our faithful.

* August 4th: To honour our founder St. Dominic, we sang Mass and gave two spiritual conferences to our German-speaking faithful.

* August 8th: At the invitation of Father R. Brucciani, Father Thomas crossed the English Channel to preach the annual retreat of the Oblate sisters of the society of St Pius X at St Michael's school (Berkshire). On August 15th, he was warmly welcomed in London by Father Clifton to sing the glories of Mary at Saint Joseph and Padarn's Church.

* August 25th: Great outing to Luxembourg with our Altar boys, in the beautiful countryside around the abbey of Clervaux.



* August 27th to September 1st: A new retreat in Mérigny, attended this time by two fellow priests.

* September 26th: First phase of the move from Belgium to Perigord in France.

* October 2nd: Second phase of the move. We take final possession of our new home in Saint-Paul-de-Serre and enthusiastically start moving-in.



* October 12th: We drove again the nearly 600 miles from our home to Steffeshausen, for the last tidying up and farewells to our dear faithful.

* October 14th: After the last Sunday Mass in the Church of the Sacred Heart, the parishioners organised a moving farewell ceremony in the presence of our successor, Father Peter Lang, FSSPX.



* October 16th in the evening: We had barely set foot in Perigord when Fr. Raymond had to take the car back to go to his dying father's bedside. He waited, so to speak, for his son to re-

turn to France to give his soul back to God. A refinement of Providence, which also allowed the body of the dear departed to be buried in the cemetery of Saint-Paul-de-Serre while awaiting the resurrection.



At the pilgrimage in Lourdes

* 28-29 October: Fr. Thomas and Fr. François Dominique took part in the very fervent pilgrimage of Tradition in Lourdes.

* From 1st to 21st November: Father Raymond flew to Frankfurt to reach Thuringia where he participated in an apologetic training session for young people, many of whom discovered the Catholic religion. The following week, he returned to the house at Steffeshausen to preach a



Apologetic training session in Germany

spiritual retreat to fifteen people from Germany and Benelux.

The following week was dedicated to the Sisters of the Holy Spirit in Niedaltdorf, Saarland. These courageous nuns, who suffered persecution from the communist regime in Czechoslovakia from 1946 to 1966, run an old people's home. Fr. Raymond preached their annual retreat, then gave a lecture to the faithful on the origin and nature of neo-Modernism.

Finally, he finished his long journey in Luxembourg with a Tuesday evening conference on the moral virtue of piety.

* Sunday, November 11th: Preaching at the Priory of Bergerac, at the warm invitation of Father Sébastien Gabard, who takes it to heart to make our community known to his Périgord faithful. On November 18th, Father Morille welcomed us, in turn, in his church at Périgueux.

* Saturday, 1st December and Sunday, 2 December: Father Raymond gave a lecture on the virtue of patriotism to the young people of the Reims priory, then preached an Advent recollection in Reims and Charleville-Mézières.

Meanwhile, Fr. Thomas preached an Advent recollection in Rzeszow, Poland, followed by two such recollections in Lodz and Olsztyn.



Our new house in Saint-Paul-de-Serre, near Périgueux (Aquitaine)

DOMINICAN RETREAT IN ENGLISH

Preached by Fr. Thomas O.P.



THEME : CHRIST THE KING

For men and women

(members of Third Orders have the priority)

June 5th – 10th 2019 in Bristol (UK)

Inscription

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Our moving-in involves numerous expenses: reparation of the roofs of outbuildings, renovation of the existing bathrooms, changing the boiler, joinery for the sacristy and the chapel...

We appeal to your generosity to help us cover these expenses and consecrate ourselves to our apostolic vocation.

To help us you can:

- In the European Community: send a payment to our bankaccount:

* Bank : LCL Bergerac

IBAN : FR43 3000 2052 3500 0007 1468 F16

BIC : CRLYFRPP

* Bank : Crédit Mutuel de Bretagne

IBAN : FR76 1558 9228 2202 0409 5524 049

BIC : CMBRFR2BARK

- In Europe & America: use our **Paypal** account fndr@net-c.com

Take it as certain that we pray daily for our living and departed benefactors.



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