

REUNION

The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil
(The Basilians - The Basilian Fathers)



Volume 11 No. 3

OF THE CHURCH

OF MAN WITH GOD

APRIL, 2001

~ THERE IS BUT ONE TRUTH, BUT ONE SALVATION ~

From ✚ Paul, S.S.B.

To the flock entrusted into my care:

There is but one truth, and that truth is from God, not from any creature, not even from man (or, to be politically correct for once in our life, humans).

(Continued SALVATION on page 18)



LOVE IS THE MATERIAL FROM WHICH FAITH AND HOPE ARE MADE

“And Jesus said, ‘What wilt thou that I do to thee?’ The blind man replies, ‘Lord, that I may see.’ And Jesus said to him: ‘Receive thy sight.’ “

Our Lord told the Apostles He would be mocked, scourged, and crucified to death, and that on the third day He would rise again, but they understood Him to the same degree that the Blind Man could see. The Apostles knew they did not understand, but they did not ask our Lord to explain what He meant. The Blind Man, likewise, knew he could not see, but when he heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing near, he cried out to our Lord to give him sight. And upon his asking, our Lord gave the Blind Man his sight, because the Blind Man had faith in our Lord.

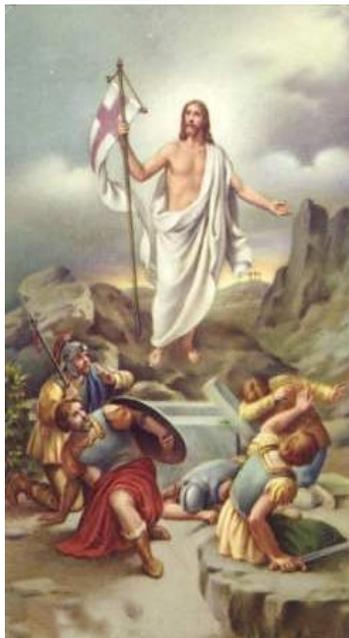
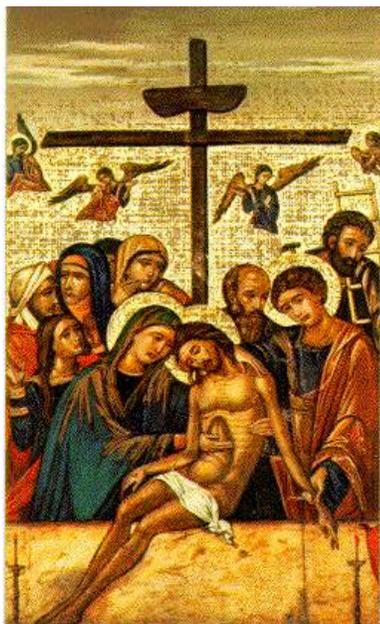
Faith can be thought of as Spiritual Sight, as one of the three corner stones to
(Continued SIGHT on page 3)

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

The First Station, Jesus is condemned to death. The Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, pronounced the sentence of death upon Thee, O Jesus. Be Thou a gracious Judge to me when my last hour comes, and do not sentence me to eternal death.

The Second Station, Jesus carries His cross. My Jesus, Thou patiently acceptest the cross upon Thy torn and wounded shoulders. Give me the Grace to bear patiently the heavy burdens of this life. Strengthen and comfort me in all my sorrows and sufferings.

The Third Station, Jesus falls the first time beneath the cross. Dear Lord, Thou hast fallen to the ground under Thy cross. The weight of my sins has pressed Thee down. I detest them with my whole heart. Give
(Continued CROSS on page 2)



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The sole purpose of this publication is to comply with the teachings and instructions of Jesus Christ, second person of the Trinity God, and to further His kingdom.

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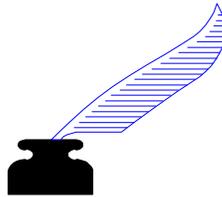
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Holy Innocents Orthodox Church
311 Hickory Avenue
Harahan, Louisiana 70123

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LETTERS

(The Editors reserve the right to reject any submissions, and to edit as necessary. Letters must be typed, single space, signed, and include the sender's name address, and day and evening telephone numbers - Ed.)



Dear Friends,

(Continued LETTERS on page 3)

of St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church (Waveland, Miss.); publication swaps; those who pick up a copy and those who request a "free" subscription (if any are left); **** those who make a donation of \$30.00 (or more) to Holy Innocents Orthodox Church will be mailed each print published issue of REUNION for one calendar year from the date the donation is received. **A donation does not create an obligation for us to publish.**

We try to publish between four and twelve issues per year, and to print publish each electronically published issue, but do not guarantee to do so due to staffing and finances.

Telephones / electronic addresses:
Holy Innocents (504) 738-3502;
311 Hickory Avenue
Harahan, Louisiana 70123 USA
FAX C/O (504) 737-7707 (9-5 M-F)
apb@reu.org
BBS (504) 738-2681
<http://www.reu.org>

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✚ Paul, S.S.B.
Publisher .

✚ The Basilians - The Basilian Fathers ✚

WORLD WIDE WEB:

The direct connection to computer which functions as the message, file, and communications center for The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil, is:
<http://www.reu.org>

Issues of REUNION, in color, in Adobe PDF and HTML, are available at:
<http://www.reu.org/public/news.htm>

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(Continued CROSS from page 1)

me the grace to see sin as the worst of evils, to hate it and to flee from it.

The Fourth Station, Jesus meets His afflicted Mother. Bowed beneath the cross, bleeding and torn, now Thou meetest Thy grief-stricken Mother. O beloved Jesus, I too, will look upon thy bitter pains and death with a stricken heart. I beg Thou sorrowful Mother to pray for me in life and in death.

The Fifth Station, Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry the cross. Simon bore with Thee, my Redeemer, my part of the weight of Thy heavy cross. I also, will walk with Thee on this Way of the Cross, and accept suffering in union with the Divine Will, that thus I may be truly Thy

(Continued CROSS on page 8)

(Continued SIGHT from page 1)

Deification. Faith is necessary for us to begin to understand and comprehend The Blessed Trinity, and what The Blessed Trinity desires for and of us.

If someone does not have Faith in The Blessed Trinity and all three Persons of the Trinity and in the Church which is the Body of Christ on Earth, then one can ask for it just as the Blind Man asked for sight. And if one does not have great Faith, and thus does not understand or comprehend The Blessed Trinity's plans and desires for us, then one should ask for that Faith - **and if one asks God the Father in the Name of His Son Jesus Christ for that Faith, that Faith will be given to the requestor.**

However, if one does not thus seek and request Faith, or does not accept the gift of Faith, then such person will be as blind as the Apostles were, and will not see the plain truth right in front of them.

Hope is also one of the three corner stones to Deification. Hope is not just a wish, it is not just a desire, it is not just the thought, "Wouldn't it be nice." Hope is the prayer of our Souls, that we will attain the promises our Lord made, chief amongst them being that we will be united with The Blessed Trinity if we believe and follow The Way taught by our Lord and so do because we have Faith that He is the Son of God, and Second Person of The Blessed Trinity.

Charity, Love, is also one of the three corner stones to Deification. It is the most important, the most faceted, and the most difficult to explain and comprehend, of the three corner stones. It encompasses both logic and emotion, the intellect and the heart. It is patient, kind, does not envy; is not perverse, impressed with self importance, ambitious, self seeking, prone to anger, or desirous of harm to anyone; it

Charity is the material from which Faith and Hope are made

abhors iniquity and rejoices in the

truth; it survives all injuries and continues to exist without diminishment from the lover to the one loved; it survives everything, including attack, rejection, being ignored, being accepted, being received; it is the material from which Faith and Hope are made, and thus it is the foundation upon which rests belief in Jesus Christ, and Faith and Hope in the promises of our Lord. If it does not endure, then it is not Love, it is not Charity.

When Saint Paul wrote, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child. But, when I became a man, I put away the things of a child.", what was he saying? A child constantly tests people, as a means of being sure that each person really is what they seem to be. A child needs constant reassurance, and thus will do the same thing over and over again, just to be sure that the same thing will happen each time. Yet, even with this constant need for reassurance, a child will turn to its parents for all its needs, for in its parents it trusts. An adult makes decisions based on knowledge. Though a child will often do things which are extremely dangerous, it usually does them without full comprehension of the extent of the danger. It is rare for a child to knowingly take an extreme risk. Adults, however, sometimes must take a risk if they are to achieve or attain beyond their instant status. When an adult does take such a risk, it must be in the Faith, Hope, and Charity of an adult, and not in those of a child.

Charity allows and induces one person to give, and another to receive.

Yet, we must also be like the little children if we are to be united with our Lord for all eternity (Mat 18:3). We must

trust in The Blessed Trinity and in each Person of the Trinity, the same way a child trusts in its parents. This trust is created by the very same Charity upon which all else rests and of which all else is made.

Of all the factors in the life and existence of every spiritual and every physical created person, Charity is the most important. The

rejection of Charity by Satan and his followers is that which lead to their enslavement within themselves, totally separated from The Blessed Trinity. The possession and practice of Charity is that which will make a happy union of two people into one married person. Charity allows and induces one person to give, and another to receive.

It is being in the fullness of Charity that leads one to escape self enslavement and enter into the freedom of eternal union with The Blessed Trinity.

(Ref: 1 Cor 13:1-13; Luke 18:31-43)

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(Continued LETTERS from page 2)

This was sent to me by my priest please take the time to read and respond.

*God bless,
Andrei Edward McIntosh*

Since 1983 more than 2,000,000 Sudanese Christians have been martyred . Today, more than 4,200,000 Sudanese are refugees... their homes destroyed and all their possessions stolen. Many who are not refugees are in SLAVERY. In Sudan Christian children are regularly stolen from their families taken into slavery by the Muslim government.

The Church in America has been largely silent and that is shameful. I know that it is not because they don't care. Most do not even know.

The cry of the Sudanese that are being oppressed, and slaughtered must be heard. Will you help us? We need to send a message to President Bush that Americans do care about our brothers and sisters in Sudan. You can do that by going to <http://www.christianpetitions.com/petition.html?name=sudan> and signing our petition.

Please make your voice heard in Washington D.C. Go to <http://www.christianpetitions.com/petition.html?name=sudan> and sign our online petition. When you complete the petition it goes directly to the White House. The

(Continued LETTERS on page 17)

THE BASILIAN FATHERS

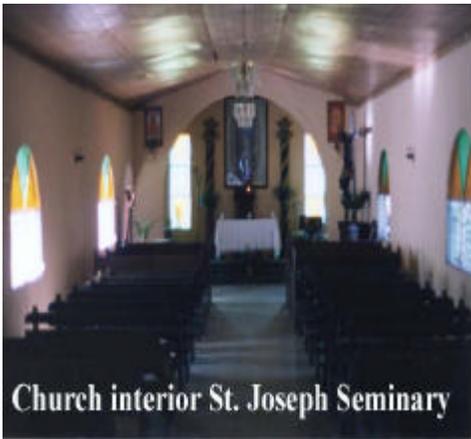
(The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil)

SAINT JOSEPH SEMINARY

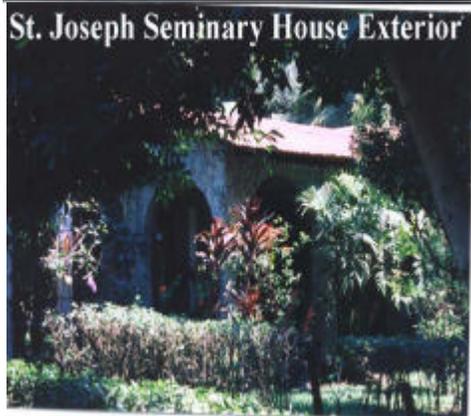
(Donations should be sent to:)

The Basilian Fathers
Most Rev. Andres Giron, S.S.B.
Parcela # B 105, Calle del Banco
Nueva Concepcion, Escuintla
Guatemala CA

Archbishop Andres has established a Seminary, regular schools, convents, and in 1998-99 alone, created between 800 and 1,000 family farms which sup-



Church interior St. Joseph Seminary



St. Joseph Seminary House Exterior

port the extended family.

The family farms Archbishop Andres created are not "share cropper" farms - Archbishop Andres fully turned each farm over to the people who live on them.

You never have to wonder if your charitable donations are being properly used. You can *SEE* their use.



Children playing in front of open walled class rooms



One of many Parish Churches



Interior of Newer Parish Church



Older Parish Church

Archbishop Andres has been the one of the leaders of those who seek moral treatment of the Mayan People in Guatemala, even leading a march seeking promise the Mayans will no longer be killed at whim. For this Guatemalans call him "The Martin Luther King of Guatemala".

Your assistance is desperately needed for these good works to continue.

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SAINT BASIL

(Donations should be sent to:)

Saint Basil Orthodox Church
Very Rev. Fr. James (George Bowles), S.S.B.
512 A Sydney Road
Coburg, Melburn 3058
AUSTRALIA



Saint Basil's, Melburn, Australia

Archpriest James has been the leader of all the religious communities in Melburn, in providing food and the necessities of life to the poor. He established the first food kitchen, and operates on a "shoe string budget" that should make most Americans ashamed of purchasing an extra order of French fries.

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HOLY INNOCENTS

(Donations should be sent to:)

Holy Innocents Orthodox Church
311 Hickory Ave.
Harahan, Louisiana 70123
Voice (504) 738-3502
FAX (504) 737-7707
HIOC BBS (504) 738-2681
<http://www.reu.org>

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ICON # 4



ICON # 7



ICON # 11



ICON # 19



ICON # 26

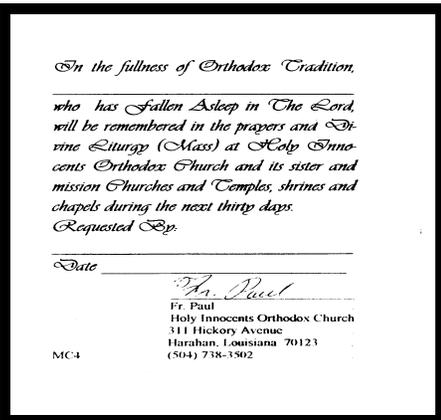


SOUFANIEH

DIVINE LITURGY "MASS" CARDS

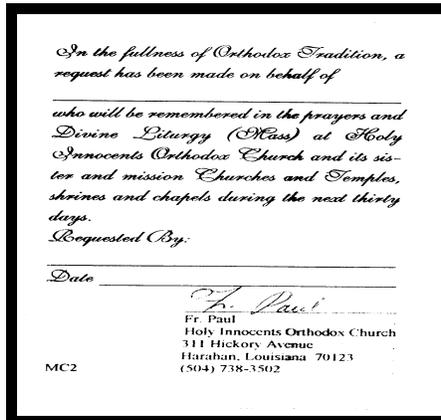
Commonly called "Mass Cards", these 4 1/4" by 5 1/2" (folded) Icon cards feature the above Icons, and open to reveal prayer intentions for the living and for those who have Fallen Asleep in The Lord.

For those who have Fallen Asleep in The Lord, Icon # 19 graces the cover, with the following text (reduced here to fit



in this column) inside:

General Intentions For the Living, for weddings, illnesses, general need, and for the sake of prayer itself, etc., cards, have Icons nos. 4, 7, 11, and 26, and a photograph of the Icon of Our Lady of Soufanieh showing the olive oil dripping from the bottom of the Icon's frame, are available on the covers. All the Icons are full color printed cards, except Our Lady of Soufanieh, which is



a color photograph.

The text on the inside of the cards for the living is given above, again reduced here to fit inside the

column.

These cards are very beautiful, bamboo or light gray in color, but they are only a product - something to induce you to make a donation which we use to support the various works we provide, including publication of **REUNION**.

To have a person included in our prayers and at Divine Liturgy, send us a note, or fill out the form in the right column of this page and send it to us. There is no fee for the prayers and Masses, that

would be Simony. **These cards are also available without prayer intentions**, and can be used for regular note or religiously oriented note stationery.

Consider obtaining a small supply, and send the prayer request slip which accompanies the cards when you actually use the card.

Like Monasteries which obtain donations for their Icons, or sell Icons and other items, the donations we receive from these cards are of great use to us. Your help is always appreciated.

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Dear Fr. Paul,
Please include and remember _____

in the Divine Liturgy and Prayers for the (living - dead) at Holy Innocents Orthodox Church and its sister and mission places of worship during the next thirty days, beginning _____, 20_____, on the occasion of _____

Requested by (optional) _____

(Name) _____

(Address) _____

(City, State Zip) _____

Please mail this slip to:
Fr. Paul
Holy Innocents Orthodox Church
311 Hickory Avenue
Harahan, Louisiana 70123
or telephone (504) 738-3502
[Please note that prayer requests are also normally posted in REUNION BBS (504) 738-2681, with world wide access]

PRODUCTS REQUEST FORM

ITEM	QUANTITY	REQUESTED DONATION	TOTAL
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Mass Cards:		Each	
Icon # 4	_____	\$2.00	\$ _____
Icon #7	_____	\$2.00	\$ _____
Icon #11	_____	\$2.00	\$ _____
Icon #19 (Deceased)	_____	\$2.00	\$ _____
Icon #26	_____	\$2.00	\$ _____
Soufanieh	_____	\$3.00	\$ _____

Icon Stationery Cards: (same as Mass cards but without inside inscription, packs of 10 cards and 11 envelopes)

Icon #4	_____	\$15.00	\$ _____
Icon #7	_____	\$15.00	\$ _____
Icon #11	_____	\$15.00	\$ _____
Icon #19	_____	\$15.00	\$ _____
Icon #26	_____	\$15.00	\$ _____
Soufanieh	_____	\$22.00	\$ _____

Liturgical Calendars: (may contain errors, we try to correct them as we receive notice)

General Calendar	_____	\$6.00 for one	\$ _____
(55 pages +/-)	_____	\$2.00 for each additional ordered at same time	\$ _____
For Year 2001	_____	\$6.00 for one	\$ _____
(49 pages +/-)	_____	\$2.00 for each additional ordered at same time	\$ _____

Western Rite Divine Liturgy with rubrics:

Pew Size	_____	\$5.00 for one	\$ _____
	_____	\$2.00 for each additional ordered at same time	\$ _____
8 1/2" x 11 " pages	_____	\$9.00 for one	\$ _____
	_____	\$4.00 for each additional ordered at same time	\$ _____

PLEASE PRINT !!!

REQUEST PLACED BY:

Name _____
 Address _____
 City/State _____
 Zip _____

Total \$ _____

There are no shipping charges. Propriety requires the total requested donation amount accompany your products request. Send product request with donation to:

Holy Innocents Orthodox Church
 311 Hickory Ave.
 Harahan, Louisiana 70123

(Continued SSB NEWS from page 4)



The Church (Chapel) is usually open from 9:00 AM to Noon Sundays, 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM Monday - Friday, as schedules permit, closed Saturdays except for special occasions like weddings. Saturday Vespers are usually at St. Mary Madgalene.

These schedules are kept unless something extraordinary occurs. Last minute notices are posted on the marquee by the front door.

REGULAR SUNDAY SCHEDULE:

9:30 AM - 9:45 AM, Confessions
 9:45 AM Prothesis
 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy (Mass)
 Western Rite
 11:00 AM - Noon, Coffee - Fellowship Hour

All who have been Baptized and Chrismated (Confirmed) are encouraged to receive The Eucharist (Holy Communion).

WEEKDAY DIVINE LITURGY:

Weekday Divine Liturgy is at 8:00 AM. Some days we do not have weekday Divine Liturgy due to scheduling problems. Check the Bulletin

When we have weekday Divine Liturgy, Confessions are available immediately before Divine Liturgy, from 7:30 AM - 7:45 AM.

There is no socializing after weekday Divine Liturgy. Social telephone calls should be limited to between 6:30 PM

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and 8:30 PM.

BULLETIN COPIES:

Copies of Holy Innocents weekly parish bulletin can be FAXed to you (local calls only). Just send us a FAX request. You can also obtain a copy on HIOC BBS or at the chapel, or on our web site.

Holy Innocents is a Western Rite Orthodox Church affiliated with The Orthodox Catholic Archdiocese of Louisiana, and the Archdiocese of Orleans, of the Orthodox Catholic Church of the Americas operated by the Basilian Fathers. Its lineage is Russian Orthodox, and Eastern Rite Liturgy is observed in special schedules as an accommodation.

Most Rev. John (John J. Lehman), S.S.B., (Retired)

Most Rev. Paul (Lee S. McColloster), S.S.B., Metropolitan Archbishop of Orleans.

OTHER SACRAMENTS AND LITURGIES

Baptisms and Chrismation (Confirmation) may be scheduled two or more weeks in advance, for children and adults who have never received these Sacraments, and who desire to join the Church.

Reception of Converts, for those who have been Baptized and Confirmed in another Jurisdiction of The Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, may be scheduled two or more weeks in advance.

Holy Matrimony should be scheduled at least three months in advance, but may be arranged in less time depending on the circumstances. We are not a marriage mill, and will not marry just anyone - interviews are required for those with whom we are not very familiar.

Absolution/Confession, is available from 9:30 AM to 9:45 AM, Sundays,

and on request at virtually all times.

Anointing of the Sick (Extreme Unction, Holy Anointing) is available after Sunday Divine Liturgy, and with visitation of the sick, is available on request. Please notify us if you, family, or a friend, become ill, are hospitalized, or desire a visit. You need not be ill to request a visit.

Blessing of a Home is usually done on the Feast of The Epiphany (January 6), or when a family moves into a new home. It should be scheduled a week or so in advance. The house need not be all "in order".

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ST. MARY MAGDALENE

(Donations should be sent to:)

St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church
 125 Hartsie Drive - 150 Angell Lane
 Waveland, Mississippi 39576
Voice (228) 466-4508



RETREATS:

Holy Innocents hosts a retreat on the first Saturday of each month, at St.



Mary Magdalene. This is an "open" retreat, without the 'rule of silence'. Grounds open at 9 AM, Divine Liturgy is at 11:15 AM, grounds close between 1 PM and 4 PM. Bring your own food,

though chicken noodle soup and coffee are provided.

St. Mary Magdalene is primarily a retreat house. Anyone wishing to conduct or participate in a one day retreat for a group or an individual should call either St. Mary Magdalene, Holy Innocents to schedule. We encourage everyone to go on a retreat at least once each year - more often if possible. Talks on various special subjects can be arranged for groups in retreat, and those on private retreat will be left alone as they desire. Overnight retreats are available with "dormitory style" facilities.

Directions: Take I-10 East through Slidell. Cross the Louisiana - Mississippi State line; pass up the truck scales and take the first exit after the truck scales. This is the scenic route to the beaches. (Some people call this the Hwy. 90 exit.) Stay on the highway, pass (and curse) the gambling casino exit until you arrive in Waveland (about 17 miles from I-10). Turn right at the first traffic light, go down the road towards the beach, cross over the rail road tracks and turn left on Central Ave. which is the first road over the rail road tracks. Stay on central until you reach Coleman Ave., which is located at the first stop sign you will come to. Turn right on Coleman and you will see the beach road ahead. Turn right on Beach Road., go two blocks to Hartsie, turn right on Hartsie, travel 550 feet until the bend in the road. St. Mary Magdalene is on the left.

Or, I-10 to Miss Hwy 603 (43), also known as Kiln Rd., then South on Hwy 603 (43) (Kiln Rd.), cross over U. S. Hwy. 90 [Hwy 603 (43) changes its name to Nicholson Ave.], to the Beach, right on Beach Road, pass Coleman Ave., and proceed as above.

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**TEND TO YOUR SOUL, THE SOIL
WHERE GOD'S SEED GROWS
You can scrub now, or get scrubbed
later**

"If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things that concern my infirmity . . . And lest the greatness of the revelations should exalt me, there was given me a sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan, to buffet me. For which thing, thrice I besought the Lord that it might depart from me. And he said to me: My grace is sufficient for thee: for power is made perfect in infirmity. Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me."

All the Apostles *except* Saint Paul, were taught by Our Lord in very painstakingly constructed parables and lessons, by daily personal example, in a living classroom of life. Saint Paul was taught by Our Lord by revelation, and by Saint Paul's use of his own Divinely inspired intellect in a living prayer of his life to Our Lord.

Because of the greatness of the gifts God gave to him, Saint Paul could have easily exalted in that greatness, and in the greatness of the favor which God showed to him. But Saint Paul also suffered from an infirmity which he asked God to remove. God refused, for in that infirmity God's greatness was made manifest in the form of the great gifts He constantly gave Saint Paul.

So Saint Paul exalted in his infirmity for through that infirmity he experienced the greatness of God, while bringing the same greatness of God to all of mankind in God's message of Eternal Life.

When God's Word fell upon Saint Paul, the Word was received in the fullness of Saint's Paul's fertility, and Saint Paul brought forth much good fruit. Not only was the Seed well received by Saint Paul, it grew and seeded the whole world.

This was not an instantaneous happen-

ing, it was not intellectual and spiritual spontaneous combustion. Long before Saint Paul was knocked off his horse by our Lord, Saint Paul had studied the God of Abraham, the one, true, and only God, and everything which was known about Him. Saint Paul was actually persecuting Christians when our Lord Jesus Christ called him as a follower. And while Saint Paul almost immediately thereafter began preaching The Way, he experienced many years of little success, and spent many years studying and learning from our Lord.

If each of us is to be fruitful in the seed God has cast upon our own soul, our soul must be soil which has been prepared, a garden which we have tended and continue to faithfully tend so that we in turn will shower the seeds of holiness over all the lands, or at least in our own back yards.

Look at the depression and despair most of the affluent world calls home. Children learn evil through songs that explicitly relate acts of violence and murder, and through videos that depict grave yards as places in which to live in sensual debauchery and total despair.

You, in your example of living The Way, can be an ever present example that Christ's real followers experience joy even in the worst of situations as well as in the best of times. We can be troubled, confused, in pain, as well as well focused, knowledgeable, without a care, and thus live in Divine joy in good times and in bad times.

But the children of evil are without joy whether they are experiencing good times or bad times.

Living The Way taught by our Lord demands you tend to your soul, which is the soil in which God's seed grows. You must nourish it with prayer, weed it with penance, fertilize it with the Bread of Heaven, insecticide it with Sacramental Absolution.

We prepare for a great banquet by not eating so we have room for the good

stuff and do not spoil our appetite. We learn which forks and spoons to use on the various courses, and may even study which foods and beverages compliment each other, all for the purpose of better enjoying the banquet.

We should also prepare ourselves in a like manner, for receiving the Sacred Eucharist, and even when just attending in the House of the Lord, for the same reason - that we may better enjoy the banquet of joyful everlasting life.

Take the opportunities God gives to us through His Church, to be cleansed, nourished, and freed from pestilence.

Remember, only the well scrubbed will be given the new garments which are required for the banquet. You can scrub now, or get scrubbed later.

(Ref: 2Cor 11:19-33; 12:1-9; Luke 8:4-15)

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(Continued CROSS from page 2)
child.

The Sixth Station, Veronica wipes the face of Jesus. Veronica pitied Thee, O sweet Jesus, and with a cloth wiped away the blood and sweat that stained Thy face. Thou didst stamp upon the cloth the likeness of Thy wounded face. Print deep in my soul the memory of Thy bitter pains, that I may never offend Thee. My Jesus, I love Thee.

The Seventh Station, Jesus falls the second time. O Jesus, a second time Thou hast fallen beneath the cross. My sins, my bad habits, have made it heavy to Thee. Let me not fall back into them. Help me to amend my life.

The Eighth Station, The daughters of Jerusalem weep over Jesus. Dearest Lord, Thou speakest to the weeping women who pitied Thee saying: "Weep not over Me,

(Continued CROSS on page 9)

GIVING EVIDENCE OF GOD’S WORK IN YOU

But when the Paraclete cometh, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall give testimony of me. And you shall give testimony, because you are with me from the beginning. (John 5:26-27)

We have not been with Christ from the beginning of His physical presence on Earth, nor have we been with Him from the instant of the beginning of our existence, but we are with Him now. Since we are with Him now, we too must give testimony of Christ. We do that primarily by being living evidence of what Our Lord has taught.

For most of us, that living evidence is fairly sorry evidence, for most of us do not follow Our Lord very well. But it does not need to be that way, for we can change into true followers of Christ whenever we desire to so do. In some things, such as the unthinking, habitual sins we commit, this may be difficult, especially for the vast majority of people who do not consider these habitual sins to be sins, but rather, classify them as somewhat undesirable deviations from Christ’s norm which He readily forgives.

However, we must readily acknowledge that every time we ignore these little “peccadilloes”, we are not giving testimony for Christ, and we are not giving evidence of God’s work in us. We therefore give the lie to these so called “undesirable deviations” being insignificant, and acknowledge they are sins.

When we acknowledge they are sins, we do something good, for in that acknowledgment we give testimony to Christ’s teachings.

But there is another form of testimony to Christ which we can easily make. That testimony is stating Christ is God, second Person of the Trinity, and accepting the guidance of the Holy Spirit

in following The Way to salvation which Christ taught.

Most people consider this type of thought to be so abstract that it is of little use to them, even though it is not abstract, but, rather, is just minimally intellectual.

We therefore will give a practical application of this so called abstract thought.

When you attend Divine Liturgy, or, as some call it, Mass, you are in the presence of between one and two hours of prayers. Pay attention to the prayers the Priest prays, and to those prayers you pray and to the responses you pray. Think of what Priest is saying and praying, and of that for which he is praying, and do the same for your prayers and responses. Join the Priest in his prayers, silently, but intentionally.

You will be surprised at the wide range of things for which you will be praying, and you will be giving testimony of Christ in that praying. As you receive gifts from God and begin to more and more live in accordance with The Way, you will more and more give testimony of Christ, and you will be accepting the accommodations God has prepared for you in His house.

(Ref: 1 Peter 4:7-11; John 15:26-27; 16:1-4)

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(Continued CROSS from page 8)

but weep for yourselves and your children.” Thou seest the coming destruction of Jerusalem. I will heed Thy warning, and weep for my sins, that they may not destroy me. My Jesus, mercy!

The Ninth Station, Jesus falls the third time. O dearest Jesus, utterly exhausted, Thou fallest under the cross the third time. The hardness and impenitence of men have crushed Thee to the ground. Grant that I may always cooperate with Grace, and readily

follow pious instructions. Thy will be done.

The Tenth Station, Jesus is stripped of His garments. Thou wert stripped of Thy garments, O Thou Most Holy One, to atone for my sins of impurity. I firmly resolve to keep my heart clothed in purity, all my thoughts and actions chaste.

The Eleventh Station, Jesus is nailed to the cross. My Jesus, They nailed Thee upon the cross. How great was that agony, and Thou didst bear it for me! All my life I will thank Thee for it. I will remember Thy pain when sinful desires attack me.

The Twelfth Station, Jesus dies on the cross. Beloved Jesus, Thou wert raised upon the cross, and didst die upon it. May Thy death bring me to eternal life. I believe in Thee, I hope in Thee, I love Thee above all things.

The Thirteenth Station, Jesus is taken down from the cross. Thou wert taken down from the cross, my Redeemer, and laid upon Thy Mother’s breast. In Holy Communion I receive Thee within my breast. Give me the Grace always to receive Thee worthily. Grant that through the intercession of Thy Sorrowful Mother, I may live a holy life and die a happy death.

The Fourteenth Station, Jesus is laid in the sepulcher. After Thy death, O my blessed Lord, Thy body was placed within the tomb. But Thou didst rise again the third day. I implore Thee, by Thy resurrection, make me rise glorious with Thee at the Last Day to be forever united with Thee in heaven, to love Thee and bless Thee with the angels and the saints throughout eternity.

(Ref: 2 Cor 6:1-10; Mat 4:1-11)

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CHILDREN'S PAGE

A BANJI STORY (Getting To Your Just Reward)

Banji is a person who has many varied and common experiences which are sometimes shared with us. We seem to never find out if Banji is a boy or a girl, and some people think they know who Banji is, but they always guess wrong.

When Banji was in school there was a boy named Bornel who was different from everyone else. Bornel was tall and skinny, had his hair cut so close to his scalp that it looked like peach fuzz, wore big, round glasses through which his big eyes seemed to peer like they were looking through a ship's portal, and when he was excited (happy, sad, or just agitated) he would stutter. A lot of the other students made fun of Bornel because he was so different from everyone else, and because they could make him stutter in speech so easily.

Banji and Bornel went to the same schools for several years. Some years they were in the same classes, and some years they were not, so there were times Banji and Bornel saw each other very often, and sometimes when they did not. When they were young and had classes together, Banji would seek out Bornel at recess, and often sit with him at lunch, because Banji could see that no one else would even talk with Bornel except to make fun of him. As the years passed Banji noticed that Bornel became more and more withdrawn, and that when they had not seen each other for several months it took longer and longer for Banji to get Bornel to respond to even the most common conversation.

As Banji became older Banji realized that Bornel had become withdrawn and not very talkative because of so many people making fun of him, so Banji tried to become more friendly with Bornel - partly out of sorrow or empathy for Bornel, but mainly because Banji knew that Bornel was a very likable guy when they were little and that he still was a very

likable guy.

The people who made fun of Bornel did it for different reasons. Some of them were just plain evil, and did nasty things just because they wanted to do nasty things, and it was easy to do nasty things to Bornel. Most of these were the school bullies. Now it is a horrible but true fact, that children will be afraid of a school bully, and will not like a school bully, but will also follow a school bully's lead. This means that if a school bully treats someone meanly, the other children will often do the same. Often, if they do not, they too will be treated meanly by the school bully.

No one dared to treat Banji meanly because Banji treated Bornel decently, but that was because Banji had a reputation for being one of the kids who got things done - like putting together school dances and picnics, and a reputation for being extremely intelligent - Banji was always reading books and scored real high on all the intelligence tests, and for never quitting at sports, even those at which Banji really was not too good.

But Banji to this day feels that if the friendship with Bornel had been more important to Banji, and worked on and cultured, that Bornel's childhood would have been a more happy childhood.

Each one of us is what we are. We can not do too much about our physical appearances or our innate intelligence, but we can make the best of our physical and mental gifts. Bornel's parents should have groomed him better when he was little, and not made or allowed him to look as strange as he did - especially with his peach fuzz haircut and big round glasses. Nothing could be done about his being so skinny and tall, nor could much have been done about his stuttering, but Bornel's parents could have given him a regular haircut, and regular glasses would have been less expensive than those big, round, face covering glasses they had him wear. It is as

if Bornel's parents were being bullies to him just like the school bullies.

Now God is a lot different from Bornel's parents. He made each of us different, but He never bullies us, and He always gives us what we need to get to Heaven - we just have to accept what He gives to us and, just as important, we have to properly use what He gives to us.

Bornel had the deck stacked against him by his parents and by the school bullies, and even by Banji not being as good a friend as possible. Yet Bornel went to school, learned, graduated, and did what was good and proper. He wished he was more normal in appearance, but he did the best with what he had and even though he did not like being teased and pushed around, he still turned out OK.

Surprisingly, the biggest school bully is considered very successful today, but he is the least happy of all the kids that went to school with Banji and Bornel. That is because he still really is a bully, and bullies are nothing more than cowards who have to get their own way - and we all know cowards are always afraid and die a thousand deaths, but people with the guts to do what is right - even if they are afraid - live and find happiness and joy in God.

What this boils down to is, if you do what mankind approves, mankind will glorify you while it uses and abuses you, but then God will not allow you into His house, leaving you the only eternal alternative, which is Hell. But, if you do what is right, mankind will give you mankind's damnation, which mankind deems to be your just reward, but God will give you His just reward, which is eternal happiness with Him in Heaven.

(Ref: 1 Cor 10:6-13; Luke 19:41-47)

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CHILDREN'S PAGE

BIBLE HISTORY FOR CHILDREN

8. The Flight Into Egypt

SOME time after the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph, and said: "Arise, take the child and His mother, and flee into Egypt. Stay there until I shall tell thee. Herod will seek the child to kill Him." Joseph arose, took the child and His mother, and went into Egypt.



THE HOLY FAMILY IN NAZARETH

2. Herod was still waiting for the return of the wise men. At last, when they did not come, he grew very angry. He ordered that all the male children in Bethlehem and its neighborhood from two years and less should be killed. So it was done. Then there arose a great lamentation, and the mothers would not be comforted.

3. Some years later, Herod died a terrible death. Then the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in Egypt, and said to him: "Arise, take the child and His mother, and

go into the land of Israel." Joseph arose, took the child and His mother and went to the land of Israel. He retired to Galilee, and lived in Nazareth.

QUESTIONS

1. *Who appeared to Joseph soon after?*

2. *For what was Herod still waiting?*

What order did he

give?

3. *Who appeared to Joseph when Herod was dead?*

9. The Child Jesus Remains Three Days in the Temple

WHEN Jesus was twelve years old, He went with His parents to Jerusalem. The holy days of Passover (the feast that celebrates the Angel of Death passing over the Jews in Egypt and their freedom from Egypt and Pharaoh) being over, Mary and Joseph returned home. But Jesus remained in Jerusalem, and His parents knew it not. They made a day's journey, and sought Jesus among their relatives and neighbors. As they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem. They were in great sorrow and affliction.

2. After seeking for three days they found Him in the temple. He was sitting in the midst of the doctors, listening to them and asking them questions. And all, that heard Him, were astonished at His wisdom and His questions.



JESUS AMONGST THE DOCTORS

(Continued BIBLE HISTORY on page 12)

CHILDREN'S PAGE

(Continued BIBLE HISTORY from page 11)

3. His mother said to Him: "Son, why hast Thou done this to us ? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing." Jesus answered: "Why did ye seek Me? Did ye not know that I must be about the things of My Father?"

4. He arose and returned home with His parents to Nazareth, and was subject to them. He grew in wisdom and grace before God and men. He stayed with His parents at Nazareth till the beginning of His public life.

QUESTIONS

1. *What happened when Jesus was twelve years old?*

2. *Where did Mary and Joseph find Him?*

3. *What did His mother say to Him?*

4. *Whither did He go with them?*

Catechism

LESSON FIRST: On the End of Man.

Q. 161. Say the Apostles' Creed.

A. I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified; died, and was buried. He descended into hell: the third day He arose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty: from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Some people say Holy Ghost instead of Holy Spirit. When we are talking about God, they mean the same thing. We should also remember that Roman Catholics often refer to themselves as Catholics, but that the reference to the Holy Catholic Church was made during the times of the Apostles, and that we now call the Church The Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

LESSON SECOND: On God and His Perfections

Q. 162. What is a perfection?

A. A perfection is any good quality a thing should have. A thing is perfect when it has all the good qualities it should have.

Q. 163. What is God?

A. God is a spirit infinitely perfect.

Q. 164. What do we mean when we say God is "infinitely perfect"?

A. When we say God is "infinitely perfect" we mean there is no limit or

bounds to His perfection; for He possesses all good qualities in the highest possible degree and He alone is "infinitely perfect."

Q. 165. Had God a beginning?

A. God had no beginning; He always was and He always will be.

Q. 166. Where is God?

A. God is everywhere.

Q. 167. How is God everywhere?

A. God is everywhere whole and entire as He is in any one place. This is true and we must believe it, though we cannot understand it.

Q. 168. If God is everywhere, why do we not see Him?

A. We do not see God, because He is a pure spirit and cannot be seen with bodily eyes.

Q. 169. Why do we call God a "pure spirit"?

A. We call God a pure spirit because He has no body. Our soul is a spirit, but not a "pure" spirit, because it was created for union with our body.

Q. 170. Why can we not see God with the eyes of our body?

A. We cannot see God with the eyes of our body because they are created to see only material things, and God is not material but spiritual.

Q. 171. Does God see us?

A. God sees us and watches over us.

Q. 172. Is it necessary for God to watch over us?

A. It is necessary for God to watch over us, for without His constant care we could not exist.

Q. 173. Does God know all things?

A. God knows all things, even our most secret thoughts, words, and actions.

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THE STUPIDITY OF SIN, TURNING SIN TO BENEFIT

Our Lord brought the son of the Widow of Naim back to life. What would be your reaction and thoughts if, upon being brought back to the living, the Widow planned and carried out her son's murder, or that son planned and carried out his suicide? What if the plan was not to cause death, but rather to injure? Both planned death, and planned injury, especially under the circumstances of the Widow of Naim and her son, are stupid. The Widow's son was her only means of support, the only member of her immediate family left, and the only one she loved as we love family in a unique manner. The Widow's son felt deep love for his mother, and desired to take care of her in that love a son has for his mother. Therefore, any thought of the Widow or her son intentionally causing injury to that son, or intentionally causing his death, is deemed stupid and illogical.

That is exactly how stupid sin is, especially after one has received absolution and then sins again. Venial sin would be similar to injury of the son, and mortal sin like the death of the son. It is amazing how often each of us is stupid, for we all keep on sinning.

If we focus all or even most of our attention on things of this world, of getting what we can of the things we want in this world, then that is what our eternity will be - not the good things of this world but rather an eternity without God for God will not have been our main focus. But if we focus on God, or mainly on God, then that is what our eternity will be - an eternity with God.

Every time we commit a sin, whether

it be mortal or venial, every act or thought about someone which is not a loving thought or act, every desire to have a thing just for the sake of having it, every attempt to have someone bend to our will, every desire to be important or have fame or celebrity, every attention to sensual satisfaction, every focus on the flesh and not on God, leads to an eternity without God.

But every resisting of sin, every thought or act about someone which is based in Love and desire for their well being, every desire to have a thing because of its usefulness or the use for good to which it can be employed or even for intellectual interest which stimulates the intellect, every attempt to lead or guide someone to Holiness without impinging on their Free Will, every desire to be a good example for the sake of the salvation of others, every pleasurable sensation received as a result of expressing Holy Love of another or received in appreciation of that which God has provided, and every thought and act made in the Love Our Lord has given to us, is a reward for living that Love and leads to an eternity with God.

We can even take moral advantage of our sins and of the sins of others whether or not they be against us.

Our own sins we can fight, realizing that sinning makes as much sense as having been raised from the dead into a life we love, and then committing suicide. The sense of victory when we successfully resist sin is a feeling beyond compare. The discovery of sin in our life and rooting it out is pleasing in the finished product, which is ourselves as Holy persons.

When a sin is committed against us we have the opportunity to experience something similar to what God experiences when we sin. As an example, when a thief steals something

from you, not just something of inconsequence which was given to you by someone you can not remember, but something you worked very hard to obtain or which was given to you by someone you cherish very much, when this happens you experience an unmeasurable anger. This anger is like unto that which is in God when we sin, when we reject Him and steal the Gift of Grace which He has given to us and then just throw it away.

But how does God treat us in response to our sins? Even though He has something like anger, He gives us another chance for as long as we are alive in this world, and no more chances after the Last Judgment. His reaction is that of Love and Divine Mercy, and Divine Judgment only if there is a final rejection of Him by a person.

That, then, should be our reaction as well. **We can still lock up the valuables to protect them from the thief, and we can put the thief in jail to protect us from him. But we also must try to lead the thief to repentance, to rejection of his old life and to acceptance of a life in Christ, all without interfering with the thief's Free Will. This actually is as difficult as it seems - just ask God about His working with you!**

Every time we are successful in assisting someone into a life of prayer, a life of working with Our Lord, we acquire an ally in our own fight against sin, . . . against our own ungodly inclinations, . . . and against the father of sin, Satan.

So it behoves us to seek our own resurrection from sin, and to seek the rescue of every other person from sin, and to attempt a sinless life. Imagine how joyful a place the world would be if no one sinned!

(Ref: Gal 5:25-6:10; Luke 7:11-16)

AUGUSTINUS CONTRA DONATISTAS:

Augustine refutes the Donatists on Unity in the Church

An abstract by JOHN A. COR-
CORAN

My dissertation begins with re-searching the history of Donatism, reflecting on its origins and its development, and setting forth its theological affirmations. In describing Augustine's activities as Bishop of Hippo from A.D. 396 - A.D. 430, I focused on an analysis of his theological arguments against the Donatists, and determined the consequences of his theological perspective within that context. Finally, I state the contemporary significance of my dissertation for the Church, that is, that the conflict between Augustine and the Donatists may also be considered a contemporary ecclesiological issue.

Donatism came into being as a fourth century schismatic church in Roman North Africa. Its roots lay in the persecution of Diocletian which had begun in A.D. 303. Several edicts had been issued in Nicomedia, enjoining the demolition of Churches, the burning of sacred books, and the proscribing of clergy, with the punishment for resistance being imprisonment, torture, or death. Those Bishops and Priests found to have handed over sacred books to their persecutors were labeled *TRADITORES* and were shunned by the Donatists. They were seen as a pollution on the Church and having given in to their persecutors. The Donatists claimed that as long as the Catholic Bishops had these *TRADITORES* in their succession of Bishops, the Catholic Bishops would not be true Bishops. Consequently, the Donatists refused to accept Caecilian, as the newly consecrated Bishop of Carthage

in A.D. 311, contending that Caecilian's consecrator, Felix of Aptunga, was a *TRADITOR* during the persecution of Diocletian in A.D. 303. The North African Numidian Bishops supported the schismatic movement, and consecrated Majorinus to stand in opposition to Caecilian. Majorinus was succeeded by Donatus, who has given his name to this schism.

Donatus and his followers separated themselves from the Catholic Church, making much of the personal worthiness of sacramental ministers, and insisting on the rebaptism of Catholics who chose to join the Donatist ranks. The latter included roaming supporters, the *CIRCUMCELLIONES*, who were given to great violence in their attempt to spread their message. Hence, the Donatists may be considered ecclesiastical purists. Similar to the Novatianist viewpoint (c. A.D. 250), they asserted that because the Church was comprised of saints, it was therefore Holy. From this position, they went on to conclude that:

1. The Sacraments as administered by *TRADITORES* were invalid;
2. The Donatists alone made up the One, Holy, Catholic Church;
3. The Catholic Church forfeited its claim to be Holy, and to be the Body of Christ, when it tolerated morally unworthy clergy to function within it; and
4. The Church of Caecilian and his successors had contaminated the whole Church in North Africa, and the Church throughout the world, which was in communion with it.

In brief, the Church for the Donatists consisted entirely of morally pure men and women. Therefore, they considered that the Donatist Church alone was the *ECCLESIA CATHOLICA*-the morally and spiritually pure Body of Christ, and the only true successors to the Apostles.

In A.D. 367, the first substantial opposition and response to Donatism came from Optatus, Bishop of Milevis in North Africa, in his treatise, *CONTRA PARMENIANUM*. The central argument in this treatise was that the Do-

natist sect, because of its lack of catholicity and its false claim to holiness, could not be the One, Holy, Catholic Church. Since the Church must be indivisibly one Church, all schismatics, including the Donatists, severed themselves from the Church, "like branches broken off from the parent tree." Optatus' treatise became the background for Augustine's systematic refutation of Donatism.

Augustine was not only aware of the deep divisions that Donatism was causing in the North African Church, he also found it necessary, in meeting the Donatist challenge, to develop his own unique doctrines of the Church, the Sacraments, and Grace, to a degree that has influenced subsequent Western theology. Hence, Augustine was compelled to devote a great period of his episcopacy in Hippo to the refutation of the Donatist perspective. For him, the Church as "the realm of Christ," and "His mystical body and bride," is identified with the Universal Catholic Church, which has its center in Rome. It teaches the whole truth and not fragments of it; it has worldwide extension and geographical universality, rather than the particularity that was manifested by the Donatists.

For Augustine also, the Catholic Church is a "mixed community," comprised of good and corrupt people; its ultimate moral and spiritual perfection belongs to God's final consummation. This "mixed community," nonetheless, is characterized by a unity which is dependent upon a union of love among Christians, the antithesis of which is a divisive and hateful spirit resulting in schism-"rending Christianity's seamless robe and tearing His Body apart by an act of *NEFARIA SEPARATIO*." Because the Donatists had abandoned the principle of Christian love, they had separated themselves from the true Church of Jesus Christ.

As an empirical and historical institution, the Church must include sinners as well as those who reflect sainthood,

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and Augustine saw the error of the Donatists to have been the attempt to establish some kind of institutional barrier between these two groups. He argued that the precedent of the history of Israel was that God intended the two kinds of human being, good and bad, to exist side by side in the Church.

Augustine argued that the Church was One only when the members of the Church expressed love for one another, and that it was Holy, not because its members were holy, but rather because God gave to the Church its holy character. As history records, in A.D. 411, there was a conference at Carthage where Catholic and Donatist Bishops held an official debate in front of an imperial emissary with Augustine leading the Catholic representation. The result was that the Empire suppressed the Donatists, fined them, and confiscated their property.

In summary, my dissertation is centered on Augustine's controversy with the Donatists and the theological principles, which the struggle enabled him to set down. What evolved from this is the clear indication how Augustine's teaching on the unity of the Church, on the Ministry, and on the Sacraments, as well as his teaching on the Church's relations with the state, rooted itself in the thought of ages to come. Having become thus identified with the Church's authority, Augustine's teaching will continue to warrant this stature, and enjoy this distinction until the end of time. He was a theological thinker and a theological power. The history of Christian Doctrine might never have been the same, had he not been raised up to proclaim the faith at such a critical juncture as the turn of the fifth century.

What was the true calibre of Augustine's thought? Perhaps the only informed answer to this question is its ability to root itself in the minds of his successors throughout succeeding generations. At least, here we would find confirmation of the intellectual and spiritual stature accorded to Augustine

in the world of Christian scholars and religious thinkers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Reverend John A. Corcoran received his B.B.A. degree in Economics from Pace University, New York City, 1970, and his M.B.A. degree from Fordham University, 1975. Through 1981, he studied theology at the Institute of Theology, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, under the direction of The Reverend William A. Johnson, Ph.D., Teol. Dr., Professor of Philosophy and the Albert V. Danielsen Professor of Christian Thought; Adjunct Professor of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies at Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts. In 1983, he received his Master of Sacred Theology degree from New York Theological Seminary. In 1992, he was awarded the Doctor of Ministry degree in Spiritual Direction from the Graduate Theological Foundation, Donaldson, Indiana, which also awarded him the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Theological studies in May 1996. His doctoral dissertation was titled, *Augustinus Contra Donatistas: Augustine Refutes the Donatists on Unity in the Church*. His academic *Ordinarius* during his doctoral studies was The Reverend Doctor William A. Johnson, and he received further academic guidance from The Reverend Doctor George Williams Webber, former President of New York Theological Seminary, The Right Reverend Professor Krister Stendahl, former Dean, and Professor of New Testament, Harvard Divinity School of Harvard University, and The Reverend Doctor Peter A. Fiore, O.F.M. Doctor Corcoran was also privileged to have access to the following library facilities: General Theological Seminary, New York Theological Seminary, Union Theological Seminary, Fordham University, Bangor Theological Seminary at Portland, Maine, Vanderbilt University Divinity School, Nashville, Tennessee, and the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium. He now resides with his wife in Portland, Maine.

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PERFORMING YOUR VOCATION

Whether you realize it or not, your vocation is to attain eternal union with God, and to influence everyone you can to also fulfill their vocation, which is exactly the same as your vocation.

For most of us we engage in this vocation while engaging in other, ancillary vocations, such as being a spouse, parent, employee or employer, engaging in skilled, unskilled, or professional business pursuits; and generally doing those things which people normally do.

Some are called to cloister or monastic life, but even those in a convent or monastery must engage in person to person interaction, and a convent or monastery is not a safe haven from temptation. If anything, life in a monastery or convent is fraught with even more temptations than life in the world, and there are more spiritual failures behind the walls which protect one from the outside world than there are in the world of temptation and sin in which we live.

Even the life of a hermit is fraught with danger, for if one becomes a hermit so that they can escape the world of temptations, then one is unable to give good example of overcoming sin, and one is unable to give the good example of seeking sacramental absolution.

A person who leaves the "outside world" for the sake of escaping temptation is running away from their vocation of being a beacon of how to live a sanctified life of husband, wife, father, mother, employee, employer, government official, and all the other things which people are and do. Such persons do not follow the lead of our Lord, for our Lord did not run away from His vocation.

Instead, He showed us through Saints Peter, James, and John, what was in store for us if we fulfill our vocation.

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We will be in eternal communion with our Lord, and all the Saints and Angels, our Father, and the Holy Spirit.

We are admonished to be clean in our sexual relations. We are to not just refrain from sexual relations with one to whom we are not married, but to engage in such relations only with one to whom we are married and then as an expression of love, not lust. Such an expression of love is much more passionate than just sexual relations, and is not a weakness but rather is part to the fulfillment which God designed in the love of *holy* matrimony.

How can we show the world how married life is supposed to be if we are not engaged in societal life?

We are to be honest in our business dealings. How often do we see rank dishonesty in the business world? Every day. From mistakes at the check out counter at the local store, and not trying to return lost money or property found on the street, or taking office supplies from ones' place of employment or using the office copier for personal matters, to using information and economic position to the detriment of of another business, not honoring a business commitment, and outright theft, the business world is rank with dishonesty and lack of honor.

If we remove ourselves from the business community, how are we to give good business example to the business community?

If the Christian is not right there with those who disdain God, how are those who disdain God supposed to receive the example of loving God? If the Christian does not practice Christianity, then the Christian is not a Christian.

Practicing Christianity in The Way

taught and practiced by our Lord is a gentle persuasion by way of example. It is not a belaboring exhortation,

for a belaboring exhortation by its nature damages that which is belabored, and the belaborer. Practicing Christianity is a gentle exhortation which is always there and never yields.

It may seem that by being active in the world we run great risk of succumbing to the multitude of temptations which surround us. Well, in this instance, what seems to be, actually is. We do run the risk of succumbing to some of the temptations which surround us. But we can not teach by example if we are not actively in this world.

the business world is rank with dishonesty and lack of honor.

If we remove ourselves from the business community, how are we to give good business example to the business community?

Our quest for perfection can not be successful if we abandon the world and those we know, for in such abandonment we de facto fail in the vocation God has given us; we fail to be beacons to the

world as to how God wants all of the world to live.

If we have any common sense, we will wish to go directly to Heaven when we die. We will wish to avoid anything like purgatory, or even a spiritual "finishing school" where we would learn to best behave in union with God. We only go directly to Heaven if we have attained the exemplary goodness and holiness which accompany spiritual strength in this life, and that is something very few people attain.

We can only attain such spiritual strength by battling and eventually being successful against sin and temptation - and it is in engaging in that battle that we show the world how to live.

(Ref: 1 Thess 4:1-7; Mat 17:1-9)

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THIS DIVISION AMONGST US

Psalm 54:10-15 . I have seen iniquity and contradiction in the city. Day and night shall iniquity surround it upon its walls: and in the midst thereof are labour, And injustice. And usury and deceit have not departed from its streets. For if my enemy had reviled me, I would verily have borne with it. And if he that hated me had spoken great things against me, I would perhaps have hidden my self from him. But thou a man of one mind, my guide, and my familiar, Who didst take sweetmeats together with me: in the house of God we walked with consent.

You, my brother Rome, my brother Constantinople, my brother Egypt, my brother Armenia; we walked together eating sweetmeats in the house of the Lord. Now it is said that we can not eat sweetmeats together, because of the foolishness of a millennium past, the foolishness of desire for power which can not be had, the foolishness of pride, the foolishness of fear . . .

We can not eat sweetmeats together because you do not wish us to eat sweetmeats together, for no other reason do we not eat sweetmeats together. You wish us to only eat the sweetmeats if you hand them to us, but God hands them to us all as He has from the beginning. Are we to ignore God and only accept that which you give to us? Did God not give to each of us, and does He not still give to each of us? Then why must one or another be the elder brother - were we not all born at the same time, not as twins or triplets where one must of needs be born before the other, but rather born joined at the Heart and sharing but one Heart amongst us?

And should one of us die, would not that death kill all of us, for we are so joined that what befriends one befriends all, and that which causes illness in one becomes a sickness to all.

(Continued SWEETMEATS on page 17)

(Continued SWEETMEATS from page 16)

Are you happy? Do you have all the sweetmeats? No, you do not, for you are forced by He Whose house we all seek to enter, to acknowledge that you do not have all the sweetmeats, to acknowledge that your brothers also have sweetmeats as fully and of as fine a quality as yours.

We speak not of those who have sourmeats and believe them to be sweetmeats, for they have not walked in the House of God; though they say they have, they know they have not, and they receive no nourishment for that which they have is without the flavor of God. They do not share our Heart.

Why do you hesitate my brothers? What is there to fear but He who has the power to destroy because of your neglect?

How can you fear to lose that which you do not and can not have, that which you are not and can not be?

If it were Satan who railed against us, what surprise would there be? That he who is our enemy would attack us in our house, in our home, is to be expected. But that our brother would be enemy, would speak against me, would wish to subject me; why does my brother hate me?

Does he hate that we live from the same Heart?

The words of forgiveness have been made all around. The words of reconciliation have all been spoken, they have all been written, they have revoked the words of division, yet we do not eat sweetmeats together, and until we all eat sweetmeats together we will none of us eat sweetmeats in the House of God.

What think thee, that God will honor thine foolish pride, that He will honor thine stiff-neck, that He will honor thine desire to be the maker of sweetmeats? Thou canst not be the maker of sweetmeats, for the sweetmeats are of the Creator and He hast given them to thine brothers as well as thee.

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SENATOR LANDRIEU ATTEMPTS TO HIDE HER PRO-ABORTION STANCE

In a letter published in the 15 March 2001 edition of the Clarion Herald, Senator Landrieu states she is not pro-abortion. She states she is opposed to late term and partial-birth abortions. However, in her closing paragraph she states, "I believe this issue" (abortion) "involves wrenching decisions which, within reasonable and common-sense guidelines as stated above, should be made by the individual, her doctor and according to her conscience - not by the government."

Senator Landrieu therefore does believe abortions should be allowed. If one believes abortions should be allowed, such one can not be pro-life, and can not be anti-abortion. The only position left is that of being pro-abortion.

There is no middle ground in morality. Our Lord clearly stated, "He that is not with me, is against me." (Mat 12:30, Luke 11:23). With this as our guide, we realize that morality (which is God's unchanging law, not man's changeable law) is constant and does not allow one to stand on both sides of a moral fence. When someone is against allowing abortions in some instances and in favor of allowing abortions in other instances, such person is in favor of allowing abortions and no qualification of conditions can change the fact that under certain circumstances such person is in favor of allowing abortions. Such person is therefore pro-abortion.

Were the subject extra-marital sexual intercourse, then the statement, "I believe this issue involves wrenching

decisions which, within reasonable and common-sense guidelines as stated above, should be made by the individual, her doctor and according to her conscience - not by the government," would un-equivocally be one which supported extra-marital sexual intercourse. Likewise, there should be no doubt that holding the position that the decision to have or not have an abortion should be made by the mother, is supporting the ability to have an abortion, and therefore is a pro-abortion stance.

+ Paul, S.S.B.
Metropolitan Archbishop of The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil

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(Continued LETTERS from page 3)

petition urges President Bush to do whatever is necessary to bring about peace and justice in Sudan.

*We also have a petition for our youth to sign.
http://www.christianpetitions.com/petition.html?name=sudan_youth*

They can make their voice heard even before they are old enough to vote. We need to teach our children to care about the hurting and suffering in this world.

Thank you so much for your prayers and concern. Please forward this to everyone who you know would or should care.

In Christ's Love,

*Pastor Gary I. Kusunoki
Executive Director*

PS The number one request that we get from the people in Sudan is Prayer. It is the greatest need and the greatest help.

(Continued LETTERS on page 18)

(Continued LETTERS from page 17)

Pray for peace, for protection, for the provision of needed food, medicine and supplies. Please PRAY that President Bush will take action to end this atrocity. Let him know you are praying when you sign our petition at <http://www.christianpetitions.com/petition.html?name=sudan> Thank you and God Bless you.

I bow down to Thee, O Master; I bless Thee, O Good One; I beseech Thee, O Holy One; I fall down before Thee, O Lover of mankind; and I glorify Thee, O Christ; for Thou, O Only-begotten Master of all, O Only Sinless One, wast, for the sake of me, an unworthy sinner, given up to death on the cross in order to free the soul of a sinner from the bondage of sin.

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WHY DO WE HAVE HUMOR SECTIONS IN REUNION?

Because . . .

:-)



God the Father removed the benefits of Eden from mankind when our first parents rebelled against Him. From thence, all mankind, instead of being blessed with a virtually effortless physical sustenance, was blessed with sustenance by the sweat of each one's brow.

But God did not condemn mankind to a joyless life. Indeed, He blessed mankind with laughter, happiness, and joy in unmeasurable abundance.

Indeed, even our Lord, Jesus Christ, engaged in humor, one of the best examples being His banter with the woman at the well. Of course, this humor does not translate very well, but it can still be seen even in English.



HUMOR

John loves the race track. One day he was there betting on the ponies and nearly losing his shirt when he noticed this priest who stepped out onto the track and blessed the forehead of one of the horses lining up for the 4th race. Lo and behold, this horse - a very long shot - won the race.

John was most interested to see what the priest did the next race. Sure enough, he watched the priest step out onto the track as the 5th race horses lined up, and placed his blessing on the forehead of one of the horses. John made a bee-line for the window and placed a small bet on the horse. Again, even though another long shot, the horse the priest had blessed won the race.

John collected his winnings and anxiously waited to see which horse the priest bestowed his blessing on for the 6th race. The priest showed, blessed a horse, John bet on it, and won! John was elated. As the day went on, the priest continued blessing one of the horses, and it always came in first.

John began to pull in some serious money, and by the last race, he knew his wildest dreams were going to come true. He made a quick stop at the ATM and withdrew every penny he owned, and awaited the priest's blessing that would tell him which horse to place the bet on.

True to his pattern, the priest stepped out onto the track before the last race and blessed the forehead, eyes, ears and hooves of one of the horses. John placed his bet - every cent he owned - and watched the horse come in dead last.

John was dumbfounded. He made his way to the track, and when he found the priest, he demanded, "What happened, Father? All day you blessed horses and they won. The last race, you bless a horse and he loses. Now I've lost my life savings, thanks to you!!"

The priest nodded wisely and said, "That's the problem with you Protestants... you can't tell the difference between a simple blessing and the Last Rites!"

(Thanks, Stacy)

(Continued SALVATION from page 1)

Part of that truth is that God created everything, including the angels and including mankind. Just as some of the angels rebelled against God, so too did all of humankind rebel against God.

Angels, being without hindrance to their intellect, and existing, as it were, after the creation of time but before the running of time, make decisions in fullness at the time their decisions are made. Thus, those angels who rebelled against God did so in fullness with no intention of seeking reconciliation with God.

Humans, being with hindrance to their intellect, not perceiving fully in their minds and spirits due to the influence of their bodies, their corporal nature, and existing as it were, after the creation of time and in the running of time, do not make their decisions in fullness while their bodies are living, but only make their decisions in fullness at the instant of death, when their corporal nature no longer hinders the full functioning of their intellect. However, the fullness of a man's final decision, which is to either be with God or to rebel against God, will generally be in accordance with the manner in which each man has lived his life, and the temporary decisions each man has made during his life.

Thus it is that our conduct, practices, beliefs, and endeavors whilst living here, have a major influence on our hereafter, even to the point of being outcome determinative.

We know the history of mankind's creation, downfall, and redemption - those who are not familiar with this history are behoved to learn it and to conduct themselves accordingly.

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ did not just appear and do what was needed for mankind's redemption. He became man while remaining fully God, fully Divine, and then taught mankind by His example.

(Continued SALVATION on page 19)

(Continued SALVATION from page 18)

Included in His living example to us of how to live, and why live that way, are fasting, particularly when preparing for something extraordinary. Also included are: actively assisting those in need, the sick and infirm, the poor, the persecuted, and an inexhaustible list which amazingly includes prayer and submission to the Will of God the Father.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is God; and so we may wonder why God would pray. We know to Whom He prayed; He prayed to His Father. We find the answer to why He prayed in His prayers.

We are now preparing to celebrate the proof of the truth of Christ; His resurrection. We celebrate that proof of truth in His suffering, crucifixion, death, and resurrection.

We can prepare for that celebration as though it were just another day, or as though it is just another important or memorable day, or as though it is what it is, the most important day, for that was the day on which all of mankind regained the until then lost ability to have eternal communion in God.

It may be that you have not yet prepared very well for this celebration. If so, it is not too late. Do fast, though be prudent for in the world in which most of us live, one must also maintain good health, and it is very possible for fasting to take such a toll on health as to impinge on one's ability to function or even drive a vehicle.

Do pray, but for a change use the creative abilities which God has given to you. Pray the traditional prayers; pray for yourself and others, and for that which you need or desire; pray thanksgiving to God; but also pray in ways you have never before prayed. Pray as talking with God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; each One. Look, listen, and feel in payer of wonder. Use your physical as well as your spiritual, and nuzzle your children as they sleep and

thank God for them. Feel the warmth of having an elderly relative or friend still be with you. Cry in the loss of loved ones, and in the joy of their awaiting you.

Do more than just drop money into the poor box. Do more than contribute to a charity which helps those in need. Write to your government officials expressing your concerns regarding abortion, the low scholastic abilities of our students, the abominable situation in the Sudan and other places where people are being persecuted and murdered on Satan's altar. Chastise your government officials for being two faced on abortion, for saying they would never have one but that they do not have the right to prevent a mother from having one - chastise your government officials for allowing the murder of individuals who are totally innocent, for allowing the murder of babies.

Listen to someone who wishes to talk.

Our Lord did these things. If we wish to be as God, we must do as God, and must do for the same reason as did God - Love.

Our Lord established numerous means of bestowing Himself to us. These means are the only means by which a human can invoke the bestowing of God's Grace upon a human, even upon one's self. Our Lord promised that when one to whom He had given the authority in succession to His Apostles, properly invokes Grace unto a person, Grace actually is imparted to that one if the recipient is properly disposed. This assured bestowal is through the Sacraments and the Sacramentals. Do not neglect them.

It is a simple fact that no one other than Jesus Christ has provided for our redemption.

Prepare for the celebration of mankind's redemption by imitating the Redeemer.

✚ **Paul, S.S.B.**



FASTING AND ABSTINENCE IN NEW ORLEANS

When we cook in New Orleans, we automatically reach for various spices with which we enhance the taste, aroma and presentation of the delightful variety of foods with which we have been blessed, which are created by God to exist literally at our door steps.

The variety of animal and plant life here is as though God moved a little bit of the Garden of Eden to the Mississippi River Delta, and deposited every herb, spice, and mineral used in cooking onto every kitchen window in the area.

When someone cooks, their cooking habits effect everything they prepare, no matter what the circumstances. Our every day cooking habits thus have a profound effect on fasting and abstinence, making these extremely difficult to practice unless one uses diligence.

For example, if today is a day of abstinence from meat, one might prepare grits or Malt-O-Meal as a main part of the main meal. However, grits or Malt-O-Meal lose something of their penitential character when the cook instinctively reaches for the imitation bacon bits, and stirs in Brer Rabbit Syrup as well.

Or, were one to decide to have fish with the main meal, are any of fresh blackened redfish, fresh trout (salt or freshwater), fresh bass, fresh blue crabs, grouper, a crawfish boil, shrimp remoulad, an oyster po boy, are any of these a real hardship????

Does one really endure hardship when, after a fast, around the corner is the local restaurant (in Arabi) which serves a 32 oz. steak (any cut), plus fettuccini alfredo or a baked potato, and salad, for \$15.00 (soft drink is extra).

There is no penance involved in eating Brother Dominic's bread (St. Joseph Abbey), and water (Kentwood or Abita Springs).

Our fasting "curse" in New Orleans is only cured by a total fast, by not eating or drinking at all. And all that does is make room for more culinary delights.

Sigh.

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Every Sunday, a little old lady placed \$1,000 in the collection plate. This went on for weeks until the priest, overcome with curiosity, approached her. "Ma'am, I couldn't help but notice that you put \$1,000 a week in the collection plate," he stated. "Why yes," she replied, "every week my son sends me money, and what I don't need I give to the church." "That's wonderful, how much does he send you?" "Oh, \$2,000 a week." "Your son is very successful, what does he do for a living?" "He is a veterinarian," she answered. "That is a very honorable profession. Where does he practice?" "Well, he has one cat house in Kansas City and another in Dallas." [Thanks to Roy and Fr. Dcn. George (R.C.)]

REUNION

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FIRST CLASS MAIL