



# REUNION

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



Volume 17 No. 2

OF THE CHURCH

OF MAN WITH GOD October, 2007 A.D.

## ~ THE EUCHARIST IS THE FOUNDATION AND KEY TO HOLINESS AND SPIRITUALITY ~



*From Metropolitan Archbishop Paul, S.S.B.  
To the flock entrusted into my care:*

Holiness, being filled with Grace, living in accordance with The Way taught by Jesus Christ - God, acquisition of and maintaining the Three Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, seems to have a multitude of paths which seem to possess some measure of viability.

But there is only one path and it must be followed by at least three of the human aspects: intellect, emotion, and spirit. The intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects of each person must function in concert following Christ simply because He Is. There can be no greater reason, no stronger argument, and no other reason than, Jesus Christ Is. **IS.**

It is defective to emotionally desire God but fail in intellectual and spiritual development. It is also defective to intellectually appreciate God but fail in emotional and spiritual development. While one can develop intellectually and emotionally as relates to God, unless one develops spiritually the intellectual and emotional viability are questionable and of questionable value.

The crux of spiritual development is in the Sacred Eucharist, for Jesus Christ God said unless we eat His flesh and drink His blood we shall not have life in us.

The fullness of what Jesus Christ - God, said is: (*John 6:49-59:*) ***Your fathers did eat manna in the desert: and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven: that if any man eat of it, he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying: How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say unto you: except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me: and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live for ever.***

And:

(*Matthew 26:26-28:*) ***And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread and blessed and broke and gave to his disciples and said: Take ye and eat. This is my body. And taking the chalice, he gave thanks and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins.***

(Continued EUCHARIST on page 7)

## THANK YOU

Thank you for your prayers, your material and spiritual support, four your kind thoughts and deeds.

No, I do not feel as though I am about to die or suffer some additional physical malady.

I just wish to thank you, and so I thank you, each and every individual, for all of the assistance you have given and the kindness you have shown.

+ Paul

**GOD DIED FOR YOU. ARE YOU WORTH IT?  
Are you worth the price He paid for your redemption?**

## FAITH SUSTAINED

Anthropologist believe that religion is applied by cultures which do not have science to explain a subject. Thus, a society which has expertise in farming will be likely to not apply religion to farming unless inexplicable things happen, or unless bad crop conditions happen. But anthropologist use this belief to place religion into the same category as magic, and to discredit religion in the process of discrediting magic.

The same can be said of the weather - godless weathermen and scientists are searching for logical reasons as to why Hurricane Lili decreased from a strong category four to a weak category two, in less then one day, and why Hurricanes Katrina and Rita did the opposite.

But whether it be crops or weather, we know that prayer works, that prayer is not

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+ Paul, S.S.B.,  
Publisher .

+ The Basilians - The Basilian Fathers +

**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 - If your typed letter is accompanied by an ASCII DOS Text copy on a floppy, we will thank you with extra prayers - Ed.)*

Dear Archbishop Paul,

How can we know if you send us the copy of REUNION we get or if someone else sends it to us.

*(Continued LETTERS on page 9)*

**WORLD WIDE WEB:**

**The direct connection to the computer which functions as the message, file, and communications center for The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil, is:**

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**Issues of REUNION, in color, in Adobe PDF and HTML, are available at:**

<http://www.reu.org/public/news.htm>



**On Line Chat Room: at the main web site log-in <http://www.reu.org> You have to register with the system before you can use it, and it is best to send e-mail to set a "chat schedule".**

**Current Active Mailing Lists  
Originating From BasilNet ReuNet  
HIOC BBS**

**The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil - The Basilian Fathers**

Each ML (Mailing List) has its own rules, which are posted in the ML on a regular basis. Abbreviated commands are also in the signature of each ML message sent via e-mail. You must have permission from the appropriate ML administrator or SysOp to gate a ML.

**PRAYERS**

Prayer requests operates under a simple premise. When we pray for each other we fulfill a portion of our Christian duty. Prayers for the living and for the dead are allowed and welcome. Those who make prayer requests agree to include the prayer requests of all who make them here. Prayer requests MUST be moral and for moral

*(Continued WEB on page 3)*

If you wish to receive **REUNION** please see \*\*\*\* above, and fill in your name and address below and send to:

**REUNION**

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311 Hickory Avenue  
Harahan, Louisiana 70123

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City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

(Continued WEB from page 2)

purposes . . . hopefully morality will not have to be defined at length (i.e.: use common sense).

Participants and subscribers agree to honor the moral prayer requests posted, and to pray for those intentions and persons for at least one week.

**BIBLE-DAY**

Every day we try to post a Chapter of one of the Books of the Bible on the ML for discussion. This began with Genesis, Chapter 1, and continued to the end of Genesis, and so on to the next Book. Discussion is not limited to the Chapter posted each day. We use the Douay-Rheims translation which, while it sometimes has editorial comments biased against the Orthodox Church, is a basically a good, non political translation.

**SERMONS**

A place to exchange sermons by Christians. POSTERS must be, and certify they are: male; duly ordained Priests, Deacons, Ministers, or seminarians of, a Christian Church, Jurisdiction, or Religion; that the Creed of the Council of Nicea is the Creed, or expresses the basic dogma, of the Church of which each participant is a member. Rabbi may participate and post. (Us Christians may learn something). ANYONE may RECEIVE the ML.

When you post in this ML you must provide your church/religious affiliation in the post.

**STUDIES**

The STUDIES ML is a list which studies Orthodoxy and the Theology/Dogma of the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church. We attempt to have the text of what ever book/publication we are using posted in pertinent parts during the discussions. This is a slow moving ML, primarily because most people do not wish to or have the time to or are not inclined to read and study as is required for participation in a ML

such as this. However, for those who do, it is well worth the effort.

**ONE-BODY**

This is a mailing list designed to promote and further reunification of the Holy Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church with the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church and all other Jurisdictions of the Body of Christ; and to bring each and every human being into union with Christ Jesus our Lord. **Activity - very light.**

**REU\_PUB**

This ML sends REUNION (publication) to its subscribers, in Adobe (PDF) format. In some instances this is better than the paper print issue because the pictures often are in color. The ML does support discussion, and discussion is encouraged. It is mainly used by those who desire to receive the Newsletter but do not have access to the WWW (each issue is available on-line), and those to whom we can not send a free print copy.

**We have initiated a simplified method of subscribing to our InterNet mailing lists.**

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Enter your e-mail address in the place provided, select the mailing list to which you wish to subscribe, click the **Subscribe** button, and an e-mail will be sent to you to confirm your desire to subscribe to the mailing list.

To confirm your subscription simply follow the instructions in the confirmation message (just click the reply command on your e-mail program without changing anything in the Subject line) and you are subscribed to the mailing list.

Most of the mailing lists then send out a welcome message.

Some of the mailing lists use the mailing list name as the sender's address. Some use the sender's name, and others use Fr. Paul, or father.paul@reu.org on behalf of whoever the one who originated the message. We will bring some consistency to this sometime in the future, probably.

To un-subscribe just follow the above procedure for subscribing and click on the unsubscribe button. A confirmation message will be sent to which you should reply to confirm the un-subscription.

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+

## THE BASILIAN FATHERS

(The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil)

### SEQUENCE

In the Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Seven Sorrows of The Blessed Ever Virgin Mary, there is a Sequence, which is given below.

Read it very carefully, with comprehension and understanding. If you have fortitude, while you read it, pray it slowly, comprehending what it prayerfully acknowledges and requests. Then ask yourself, "Am I willing and desirous of everything in this prayer, particularly as it applies to me?"

### SEQUENCE

**Next the cross in tears unceasing,  
Worn by sorrow aye increasing,  
Stood the Mother 'neath her Son**

**Though her soul already riven,  
Simeon's sword divinely driven,  
Edged with anguish, lo! Hath run.**

**Sad, afflicted as no other,  
Was that chosen blessed Mother,  
Having none but Christ begot.**

**Faithful Mother! Upward gazing,  
Heart and hands to Son upraising,  
Mourns and grieves His cruel lot.**

**Hard the man his tears refraining,  
Watching Mary uncomplaining,  
Bear a sorrow like to none.**

**Hard the man that shares no sorrow,  
With a Mother fain to borrow  
Every pang that writhes her Son.**

**Tortured, scourged in expiation  
Of the sins that marred His Nation,  
Mary watched His every pang.**

**She beheld her dear Begotten,  
Stretched in death by all forgotten,  
As on hoisted rod He hang.**

**Mother, fount of love, the purest,**

**Floods of sorrow thou endurest,  
Turn them toward this heart of mine.**

**With these waters purge its guileness,  
Burn with love its innate vileness,  
With the flame of love divine.**

**Hallowed Mother, do this favor,  
Those five wounds that gored my  
Saviour  
Deeply on my heart engrave.**

**Pains thou gladly with Him sharest,  
Anguish that thou bravely bearest,  
Fully share with me, I crave.**

**Blend thy tears with mine in wailing,  
Sorrow for my sins prevailing,  
Till the break of endless dawn.**

**Next the cross to take my station,  
By thy side in desolation,  
Thus, I long with thee to mourn.**

**Maiden of all maidens fairest,  
Sate me with the grief thou bearest:  
Spurn me not, be thou kind.**

**Mine it be Christ's throes in sharing,  
Mine it be His anguish bearing,  
These His wounds to keep in mind.**

**May His scars my body carry.  
May His cross and blood not tarry  
Soul of mine to satiate!**

**Thus inflamed with love consuming,  
Shall I not thy aid presuming  
Safe the reck'ning day await?**

**When in death my eyes are losing,  
Ope them, Lord, to see reposing  
Victory's crown in Mary's hand.**

**When my frame by death is broken,  
And my doom by Thee is spoken,  
Be it, Lord, the better land.**

**Amen.**

+

## ONE OF YOUR PRIESTLY DUTIES

**And the consequence of failure  
to perform this duty.**

Ezechiel 33:7-9.

So thou, O son of man, I have made thee a watchman to the house of Israel: therefore thou shalt hear the word from my mouth, and shalt tell it them from me.

When I say to the wicked: O wicked man, thou shalt surely die: if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked man from his way: that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but I will require his blood at thy hand.

But if thou tell the wicked man, that he may be converted from his ways, and he be not converted from his way he shall die in his iniquity: but thou hast delivered thy soul.

~\*~

*Being a Priest is a serious matter, as well as a lot of fun. Embrace both.*

+

## A PRIEST NEVER "GIVES UP", NEVER QUILTS

**Well, at least not for very long.**

One of the "marks" of a Priest is he never quits, never gives up. He may from time to time be discouraged, but he rebounds.

This does not mean he does not acknowledge reality. He simply continues using various avenues.

The above "sounds" nice, but what does, it mean. Examples will explain.

**Large numbers of people seem determined to fornicate and to commit adultery even though these are expressly forbidden by God in direct commandments.**

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A Priest teaches fornication and adultery are immoral, wrong, and lead to eternal damnation. He is correct and accurate. People know fornication and adultery are immoral, wrong, and lead to eternal damnation, yet many people persist in these sins. The Priest knows people persist in these sins.

Does the persistence in sin cause the Priest to cease teaching and preaching against these sins? No, he persists in his proper teaching and preaching. Does he perceive any improvement in the general condition in these matters? Possibly some small improvement from time to time, but he also acknowledges the current culture promotes immorality through every possible venue. He acknowledges the recruits to these sins are vastly greater in number than those who oppose these particular sins.

Why does the Priest persist? Because he follows God's lead, and that is what God does.

Can the Priest ever even feel confident he has been successful in just one instance, with just one person? Not often. Not really. Though he will from time to time perceive his efforts to be the main cause of an individual being on the path to countenance in accordance with that person's station in life, the Priest will never really know the final outcome until "eternity".

He may become discouraged, and especially discouraged if one who was stable in countenance, fails; and the entire process must be begun anew. Discouragement can become even stronger if the individual dies in the process of reestablishing a life of countenance. But the Priest possesses the ultimate "final weapon" so-to-speak. He can continue to pray for that individual even after the individual is dead. The most powerful "weapon" in his arsenal in that situation is the Requiem Divine Liturgy.

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## PEOPLE ARE CONSTANTLY MAKING UP, CREATING, THEIR OWN RELIGIONS.

Some of these have exerted sincere effort in an attempt to determine spiritual reality and in that effort have concocted a belief system. But they always insist on maintaining control and therefore refuse to accept in their belief system anything which has even the potential of diminishing their control. They therefore have not really been sincere in their inquiries into spiritual reality.

Others create their own religions, attempting to formulate a world into what they would like it to be. There is really no difference between these individuals, and those who belong to a religion and then make exceptions to that religion's rules so they can engage in their favorite sins - thereby creating a new religion.

These types of new religions are created every hour of every day.

A Priest knows the real religion. It has not changed from its inception and its inception is eternal. It began with God, Who had no beginning and has no end, and that one true religion persists and continues. The new religions have no effect on the reality of the one true religion. The true religion applied to the first creatures of which we are aware, the angels - actually, technically, the spirits -, all of whom we think were created at the same time. Then it applied to the first humans, and to all humans thereafter. Since the nature of humans is different from that of the spirits, the true religion applies in accordance with that human nature. After the fall of Adam and Eve, that human nature changed in accordance with sin, and the same true religion applied in accordance with that fallen human nature. The system for application of that same true religion was given a different structure through various Prophets and holy men, notably Noah, Abraham, and

Isaac, and was formulated in the covenant which was eventually written in the Ten Commandments and the Law of Moses. When the Messiah Jesus Christ God came, taught, endured His passion and death, and rose from the dead, the New Covenant of the very same true religion was established giving mankind new means of accessing God's assistance.

The Priest teaches this, teaches the one true religion, teaches its doctrine and truths, teaches the means God has given whereby mankind can access God's assistance and that these means are exclusive - that there are no other means.

Yet the new religions continue to proliferate like fleas on a gutter rat.

A reasonable person would expect every Priest to be discouraged because of this. Indeed, from time to time, when an individual Priest allows reasoned logic to overpower Faith, Hope, and Charity, he should become discouraged. But Faith soon overcomes reasoned logic, and allows reason to function in Faith, thereby assisting to Priest to acknowledge the Free Will possessed by every human, and the exercise thereof. This process is simple to comprehend once one realizes reasoned logic demands one reach the logical conclusion that every individual will desire to form a religion which changes that individual's favorite sin into a virtue. But reasoned Faith shows the Priest those innumerable individuals who reject creating their own religion in favor of attempting to follow the one true religion established from all time by God. This gives the Priest Hope, for himself and for all of mankind. And Divine Love, Charity, makes his heart restless for the salvation of each and every human being. And especially for the salvation of those whom he knows.

In that Charity the Priest again relies on the one most powerful and effective thing he can do - praying the Divine Liturgy. His own personal life and example will be defective because he is not perfect. But

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his example of persistence in pursuit of the Divine Will will influence others and will effect others, as will his praying the Divine Liturgy.

Why does he persist? Is that not what Jesus Christ God did and does? Is a Priest to do other than what God did and does? Of course not. He is to follow the example of He who truthfully said, "My yoke is easy and My burden is light," while at the same time told us we must take up our cross and follow Him.

He relies on doing what Christ did in the most profound act possible: the unbloody sacrifice and offering of the Divine Liturgy.

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## EVERY PRIEST IS A LAMP

The world is in darkness, illuminated only by the light which shines from every true Priest, for every true Priest is a lamp.

Whether you were chosen by God, or thrust yourself into the Priesthood despite God's desires, you became a lamp to the world.

The fire which produces your light is the divine fire of the Holy Ghost. Whether you are transparent, shining forth that light unimpeded, a painted lens shutting out that light or changing the hue of that light from brilliant white to a false color, a filthy lens blocking much of that light and casting shadows, or a dusty or not quite clean lens shield protecting the light while shining much of it upon mankind, that divine fire resides within you because of your Priesthood.

The choice to become a Priest was yours. Once made and made effective in ordination you willing took on the obligations of the Priesthood. Without regard to the reasons for which you became a Priest, you became a Priest and now are possessed of the obligations of the Priesthood.

Therefore, you above all men, are obligated to burn with the fire of God's fire, shine with the light of God's fire, casting its light upon all of mankind.

Even if your station or situation in life no longer allow you to participate in the fullness of the Priestly practices, you are obligated to participate in those Priestly practices in which it is possible for you to participate.

The talents of the Priesthood are the only talents which always make a return when they are invested. The return is always determined in part by the effort the Priest makes in that investment. Will you invest the talents the Creator has given to you, and receive a reward pleasing to you, even though it be a small reward because your investment effort was small? Or will you bury your talents in the ground and return the original talents, having made no effort to invest those talents, and receive a reward not pleasing to you - a reward commensurate with your lack of investment effort?

You need not light your lamp for it was lit at ordination. You need but clean your reflector, polish your lens, and stand tall for all to see by your illumination. If by some terrible act your light has extinguished, touch your wick to the light of God in confession and absolution and you will again illuminate the entirety of creation.

Do not paint your lens. Leave the clearness which God Himself has provided for the clarity which God provides is truer than any tint you add.

And always remember to replenish both your fuel and your fire with and in the Divine Liturgy and therein with the precious Body and Blood of Christ.

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**ST. MARY MAGDALENE NEWS**  
**St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox**  
**Church**  
**125 Hartsie Drive - 150 Angell Lane**  
**Waveland, Mississippi 39576**

*St. Mary Magdalene was destroyed by hurricane Katrina. There are no buildings or trees remaining on the property. A good natural setting is very important for maximum benefit to be derived from a spiritual retreat facility - the prime use of Saint Mary Magdalene was as a retreat house and our Mother House. That retreat house setting will require many years to re-establish at Saint Mary Magdalene.*

**We have therefore decided to sell the land, which is approximately one acre, composed of two adjacent lots, one being approximately 100 feet by 350 feet, the other being approximately 40 feet by 100 feet, situated approximately 550 feet from the beach of the Gulf of Mexico. (See the area outlined in bold in the above survey map. The survey map is not in true proportion due to the printing process.)**

**We have listed the property with Coldwell Banker Alfonso Realty, (228) 467-0244, agent Bobby Compretta, (228) 216-7197, for \$99,000.00. Inquiries should be directed to the real estate company or agent.**

**We would have rebuilt if the forest on the property had not been destroyed. We hope to establish another retreat house upon sale of the property.**

*We do fervently request your prayers, that this property will be sold and be sold very soon. We request this so we may proceed with establishing a new Mother House in a new location as soon, as quickly, and as completely as possible.*

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(Continued EUCHARIST from page 1)

And:

**(Luke 22:19-20) And taking bread, he gave thanks and brake and gave to them, saying: This is my body, which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of me. In like manner, the chalice also, after he had supped, saying: This is the chalice, the new testament in my blood, which shall be shed for you.**

There is no symbolism in these statements by God. These are harsh, stark, statements of fact made by God.

Those who receive a symbol of Christ's Body have no life in them. Those who receive a symbol of Christ's Blood have no life in them. They may be the most advanced intellects of their age possessing knowledge and understanding of God surpassed only by that possessed by God Himself, but they are spiritually dead by God's own words. They may have hearts filled with love, and desire God with every fiber of their being, and desire to be good with a strength only surpassed by that which is possessed by God Himself, but they are spiritually dead by God's own words.

It is impossible to misinterpret those words: **except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you.** It is impossible to think those words mean anything other than that which they explicitly state.

Therefore, every great evangelist of modern times who *never* received the Sacred Body and Blood of Christ, which can only be confected by a true Priest who possesses Apostolic Succession, every one of them is spiritually dead. What God does with them we have no idea. What He does with them is His business. But is difficult to imagine these men and women, who studied Christianity so industriously, would take Jesus Christ God at His own word in all matters and then make an

exception and promote the concept that when it came to eating His Flesh and drinking His Blood, God was speaking and instructing symbolically. It obviously was not a parable of the flesh and blood which Jesus Christ God proclaimed. It was and is an iron clad doctrine.

Those who receive the Body and Blood of Christ unworthily are guilty of His Passion and Death. Every Priest, therefore, prays Divine Liturgy with a certain level of fear and trepidation, for in his heart of hearts he acknowledges his unworthiness is set aside only by the very Essence of God which he receives in the Sacred Eucharist.

Because of this no Priest should ever confect the Eucharist if he is in a liturgical setting not of his own Church or Jurisdiction, unless he is completely certain of the dogmatic correctness of where he is. If he is visiting a monastery and has any level of doubt as to the dogmatic correctness of that monastery or its liturgy, he should not con-celebrate, for it is possible the Eucharist has not be confected in that place in recent times and those who receive the Eucharist he has confected will actually receive the Eucharist while no believing in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. For the same reason a Priest who has left the true Church and joined a Protestant organization should never confect the Eucharist. In all such instances that Priest will then have caused Christ to be brought into a home which has rejected Him, and will have caused those who receive Christ unworthily to be guilty of His Passion and Death, guilty of His Body and Blood. And that Priest will also be guilty of each of those individual sins himself.

**For a similar reason the required fast prior to reception of the Sacred Eucharist should not be waived or a dispensation granted unless it is requested. For as long as the congregation has not been granted a blanket dispensation from the fast, it is possible for someone who should not receive the Sacred Eucharist, to abstain without public humiliation.**

For a similar reason the required fast prior to reception of the Sacred Eucharist should not be waived or a dispensation granted unless it is requested. For as long as the congregation has not been granted a blanket dispensation from the fast, it is possible for someone who should not receive the Sacred Eucharist, to abstain without public humiliation. For there always is the presumption the individual who abstains from the Eucharist so does because the fast was broken. Of course in war time or emergencies it is customary for the Priest to give general absolution and a blanket dispensation from the fast, thus alleviating the potential for embarrassment to those who otherwise would be unable to receive the Body and Blood of Christ.

Anything which a human can do, and everything which a human does, which is not done in conjunction with or accordance with or after or in the consummation of the Flesh and Blood of Christ, is worthless, without effect - or at least without permanent effect, and will not be effective.

It is for this reason those who seek social justice without first seeking to instill spirituality in those who are to dispense and those who are to receive social justice, especially that which is prompted by the emotions, are doomed to fail, for they have not sought social justice in conjunction with spirituality.

It is only when social justice is taught and practiced as a part of and in conjunction with spirituality that social justice may become a part of the fabric of life. True social justice simply can not exist apart from spirituality. Nor

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can any improvement in the material condition of man, of humankind, of society, take effect unless it is rooted in the foundation of spirituality. This is why social organizations which lack a spiritual foundation, especially those which rely on the goodness of humans, on the ability of humans to take care of the needs and betterment of other humans, are doomed to failure - for they are not founded in the source of all goodness which is God.

When spirituality is acquired and made a part of one's every day life, social justice will of necessity proceed from that individual. Therefore, if one seeks to secure social justice from government, one must first seek to instill spirituality in

the members of government. If one seeks to obtain social justice from an employer, one must first seek to instill spirituality in that employer and in each member of the employer's management. And it must never be forgotten to seek to instill spirituality in those who are to receive that which the government dispenses in social justice, as must be the employee who is to receive social justice from the employer. Otherwise the recipient will not seek to receive in a just manner and will not give to the government and to the employer that which is also required by social justice. If both the dispenser and the recipient are not founded in spirituality there will be no social justice. The government will not just take care of those unable to care for themselves without being at fault, but will be forced to provide for the lazy. this will diminish the level of care available to those in need without fault. The employer will be forced to pay wages even to those who do not truly earn them, diminishing that which is available to those who have earned.

**It is for this reason those who seek social justice without first seeking to instill spirituality in those who are to dispense and those who are to receive social justice, especially that which is prompted by the emotions, are doomed to fail, for they have not sought social justice in conjunction with spirituality.**

Since true spirituality can only be found in and emanate from the Sacred Body and Blood of Christ, and thence from those who worthily receive it, it is a waste of time to seek social justice without including in the attempt a continual attempt to instill spirituality and an

Eventually an antagonism will develop between those who fund the government and those who unworthily receive from the government; and between the employer and the unworthy servant. This will, as history has shown, break down into an antagonism between the tax payers and the welfare recipients; and between the employers and the employees; both without realization the antagonism was caused by lack of spirituality.

acknowledgment of the continual need to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. Not some imitation thereof, but the real Thing.

Since only those who have true Priesthood in unbroken Apostolic Succession have the ability to confect the Eucharist, the Sacred Body and Blood of Christ, true social justice, true resolution of all of humankind's problems, and real salvation, can only be found in the true Church.

The Orthodox Church in its many Jurisdictions is the definition of assuredness of validity of Priestly Apostolic Succession and therefore the ability to provide the Body and Blood of Christ, that they may be eaten by the faithful. So too is it with a few other Churches, such as the Armenian, and at least some if not the majority of the Coptic, and several others. But some have recently brought their "corporate" belief in the real presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist into question. And others, such as the

Anglican Communion, clearly denounced and disclaimed the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and forsook the Priesthood and Sacramental Holy Orders hundreds of years ago.

Evangelicals, Pentecostalist, Baptist, and others even go to the extent of preaching the soda crackers and grape juice they use in a communion service represent but are not actually the Body and Blood of Christ. In this they are accurate, for in this they acknowledge they do not have the ability to confect the Eucharist.

But do they not also thereby condemn themselves for not eating an drinking the Body and Blood of Christ. For were not His words : *"except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you."* ?

What happens to otherwise good people who do not consume the actual and real Body and Blood of Christ? These may be good intellectually, good emotionally, but they are not good spiritually. The expression, "otherwise good," is appropriate to them for they truly are "otherwise".

What happens to them is up to God. It is God's decision. It is God's right, and His alone. But we can effect that decision by praying for such people. In praying for such people we create the potential for their accepting Christ on His terms rather than on their terms. Since He is God and they are not, His terms are the important terms, and theirs are without merit.

Those who do not regularly receive the Flesh and Blood of Christ become stiff necked. Those who have never received the actual, real Flesh and Blood of Christ are the most stiff necked. Intellectually they can have great knowledge. Emotionally they can engage in the greatest, most compelling, exhausting, and difficult good. Yet they are spiritually without life for they have not done that which they had the ability to do. They have not

(Continued EUCHARIST on page 9)



(Continued EUCHARIST from page 8)

eaten Christ's Flesh and drunk His blood.

To be enabled to follow Christ's command that we eat His Flesh and drink His blood, these people would have to become members of the Orthodox Church, or one the few other parts of the True Church. To become members of the Orthodox Church they would have to do things required by the Church, which things were made requirements by Christ and under His direction. And they would have to stop doing other things because the Church requires they not be done and those requirements were also established under the command of God and under God's direction. That which must be done and that which must not be done were established under the Apostles, as were all dogma. We may from time to time comprehend some matter to be dogmatic in our own times, but the source and expression of that dogma is in the Apostles and their time.

Those who do not become members of the Orthodox Church (or another part of the True Church) fail to become members because they do not wish to give up that which is required, do not wish to do that which is required, and/or do not wish to acknowledge some aspect of dogma - and dogma simply is the truth revealed by God.

Because they put what they want before what God wants, they do not have life in them. Is that not what caused the Devil to wind up in his condition? Do you wish to wind up in that condition also?



+ Paul, S.S.B.

Ref: Eph. 3:13-21; Luke 14:1-11; John 6:49-59; Mat 26:26-28; Luke 22:19-20

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**PATRIARCH ALEXY II  
PRAISES ROME'S  
ALLOWING GREATER USE  
OF THE 1962 LATIN RITE  
And leaves the door open for  
more amicable contacts be-  
tween the Roman and Russian  
Orthodox Churches.**

According to the Italian daily Il Giornale, Pope Benedict XVI's move to allow for wider celebration of the Roman Missal of 1962 has received a positive reaction from the Orthodox Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow.

The Patriarch said, "The recovery and valuing of the ancient liturgical tradition is a fact that we greet positively,"

The Patriarch apparently made no comment on the traditional Latin Liturgy being degraded to an extraordinary form of the liturgical celebration, choosing to stress the positive aspects, saying, "We hold very strongly to tradition . . . Without the faithful guardianship of liturgical tradition, the Russian Orthodox Church would not have been able to resist the period of persecution."

Il Giornale further reported (ROME, AUG. 29, 2007), when asked about the relationship between Rome and Moscow, the patriarch said: "It seems to me that Benedict XVI has repeated many times that he desires to work in favor of dialogue and collaboration with the Orthodox Churches. And this is positive."

Regarding a possible meeting between Alexy II and Benedict XVI, the patriarch said it must be well-prepared, and "be an encounter that truly helps to consolidate relations between our two Churches."

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(Continued LETTERS from page 2)

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Christ's Peace,

+ Paul

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## CHILDREN'S PAGE

### *The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism*

**Q. 757. What do you mean by saying that our sorrow should be supernatural?**

A. When I say that our sorrow should be supernatural, I mean that it should be prompted by the grace of God, and excited by motives which spring from faith, and not by merely natural motives.

**Q. 758. What do we mean by "motives that spring from faith" and by "merely natural motives" with regard to sorrow for sin?**

A. By sorrow for sin from "motives that spring from faith," we mean sorrow for reasons that God has made known to us, such as the loss of heaven, the fear of hell or purgatory, or the dread of afflictions that come from God in punishment for sin. By "merely natural motives" we mean sorrow for reasons made known to us by our own experience or by the experience of others, such as loss of character, goods or health. A motive is whatever moves our will to do or avoid anything.

**Q. 759. What do you mean by saying that our sorrow should be universal?**

A. When I say that our sorrow should be universal, I mean that we should be sorry for all our mortal sins without exception.

**Q. 760. Why cannot some of our mortal sins be forgiven while the rest remain on our souls?**

A. It is impossible for any of our mortal sins to be forgiven unless they are all forgiven, because as light and darkness cannot be together in the same place, so sanctifying grace and mortal sin cannot dwell together. If there be grace in the soul, there can be no mortal sin, and if there be mortal sin, there can be no grace, for one mortal sin expels all grace.

**Q. 761. What do you mean when you**

**say that our sorrow should be sovereign?**

A. When I say that our sorrow should be sovereign, I mean that we should grieve more for having offended God than for any other evil that can befall us.

**Q. 762. Why should we be sorry for our sins?**

A. We should be sorry for our sins because sin is the greatest of evils and an offense against God our Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer, and because it shuts us out of heaven and condemns us to the eternal pains of hell.

**Q. 763. How do we show that sin is the greatest of all evils?**

A. We show that sin is the greatest of evils because its effects last the longest and have the most terrible consequences. All the misfortunes of this world can last only for a time, and we escape them at death, whereas the evils caused by sin keep with us for all eternity and are only increased at death.

**Q. 764. How many kinds of contrition are there?**

A. There are two kinds of contrition; perfect contrition and imperfect contrition.

**Q. 765. What is perfect contrition?**

A. Perfect contrition is that which fills us with sorrow and hatred for sin, because it offends God, who is infinitely good in Himself and worthy of all love.

**Q. 766. When will perfect contrition obtain pardon for mortal sin without the Sacrament of Penance?**

A. Perfect contrition will obtain pardon for mortal sin without the Sacrament of Penance when we cannot go to confession, but with the perfect contrition we must have the intention of going to confession as soon as possible, if we again have the opportunity.

**Q. 767. What is imperfect contrition?**

A. Imperfect contrition is that by which we hate what offends God because by it

we lose heaven and deserve hell; or because sin is so hateful in itself.

**Q. 768. What other name is given to imperfect contrition and why is it called imperfect?**

A. Imperfect contrition is called attrition. It is called imperfect only because it is less perfect than the highest grade of contrition by which we are sorry for sin out of pure love of God's own goodness and without any consideration of what befalls ourselves.

**Q. 769. Is imperfect contrition sufficient for a worthy confession?**

A. Imperfect contrition is sufficient for a worthy confession, but we should endeavor to have perfect contrition.

**Q. 770. What do you mean by a firm purpose of sinning no more?**

A. By a firm purpose of sinning no more I mean a fixed resolve not only to avoid all mortal sin, but also its near occasions.

**Q. 771. What do you mean by the near occasions of sin?**

A. By the near occasions of sin I mean all the persons, places and things that may easily lead us into sin.

**Q. 772. Why are we bound to avoid occasions of sin?**

A. We are bound to avoid occasions of sin because Our Lord has said: "He who loves the danger will perish in it"; and as we are bound to avoid the loss of our souls, so we are bound to avoid the danger of their loss. The occasion is the cause of sin, and you cannot take away the evil without removing its cause.

**Q. 773. Is a person who is determined to avoid the sin, but who is unwilling to give up its near occasion when it is possible to do so, rightly disposed for confession?**

A. A person who is determined to avoid the sin, but who is unwilling to give up its near occasion when it is possible to

*(Continued CATECHISM on page 11)*

## CHILDREN'S PAGE

*(Continued CATECHISM from page 10)*

do so, is not rightly disposed for confession, and he will not be absolved if he makes known to the priest the true state of his conscience.

**Q. 774. How many kinds of occasions of sin are there?**

A. There are four kinds of occasions of sin:

1. Near occasions, through which we always fall;
2. Remote occasions, through which we sometimes fall;
3. Voluntary occasions or those we can avoid; and
4. Involuntary occasions or those we cannot avoid.

A person who lives in a near and voluntary occasion of sin need not expect forgiveness while he continues in that state.

**Q. 775. What persons, places and things are usually occasions of sin?**

- A.
1. The persons who are occasions of sin are all those in whose company we sin, whether they be bad of themselves or bad only while in our company, in which case we also become occasions of sin for them;
  2. The places are usually liquor saloons, low theaters, indecent dances, entertainments, amusements, exhibitions, and all immoral resorts of any kind, whether we sin in them or not;
  3. The things are all bad books, indecent pictures, songs, jokes and the like, even when they are tolerated by public opinion and found in public places.

**LESSON NINETEENTH: On  
Confession**

**Q. 776. What is Confession?**

A. Confession is the telling of our sins to a duly authorized priest, for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness.

**Q. 777. Who is a duly authorized priest?**

A. A duly authorized priest is one sent to hear confessions by the lawful bishop of the diocese in which we are at the time of our confession.

**Q. 778. Is it ever allowed to write our sins and read them to the priest in the confessional or give them to him to read?**

A. It is allowed, when necessary, to write our sins and read them to the priest, as persons do who have almost entirely lost their memory. It is also allowed to give the paper to the priest, as persons do who have lost the use of their speech. In such cases the paper must, after the confession, be carefully destroyed either by the priest or the penitent.

**Q. 779. What is to be done when persons must make their confession and cannot find a priest who understands their language?**

A. Persons who must make their confession and who cannot find a priest who understands their language, must confess as best they can by some signs, showing what sins they wish to confess and how they are sorry for them.

**Q. 780. What sins are we bound to confess?**

A. We are bound to confess all our mortal sins, but it is well also to confess our venial sins.

**Q. 781. Why is it well to confess also the venial sins we remember?**

- A. It is well to confess also the venial sins we remember:
1. Because it shows our hatred of all sin, and
  2. Because it is sometimes difficult to determine just when a sin is venial and when mortal.

**Q. 782. What should one do who has only venial sins to confess?**

A. One who has only venial sins to confess should tell also some sin already confessed in his past life for which he knows he is truly sorry; because it is not

easy to be truly sorry for slight sins and imperfections, and yet we must be sorry for the sins confessed that our confession may be valid -- hence we add some past sin for which we are truly sorry to those for which we may not be sufficiently sorry.

**Q. 783. Should a person stay from confession because he thinks he has no sin to confess ?**

A. A person should not stay from confession because he thinks he has no sin to confess, for the Sacrament of Penance, besides forgiving sin, gives an increase of sanctifying grace, and of this we have always need, especially to resist temptation. The Saints, who were almost without imperfection, went to confession frequently.

**Q. 784. Should a person go to Communion after confession even when the confessor does not bid him go?**

A. A person should go to Communion after confession even when the confessor does not bid him go, because the confessor so intends unless he positively forbids his penitent to receive Communion. However, one who has not yet received his first Communion should not go to Communion after confession, even if the confessor by mistake should bid him go.

**Q. 785. Which are the chief qualities of a good Confession?**

A. The chief qualities of a good Confession are three: it must be humble, sincere, and entire.

**Q. 786. When is our Confession humble?**

A. Our Confession is humble when we accuse ourselves of our sins, with a deep sense of shame and sorrow for having offended God.

**Q. 787. When is our Confession sincere?**

A. Our Confession is sincere when we tell our sins honestly and truthfully, neither exaggerating nor excusing them. +

(Continued **SUSTAINED** from page 1)

magic, for we see our prayers answered with the eyes of faith given to us by God.

Lack of faith can be compared to current agriculture practices where fish genes are implanted into corn, maize, to produce strains resistant to certain parasites, insects, and diseases. Corn is also having antibiotics implanted, so that people in poverty areas will have these antibiotics in their bodies.

But these strains of corn pollinate in the air, and thus have infected pure strains of corn, so that in a very few years most all corn will have these altered genes.

The same is true of soy beans, and of wheat.

These three crops are amongst the most abundant food staples, and they are all being polluted and poisoned for those who do not desire or who are allergic to the altered crops.

A deadly killer has been unleashed on the planet, and it can not easily be removed.

That is how lack of faith spreads.

Some idiot decides he does not want to do what God has said to do. He has decided not to believe what God has said is true. He has decided not to be what God desires. And so he creates his own faith based in sin, and mankind follows his sinful lead like pollen blown by the wind.

But if we simply look at history, not just history of two thousand years ago, but even history of today, we see God, the true God, the Trinity which is God, in full operation, effecting everything and constantly proving His existence.

How can we otherwise explain dead people regaining life; people who should have died, living; blind people whose cornea are so terribly scarred that they were blinded, now seeing even though their corneas remain scarred; people receiving the stigmata, the

wounds of Christ, on certain feast days, and then having the wounds heal - all in plain sight of physicians and the very scientists who attempt to disprove what they have themselves observed; and a young lady named Mirna who has pure olive oil come out of her hands and face when she prays - and the olive oil leaves no stain on her clothing?

It is shameful that such miracles are needed to sustain faith. We should pray for faith, so that it can be sustained without miracles - and that would be a miracle to possess.

You have seen God operate in your life, in the good things which have happened to you and your families, and in weathering the hardships which have been placed in your path. Give God the credit which is due Him, so that you can continue to say with King David, "*Ps. 85:1-2 Incline thy ear, O Lord, and hear me: for I am needy and poor. Preserve my soul, for I am holy: save thy servant, O my God, that trusteth in thee.*"

Ref: Gal 5:25-26; 6:1-10; Luke 7:11-16

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## WITHOUT GOD WE REALLY ARE POWERLESS

A very wise prayer is, "By Thy grace, O almighty God, let our wicked propensities be cured and everlasting remedies be forthcoming." It is a wise prayer, for it not only acknowledges our inability to be good on our own, but also acknowledges our inability to be anything, even to function, without God's assistance.

Those who think they understand God are as ignorant as the Pharisees who could not answer the question Our Lord posed, which, rephrased, is: Since the Christ is the son or descendant of David, how can David call the Christ, Lord, since David, being the Christ's ancestor, the Christ would have to call David, Lord, and it would be inappropriate for David to call his own descendant, Lord.

We knew, as did David, that the Christ is God; that He is the eternally begotten Son of God; that He is the Word. We also know what David was unable to know for "it" happened after his time; that the Christ is Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary, begotten of the Ever Virgin by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. The Pharisees did not know this either, and if they had known it, they would not have appreciated it for they viewed God more as a super strong and powerful human rather than as a being completely different from anything within human experience and human ability to comprehend.

This misconception as to the reality of God, as to what God really is, is very common. This misconception consistently leads to a lack of respect or a lack of proper respect for God and of God.

When we pay the lip service of saying God created us, do we really realize that means God created everything and keeps everything in existence? Do we realize it means God gives humans and angels the ability to think; provides animals with that which makes them hungry and induces them to eat and enables

(Continued **POWERLESS** on page 19)

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## COMMENTS ON SOME INDICATORS OF OUR TIMES

**Apparently religious freedom and the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America only apply to those who have no religious values and do not believe in moral absolutes dictated by God.** This fact is made clear by the situation of many American pharmacists who refuse to fill birth control prescriptions and the morning after sexual intercourse abortion medication citing their Christian beliefs. Members of Congress introduced legislation which would require pharmacists fill both types of prescriptions. Such legislation effectively dictates the dogma of every religion include allowing and promoting murder of not yet born children, and of extramarital sexual intercourse, in contravention to the the explicit law of The United States of America which states in pertinent part:

### *The United States Constitution*

***Amendment 1 - Freedom of Religion, Press, Expression. (Ratified 15 December 1791.)***

***Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.***

**Eighteen Roman Catholic Members of the United States Congress believe they can dictate Church dogma.** When Pope Benedict questioned the propriety of pro abortion legislators receiving Holy Communion, these legislators declared "religious sanction in the political arena" violates American freedoms. These legislators are, quite simply, lying. Religious freedom guaranteed to Americans does not include the ability or right to dictate what the Church teaches, dogma, to determine what is in conformity with

and opposed to dogma. American religious freedom does not include the ability or right to tell the Church who may receive the Sacred Eucharist and who may not, or the why thereof. If these eighteen fallen away Roman Catholics wish to establish a group and call it a religion and receive what they call communion the United States Constitution guarantees them the right so to do. But it gives them neither the right nor the ability to dictate to God or God's Church. The attitude evident in their statement precludes their reception of the Sacred Eucharist until such time - if ever - as they repent and openly express such repentance.

**While thinking of Roman Catholics, Saint Louis Archbishop Raymond Burke declared he would deny Holy Communion to pro abortion Senator Kerry,** forced Saint Joseph's Academy to rescind an invitation to pro abortion Senator Claire McCaskill to deliver the school's commencement address, and evidences no concern for any negative reaction to his fulfilling his obligation to God. Contrast his simple following of propriety with that of New Orleans Archbishop Alfred Hughes who, on Pentecost, at Saint Louis Cathedral, instead of focusing of the miracle of Pentecost, established an annual Mass for the victims and survivors of violence. An annual Divine Liturgy (Mass) for the victims and survivors of violence can be a good thing, but it should not supersede the celebration of Pentecost nor should it be deemed of equal importance.

**Senator Barbara Boxer, a California Democrat, called legislation which would make it a federal crime to take a minor across state lines so the minor could murder her unborn child through abortion, ". . . a bill that protects incest predators . . ."** Well, considering the fact she is a Democrat, and is from California, perhaps she is an expert on . . . . .

**The "press" and "news" media continue to attempt to make legal abortion seem desirable and those**

**who perform abortions seem to be heroic** as shown by a recent article by Stephanie Simon, Los Angeles Times, dateline Denver. Simon brings forth the image of women inducing abortions before this form of murder was made legal, in rooms splattered with their blood as they stab sticks into their wombs, their bodies racked with infection as a result. She does not mention the poor baby being stabbed to death. She decries the aversion and expressions of revulsion which abortionists experience from the general population, but she probably would express great aversion to and revulsion for Dr. Mengele (Mengela) - and there is no difference between the two. Simon says (couldn't resist) her article's heroin, medical student Megan Lederer, and her companions in abortion training, have defiance as their main motivation in pursuit of a career in abortion. Apparently Simon wrote the truth without realizing it, for unlike numerous other sins which can occur through following natural instincts, abortion is an intentional, planned act directly opposed to God's command.

**The Cannes Film Festival gave first prize to** a film about the "horrors a student goes through to ensure her friend can have a secret abortion" in Communist era Romania. No mention was made of the horrors the baby experienced.

**Cokie and Steve are at it again.** But, then, they are almost always at it. In a recent column the Roberts' write: "The essence of democracy is not majority rule, but tolerance of dissent and respect for minority rights. What happens when elections bring to power intolerant forces that impose their will on others? What happens when ethnic or religious factions feel abused and assert their right to self-rule?" But Cokie and Steve do not practice what they preach. Remember those pharmacists who do not wish to fill birth control or abortion pills? Cokie and Steve and their allies wish to force these pharmacists to provide such pills - not medication but

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pills. Ever see a baby being aborted? The baby pulls away from the “medical” instruments. It cries in pain as it is being killed. It obviously does not wish to be killed, yet Cokie and Steve and their evil allies impose their desire to kill upon these babies. Cokie and Steve and their allies are the intolerant who impose their will on others. They cry “intolerance” when their desires are opposed, but in truth they are the intolerant. They also are without courage, for their main target is the defenseless.

**What do some Jews and some Roman Catholic clergy have in common?**

An opposition to the Good Friday liturgy wherein there are prayers for the conversion of the Jews. (These prayers generally are not in the RC Novus Ordo.) An aversion and opposition to parts of the Orthodox Gregorian (Western Rite) Divine Liturgy and the Roman Gregorian and Tridentine Masses which contain passages some say are offensive to Jews. To even consider the opposition is to deny belief in the correctness, accuracy, and Divine direction which established Christianity. If Christians are to omit praying for the conversion of those who are not Christians, then the teachings of Christ are being disobeyed. If a person decides to follow the desires of those Jews who do not wish to have prayers offered for their conversion to Christianity, then the person is not a follower of Christ, is not a Christian, for that person places the desires of a creature in a position of greater importance than the expressed desires of the Creator. Such a person may be a politician, or a heretic, or an apostate, but such a person is not a Christian.

**Journalistic idiocy** found its way into a piece under the by-line of Tom Johnson (Newhouse News Service) wherein he wrote the recent postal rate increase “will boost the cost of mailings for homeowners and raise business expenses for legal services, newspapers, insurance companies, and other types of businesses . . .” Focus on the part that

reads, “will boost the cost of mailings for homeowners . . .” Are renters exempt?

**And God forbid a “journalist” should ever attribute Christian precepts to anyone who does something good, especially a nun.** Well, there are a few journalists left, and not even all “journalists” (the species with the “”) are of this bent. But! Perhaps the inability of “journalists” to attribute a desire to follow Christianity to those who so do, is the reason a recent article about the conviction of Vitalmiro Bastos del Moura, for the murder of seventy-three year old Sister (Mary ?) Dorothy Stang. The “journalist” wrote that del Moura had the nun murdered because she attempted to halt “rampant jungle clearing by loggers and ranchers that has destroyed some 20 percent of the forest cover.” In actuality Sister Dorothy was murdered because she helped build schools, attempted to assist the impoverished which reduced the number of virtual slaves the wealthy could use for plantation and other work at starvation wages, and attempted to infuse a devotion to The Way taught by Christ.

**OK, One more Journalistic whatever:** Headline reads, “Police say slain man was target of attack” (*T-P B-2, Sep. 26, 2007*). Duuhh!

**And . . . the headline stated: Chinese Paddies go back 7,700 years.** Does this mean the Chinese are Irish? :-) Or, perhaps, the Irish are Chinese? :-) :-)

**The Hmong fought besides U. S. forces in Vietnam, but are now prevented from obtaining refuge in the U. S. A. because their fighting on the side of U. S. forces classifies them as terrorist under the Patriot Act and the Real ID Act.** Sometimes the level of governmental insanity . . . *Change the law you dummies!*

**Louisiana usually is such a great source of governmental, social, cultural, and practical stupidity that when Louisiana OVERCOMES**

stupidity (all-be-it is a single instance) the event is worthy of notice. One of the Louisiana hurricane recovery agencies whose purpose is to provide housing intended to spend \$2.6 million on additional staff. Louisiana State Treasurer John Kennedy was able to persuade the agency to spend the money on housing, telling the agency board members, “You’re building a bureaucracy here, and the money is coming out of housing.” He further stated, “This is not a social program. This is a housing program.” What is doubly amazing is, the board listened to what he said, and followed his suggestion, that they spend the money on its intended purpose.

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## FALSE TEACHINGS CAUSE UNFULFILLED EXPECTATIONS

The effects of the false teachings of Protestants, Evangelicals, Pentecostals, Charismatics, and heretics and apostates in general, are quite devastating.

One of the most common of their false teachings is the promise of a life of material happiness. Even though Jesus Christ - God, did not promise a life of material happiness for His followers, but a life of happiness in the world to come, the promoters of these false religions and their false dogma teach that Jesus Christ - God, promised a life of material happiness in this world. Occasionally they add as an after thought some concept of happiness in the life after physical death.

Search the New Testament for a promise of temporal happiness - happiness in this life - and you will search in vain. Yet "preacher" after "preacher" promotes promises of material happiness as being amongst the most basic of the teachings of Jesus Christ - God.

What is the source of this lie? For the most part is based in a simple truth. When the preacher of falsehood asks his audience (they are not a congregation, they are an audience), "Do you think Jesus (or J\_E\_S\_U\_S) wants you to be happy or sad?" and answers the question saying, "He wants (or W\_A\_N\_T\_S) you (or y\_o\_u) to be happy!" he is telling the truth in part; but only in part.

Jesus wants us to be happy. He taught us that the life which we experience now is temporary; that the life we will experience after we die in the material world is the permanent life; that life in the material world is a testing and proving time for each human being which will determine whether each individual person is eternally unhappy in Hell or eternally happy with Him in Heaven. He ransomed us with His passion and death but that payment does not negate the

free will of each individual to chose or reject that which will result in eternal happiness.

But if the preachers of falsehood mention living in accordance with the teachings of Christ as a prerequisite for eternal happiness, they so do only in passing. They focus on the desire Christ has that each of us be happy, and intentionally focus on temporal happiness which is something Christ did not promise.

Eternal happiness in the "afterlife" is something they teach is guaranteed if one but believe that Jesus Christ is God. They neglect to mention the Devil believes Jesus Christ is God yet the Devil does not have eternal happiness, he has eternal unhappiness.

Most individuals experience at least some form of transient happiness from time to time. These preachers of lies take advantage of the existence of this occasional happiness, using it to induce their followers to abandon any strong focus on the eternal and thereby encouraging focus on the material. This inducement is aided by the false teachers' guarantee that simple belief that Jesus Christ is God is all that is required for eternal happiness. Since eternal happiness is guaranteed in their teachings, extreme pursuit of and an overriding desire for material happiness become virtuous under their false scheme.

Another source these preachers of lies use is the common acceptance that illness and economic hardship or economic deprivation are considered to be adverse and evil. (Only rarely are they considered to be opportunities.) As evils they must have a cause or source. In many cultures that cause or source is deemed to be the individual who suffers the illness or economic deprivation, or the ancestors, relatives, or associates of those who so suffer.

The leaders of falsehood, inspired by the Father of All Lies, teach that that the Devil is the cause of their illness or economic problems. It makes sense,

they teach, because God is good, wants people to have material well being, as do people in general. Therefore the evils of illness and economic deprivation must be caused by the Devil. These preachers then suggest that since they have the insight to make the situation clear to their followers, obviously they have the insight and ability to lead their followers into economic and physical health.

They support this line of thought with citations from the Old Testament which equate material well being with blessings from God. They completely ignore the spiritual situation of the Old Testament. That time was a time of preparation for and anticipation of the Messiah. Material security was necessary for the preservation of the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. After Moses secured the people and Joshua began the securing of the Promised Land, God used material prosperity and good health as rewards to the Jews for following His direction, and material deprivation and ill health as punishment for deviating from His instructions. Underlying this was (and is) the reality of spiritual rewards and punishment, but the strength of this reality would only become clear with the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. His Resurrection gave real force, gave reality, to the concept of life after death, and of the resurrection of the dead. Thus, by focusing on the inability of most of the people who lived under the Old Testament to comprehend the reality of life under the New Testament, these preachers are able to cite and quote Scripture passages which focus on seeking material well being for material well being under that system was an indicator of spiritual well being. But there is nothing Christian in that concept, nor is there really anything Jewish in that concept.

What happens when material happiness is not achieved by the followers of these false teachers? They are told by their leaders that they have not sown seed that they may reap the harvest. The basic phrase, "sow that ye may reap," is

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basically accurate and in conjunction with the basic phrase, "ye will reap what ye sow," are founded in truth. But while the only guarantee of "reaping" applies to that which is spiritual, the false teachers use the concepts to encourage their followers to "sow" money that they may "reap" money and thereby obtain fulfillment of their material desires. Of course the "sowing" is accomplished by donations to the teachers of falsehood, the preachers of lies.

For some of the followers of these materialistic teachings any material "success" is sufficient to satisfy their underlying requirements and desires. They attribute their material successes to following and contributing to the preachers of lies whom they follow, and not to their own efforts which are enabled by God's will.

But for most of these followers their lack of gross or striking material success is attributed in their own minds to lack of fervor in following their pastors - their pastors who have lead them to fields of loco weed watered by springs of poison.

Those who perceive themselves to lack success in the material world, be it in health, or in economic status, often despair. They have accepted a false system and when they do not have success in that false system they have no recourse outside of that system for they have rejected the truth. They have rejected the truth, that spiritual well being is God's promise to those who follow The Way He taught. And they reject The Way He actually taught.

Consider the poor hunchbacked fool who left the true Church to follow a charismatic, evangelical, pentecostalist, money grubbing, womanizing preacher, who promised J\_E\_S\_U\_S would cure his hunchback if he attended the preacher's church (notice it is the preacher's church, not God's Church), supported it financially, and recruited others to attend the preacher's church. After forty years with no cure, bent over

so much that when he walks he looks between his legs at where he has just left, but he persists in the false church for he gave up true Faith for empty promises. It is difficult for those whose focus is on the material world, to gain or regain focus on the spiritual world. It also is very difficult for those who focus on the material world to admit they made a mistake, especially a mistake about what God promised and about the spiritual world.

Such people are doomed to be forever unfulfilled, never be secure in any level of what they consider to be positive material condition, never really satisfied, never really happy. That is, unless they accept what they really already know. That real, permanent, and complete happiness is only found in pursuing and attaining that which Jesus Christ - God, really promised; that being in making the Two Great Commandments, the Ten Commandments, The Virtues, Beatitudes, Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, and all that Christ taught, integral in their very being, in their very essence.

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## SAINT BENJAMIN

Feast day: March 31, and October 13/26 (412, 424?)

The Christians in Persia had enjoyed twelve years of peace during the reign of Isdegerd, son of Sapor III, when in 420 it was disturbed by the indiscreet zeal of Abdas, a Christian Bishop who burned the Temple of Fire, the great sanctuary of the Persians. King Isdegerd threatened to destroy all the churches of the Christians unless the Bishop would rebuild it.

As Abdas refused to comply, the threat was executed: the churches were demolished, Abdas himself was put to death, and a general persecution began which lasted forty years. Isdegerd died in 421, but his son and successor, Varanes, carried on the persecution with great fury. The Christians were submitted to the most cruel tortures.

Among those who suffered was St. Benjamin, a Deacon, who had been imprisoned a year for his Faith. At the end of this period, an ambassador of the Emperor of Constantinople obtained his release on condition that he would never speak to any of the courtiers about religion.

St. Benjamin, however, declared it was his duty to preach Christ and that he could not be silent. Although he had been liberated on the agreement made with the ambassador and the Persian authorities, he would not acquiesce in it, and neglected no opportunity of preaching. He was again apprehended and brought before the king. The tyrant ordered that reeds should be thrust in between his nails and his flesh and into all the tenderest parts of his body and then withdrawn. After this torture had been repeated several times, a knotted stake was inserted into his bowels to rend and tear him. The martyr expired in the most terrible agony about the year 424.

Does anyone know what Persia is called today?

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(Continued **POWERLESS** from page 12)

them to eat. Do we really comprehend it means God not only made and keeps in existence each molecule of hydrogen and oxygen and makes the reaction which joins them forming water and keeps them together in the compound known as water, but that He also does this with each of the most elementary and most complex substances and everything in between?

We know these things but we do not realize these things.

We know this but do not realize this for we can not comprehend all of the things which exist and their inter-relationships. But God can, and He does.

This ability is far beyond that of which a simple "super" or different species of human is capable. This ability is far beyond that of any conceivable entity be it sentient or otherwise.

But humans are inclined to grant unto their own species the attribute of superiority. Another species may be technologically superior, but humans believe they can learn any technology. God is therefore often intuitively conceptualized by humans as an entity with a superior technology. And many believe any entity can be persuaded. Others, who conceive the entire universe to be god, knowing they can manipulate the physics, chemistry, inanimate, animate, and sentient entities, which compose the universe as they perceive it, therefore believe they can manipulate god. The reality of God is totally foreign to their minds. Nor are they willing to accept the reality of God.

God is not limited by their concept of Him. He is not dependent on their concept of Him.

God not only made us, and keeps us in existence, and enables us to do everything we do, and to think everything we think. But He also wants what is best for us, and what is best for us is eternal union with Him in heaven, and as holy

a life as is possible for us here in this world. Trying to have the enjoyments of this world should not be a goal we have. The enjoyments of this world should be something which we accept only if they are moral and proper, and that means they must be provided by God in conjunction with our efforts but only as a by-product, never as a goal, and that they must be used as tools which we use to assist us and others in attaining union with God. Anything else makes pursuit of the enjoyments of this world, a wicked propensity which we must seek to have cured by God.

This reality and these truths are foreign to those who refuse to accept there is that which is beyond their ability to know, comprehend, understand, manipulate.

There can be no foundation, no basis, for any entity other than God to propound there is nothing which is beyond that entity's ability to know, comprehend, and understand. The reason for this is that of all entities, only God knows how He created all that exists other than Himself, and only God knows His own existence.

Only when a human can truthfully state how that human created all that is and how that human self-exists, can any human presume that which is reserved to God alone. None which are of human nature alone can make such a statement. But the God-Man, Jesus Christ, can.

Ref: Eph. 4:1-6; Mat. 22:35-46

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## WHAT DOES A KING DO?

We know what dictators and tyrants do without regard as to the title they bear - they exercise power for its own sake and see to the fulfillment of their own desires and needs without regard to those of anyone else. But what does a true King do? He takes care of His subjects.

He takes care of every need and desire of His subjects, and in return requires that they be true subjects in every way. He offers His love to every person, and those who accept His love and love Him in return are rewarded with His acceptance of their love, in an ever increasing union of all in His kingdom with Him, the King.

The King even gives His life for His subjects if this proves necessary, for His duty to His subjects is to take care of them; to provide them each with what each needs; to assist them in accomplishing everything which should be accomplished and which they can not accomplish on their own; and to assist each person to properly use what He provides.

Christ is the King of the entire universe. As King He provides all we need; and we must work with Him properly using what He has provided.

He also is the absolute ruler - with no exceptions and no equivocations. Even Satan acknowledges Christ's supremacy - Satan hates Christ's supremacy, but Satan acknowledges it, for it is. Christ even provided to Satan all which Satan needed and all that which Satan could want. But Satan rejected Our Saviour's love, and rejected all which Christ had provided to him.

We should be careful to not emulate Satan, to not be foolish. We should be careful to emulate the Apostles and the Ever Virgin Mother of God, Blessed Mary, to be wise, to accept Our Lord's love and to offer Him our love in return, to accept His gift of salvation purchased with His own flesh, blood, and life, and the gifts which He offers to us for our own well being and eternal happiness.

Ref: Col. 1:12-20; John 18:33-37 +

## THE KING IS ABSOLUTE RULER OF ALL The living and the dead

When a new king takes the throne it usually means the old king has died. When a new chief of the executive branch of government is installed it usually means the old one has been retired through term limits or losing an election - or death.

In most countries the people can, to some extent, elect those who govern them and who make the laws under which their societies operate. To a great extent these governments reflect the values of their citizenry. Some elected government officials consider the desires of the citizenry in virtually everything they do. They do this so they can obtain or maintain public office. These people are called officials, for they are not leaders. They think they have power, but they do not, for they are slaves of the public opinion to which they have subjected themselves. They can dispense money and favors, and have social position, but they have no power for they do not exercise power. Other elected officials consider the desires of the people as part of the factors by-which they make decisions. They act after deliberation in accordance with what they firmly believe is best for their countrymen and the world, basing their decisions on the foundation of unchanging moral values. These are elected government leaders, for they lead. These leaders actually exercise power, especially when they take an unpopular but righteous moral position.

Jesus Christ is the Divine King. He is not dependant on elections. Elections and popular public opinions are immaterial to Him. If public opinion desires gross and excessive sensuality to be good and proper, it does not change His decree that such is improper. If public opinion desires artificial birth control, which usually is a form of abortion, or abortion, or same sex marriages, or recreational use of drugs, He does not change His laws, and these remain morally illegal.

Because *He* is the Divine King, He does not conform to us. Because *He* is the Divine King, it is us, the lesser form, who must conform to Jesus Christ. If we do not, then we will not enter into His kingdom. And if we do not enter into His kingdom, then the only place of permanent residence for us is pure Hell.

The Saints are those dead who conformed to Jesus Christ. Not all of them went straight to Heaven upon their death. Probably more than half of them had to be refined like gold in the furnace, as Saint Peter expressed it. They had to be purified of their non-Godly characteristics and habits, and the effects of their sins.

Those who have died and are in this purification process, this Purgatory, should receive our prayers every day, and especially on All Souls Day, the day which is set aside especially for them.

There is not one person who is undergoing purification prior to entering Heaven, who does not wish he had been more holy in this life. And there is not one of them who is sad, even though they are being purified. They are not sad for they see fulfillment of their Hope upon the completion of their purification.

If you were to act like some of the candidates for public office act, do you think you would have even the slightest chance of getting to Heaven? If you were to support abortion, or the creation of human life for the purpose of killing that life for body parts like stem cells, kidneys, lungs, hearts, fingers and toes, do you think you would have any chance at all of attaining eternal union with God? Obviously the answer is no - unless you had a complete reversal of heart before you died.

Today, intellectually, resolve to follow the rules of the Kingdom of Heaven, and to continually improve even though you continually break some of those rules. On the Feast of All Saints be truly wise, and not only honor all of the

Heavenly Saints, but seek their assistance in becoming holy. The Saints will pray to God for you if you ask them, and when one contemplates prayer, one understands it is a special form of talking. It is an act of the will, supported by the emotions; an act of the intellect and of the heart. Therefore pray to God and to the Saints, asking the help of both.

When you go to the cemeteries to remember your dead, pray for your deceased relatives and friends, and seek the assistance of the Saints for those who are in the process of being purified. Remember your dead with happiness, for there almost always is something which is pleasant to remember about everyone.

And always, constantly, remember your dead with prayers that they may complete purification if they have not yet completed it, and if they have, that their station in Heaven may be increased.

And also remember when choosing government officials, to vote in a manner which will assist you in attaining eternal happiness in Heaven.

Ref: Col. 1:12-20; John 18:33-37

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**ANGELIC EXAMPLE**  
**St. Raphael**

The battle between the good Angels and the Devil and his followers, was a battle for Heaven. It was a real battle, a real war. It was not a war between God and the Devil, for there can be no war between God and anyone. It is possible to fight another living creature: one can fight a wolf, a human, a good or bad Angel, and even a bacteria.

But one can not fight a mountain. One can challenge the obstacles a mountain presents, but one can not fight a mountain. Similarly, one can challenge God, but one can not fight God.

It is important to remember these things, for our journey to salvation includes both fighting against the Devil, and challenging our evil inclinations and the evil inclinations presented to us by the Devil.

We fight with prayer, and with reception of the Sacraments, especially Holy Communion and Confession. These give us the spiritual energy needed to challenge the evil inclinations which originate from ourselves and those which originate from the Devil and his followers. We challenge these evil inclinations by doing and being good.

During the time of Saint Tobias, the king had issued an order that the dead were not to be buried. This order was partially in denial of the resurrection of the dead, and to deny the sanctity of human life. It was an open revolt against the Mosaic Law which required respectful treatment of the dead in recognition of the sanctity of human life and the body's housing of the immortal soul and the Spirit of God. Saint Tobias buried the dead in violation of the king's order.

He did not just go dig a hole and dump the dead bodies into the hole. He buried the dead in accordance with proper religious ritual and observances and prayed for the dead. He therefore not only fought against the Devil with prayer, but also challenged evil inclinations

with doing and being good.

We know very little about the war for Heaven between the Angels and the Devil and his minions, but we can be sure it included spiritual fighting of Angelic prayer against whatever it is that the Devil does which is comparable. And whatever that fighting is it must be something so awesome that human storytellers could not begin to describe it. But it also must have included challenging of the Angelic comparable to human evil inclinations. Some think such evil inclinations are not possible in the spiritual makeup of an Angel, but something comparable must exist because whatever it is, the Devil and his minions succumbed to it and embraced it rather than embrace God.

When Saint Tobias buried the dead, and did good which challenged the evil which originated from within himself and from other sources, the Devil and all evil fought back with additional temptations. Evil, which is a force which emanates from fallen Angelic nature and from fallen human nature, seeks to maintain its power, not only through obvious temptations such as lust, pride, desire for power, and the other basic sins, but also through more sophisticated means, such as loss of livelihood, loss of home, health, family, family member's health, and unjust persecution. But Tobias was so holy that the temptations he faced were not just the ordinary ones which evil emanates; he was so holy that God actually allowed Saint Tobias to be targeted, so that Tobias' rejection of temptation would prove to all of Heaven, Earth, and Hell, that Saint Tobias was a man of God.

Tobias was steadfast in his prayers and in his good works, and so God blessed Tobias in this life and in eternity.

The Angels of God continue their war against the Devil and his minions even to this day. The Angel Raphael offered to God the prayers which Tobias prayed for the dead, and offered his own Angelic prayers in union with the prayers

of Tobias. In so doing the Angel Raphael continued his opposition to the Devil, challenging the evil inclinations to abandon burying the dead which were constantly before Tobias. Saint Raphael and the other Angels of God continue challenging evil to this very day.

But they do not just fight the Devil, and challenge temptation. They also know the mind of God as much as it is possible for anyone other than God to know the mind of God. Because they know the mind of God, they constantly engage in charitable works for the benefit of mankind.

When the Angel, who is believed to be the same Archangel Raphael, moved the waters at Bethsaida, so that the first to enter the moving waters would be cured, he did so out of Divine Love, out of Charity. When a child is mysteriously pulled out of danger, or when on impulse you take a route to some place which is different from the route you usually take and by so doing you avoid a danger which is awaiting you, it is the Angel of God, your Guardian, who, as God's messenger, and as one who loves you more than you can begin to imagine, who has acted.

Follow the example given to us by Saint Raphael and the other Angels of God, by being ever vigilant against evil and ever vigilant in accepting, doing, and being good.

And when you weary of the battle against evil, think of the energy, effort, time, and all else Saint Raphael and his brothers in arms have exerted on your behalf in the very same battle. Can you abandon a brother in arms who has been so faithful to you?

Ref: Tob. 12:7-15; John 5:1-4

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## WHAT MUST HAVE EXISTED FOR A CONVERSION AT DEATH

The conversion of the Good Thief seemingly was at the last instant of his life; but it was not and could not have been a last minute conversion for conversion is not a last minute matter. It must have been an ongoing process and we can contemplate what this process might have been.

We know he was a thief, and we believe he was a member of the Zionist rebel movement that attacked Rome and often stole from the populace, probably killing and pillaging to some extent. For the Good Thief to have been converted on the cross, he must have been at least somewhat uncomfortable with these activities. He must have known he was doing wrong and desired to stop doing them, or to find some other means of freeing his people if indeed freeing the Jews was one of his goals.

He must have had remorse over his criminal activities not because he got caught, but because they were basically wrong.

If your sins make you uncomfortable because they are sins, because they are wrong, then you are united with the Good Thief in acknowledging your own evil and in desiring to remove it as you would remove a boil. But if you do not acknowledge your own sins, or if you make excuses for them, saying this situation prompted me to do this evil, or this person tempted me, or the Devil knows my weaknesses and how am I supposed to be successful in opposing someone as powerful as the Devil, **and in making these excuses seek to excuse your own liability for your own sins**, then you have not joined the Good Thief, and have little potential for true sorrow for your sins. And if you just do not care, then, of course, you have not joined the Good Thief.

Laity are not the only ones who must

join with the Good Thief in acknowledging their own evil. There are many Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, who have not, and who desperately need to do so. They are impressed with their positions as being positions of honor, as indeed they are, but that honor imposes the duty of service and of humbly acknowledging the possessor's unworthiness to hold the position. They must acknowledge their inadequacy in fulfilling their duties and in attempting to earn the honor with which they have been endowed. And they must acknowledge the honor with which they have been endowed has not been earned - that it exists because of the trust which they been given and which they fulfill so poorly. So, the Clergy must join the Good Thief.

For most of us, acknowledging our own evil is something which is a part of our existence. It is an every day thing.

But for those in exalted positions this acknowledgment can be a difficult matter.

Most of us can thank God we are not high ranking government officials, or top level corporate executives, or high ranking clergy, for our positions do not hinder our acknowledgment of our sins, of our own evil, and the need for correction. And we are blessed in that many of those whom we know who are in such positions, do acknowledge their own moral and spiritual inadequacies - their own sinfulness.

Mankind constantly experiences natural disasters. The effects of some of these natural disasters effect hundreds, thousands, and occasionally tens and hundreds of thousands of people. How many of these say or think in the midst of the disaster, "God help me." How many even just say "God!" How many say an expletive? How many say nothing because they knew not what was happening? And how many say nothing because they have no beliefs?

How many are like the Bad Thief. And how many are like the Good Thief.

We, those who possess any level of Faith, must pray and pray constantly, that all of humankind will learn to acknowledge that evil and sin are real. That each individual human being will acknowledge that we each constantly commit sins. That each of us will really and truly realize we each must have sorrow for our sins and attempt to correct them. That each individual attempt to join the Good Thief.

Ref: Is. 59:1-4; Luke 23:39-43

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## DO NOT RELY ON YOUR ACCEPTING THE LAST DEATH BED OPPORTUNITY TO REPENT

We all desire to be in Heaven with Christ when we die. And we all know how undeserving of this we actually are. So each of us has the hope that we will be like Saint Dismas, the Good Thief, and steal Heaven. Not that we will put Heaven into our pocket and take it away, but that we will get in un-noticed, so that once in and eventually noticed God will say that since we are already in, we can stay.

But that is not how the Good Thief attained Heaven. He attained Heaven by boldly acknowledging his unworthiness, and boldly acknowledging Christ as being totally worthy; then asking Jesus Christ God that he not be forgotten.

In asking Christ that he not be forgotten, the Good Thief was saying: Yes, I have done great wrongs and deserve this punishment I am receiving. But I have also done good things and I have done them for the sake of goodness, for the sake of You God, who are hanging crucified next to me.

He was saying: I only comprehend a little of why it is that you are being crucified next to me. I fully understand why I am being crucified, for it is the just punishment for my crimes, my sins. But you are without sin and therefore have never committed a crime.

He was saying: I have seen you about the country and in many towns and cities, even here in Jerusalem, and I know you are God. But I can not comprehend that you, God, who has taken on the flesh of a man, should die and that your death should be that of a criminal, unless it is that you have taken my place as a criminal before God your Father and are taking on the punishment of my sins.

In this the Good Thief realized some of the extent and fullness of Divine Love,

and that realization lead him to leap into Faith which gave him something he never had experienced before - Hope.

In that leap of Faith into Hope, he then asked of Christ the most fantastic request: Lord, remember me when thou shalt come into thy kingdom.

He knew, in that instant He actually knew, why Christ had come into this world. He knew that Christ was suffering and dying for the sins he a thief had committed, and for the sins of all of mankind. He had accepted the Grace God had given to him at the time of his death and he acted upon that Grace, asking Christ to fulfill in him, the thief, all that for which Christ had suffered.

And Christ told him that his request would be granted; that after they both died that day, he, the sinner, would be with Him, Jesus Christ God, in Paradise for all eternity.

Yes, we all want to attain Heaven. But we must remember there was another thief crucified with Christ. He also was sent the Grace for repentance and redemption just like the Good Thief. But the other thief apparently rejected that Grace, for he mocked and cursed Jesus and did not voice or give any sign of acknowledgment of his own sinfulness, nor of repentance.

The Good Thief had lead a life which gave him the predisposition or inclination to not sin even though he did sin. But the other thief had lead a life which did not give him this predisposition or inclination. It appears the other thief lead a life in which God was not a significant factor, while God was a significant factor in the life of the Good Thief.

So the other thief rejected God even at the last opportunity for salvation, but the Good Thief accepted God.

Do not rely on being a Good Thief, for it was a "touch and go" or borderline situation for the Good Thief. What if he had been crucified the day before or the day after Christ was crucified? The situ-

ation would have been different, and he would not have had the physical presence of Christ to reinforce his knowledge of Christ's goodness and the acknowledgment of his own sinfulness. He would not have had Christ's presence to make him wonder and mentally inquire and explore why Christ was suffering just as he was suffering. And he might have rejected that special grace and with that rejection, rejected the title of The Good Thief.

Think of the Good Thief as an example of last resort. And example of that for which you hope if all else should fail - which means an example of that for which you hope if you should miserably fail.

But do not rely on being another Good Thief.

Rely on your becoming and being good. This is the sure way and the best way, for it is the way Christ taught and the way He wants us to follow. It is the Way of the Cross.

Ref: Is. 59:1-4; Luke 23:39-43

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## CONSTANT REPENTANCE IS NECESSARY FOR SALVATION

Constant repentance is necessary for those who have attained the age of reason to attain salvation.

Think of a place which floods easily, such as New Orleans. When a very light rain falls, there is little possibility of flooding, but even a person accustomed to wet surfaces could easily fall and be injured or even fall in such a way as to drown or sustain severe injury. A person not accustomed to wet surfaces would be more susceptible to such injury.

A heavy rain, or a storm driven tide, could easily cause deadly flooding; flooding which can kill. New Orleans has very large pumps which usually drain excessive rain and storm driven tides, keeping the population safe.

But an unusual rain or very strong storm can cause flooding which the pumps can not quickly drain. If this occurs or is likely to occur in New Orleans, as recent history has shown, most of the people who live in the city must evacuate, they must leave the city to avoid drowning.

Sin is very much like unwanted rain or dangerous storms.

Minor temptations are similar to a light rain. A person can usually ignore both. But if a person commits little sins, that person is spiritually damaged just like a person who can not avoid a light rain. If you do not have protection from the rain, even a light rain will make you wet, will soil your clothing, may damage your clothing, and will at least make you look less attractive than you wish. Even a little sin does the same to your soul, and many little sins cause many little damages.

Just as many small rain drops can ruin your clothing, or cause you to slip and injure yourself; so too can many little sins ruin your soul or cause you to fall

into greater sin and severely damage your soul.

When the rain makes us wet, we dry ourselves and dry our clothing. We should do the same when we sin - we should repent.

We can think of the Sacrament of Absolution, of Confession, as being a cure for the rain of sin on our souls, and as a form of protection against sinning in the future much like an umbrella and rubber boots. If used properly each will give us some protection and will prepare us for a heavy rain or flood of temptations. If we fall during a heavy rain of temptation and commit severe sin, but have made repentance a part of our life, then the practice of repentance will be much like a boat or a raft to which we can cling until we are rescued by Our Savior Jesus Christ God.

It must be that the Good Thief was very much aware of the evil he practiced and did not desire to engage in evil even though he did engage in evil. Perhaps the other thief did not care about his sins and therefore did not cling to the boat Our Lord and Savior sent to him. We can only hope the other thief grasped salvation before the flood of death took him away.

If we think of our spiritual situation as much as we think about being safe from hurricanes and strong storms, if we each make good plans to protect our physical life and our spiritual life, then we will have an umbrella in our house and a Priest life boat from whom we will constantly seek and receive absolution.

Ref: Isaia 59:1-4; Luke 23:39-43

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## FOLLOW THE KING'S EXAMPLE

**There really is only a limited number of sins. But technology has increased the opportunities to encounter near occasions of sin.**

Jesus Christ is the just and merciful King. He gives us His life as the one and only example of how to live our lives, and why to live them in that manner, if we are to attain eternal happiness with Him in Heaven.

Just as the King forgave the greedy servant when the greedy servant prayed for forgiveness of his debt, so too will God forgive us of our debts if we pray for that forgiveness. But just as the king withdrew his forgiveness when the greedy servant did not show mercy to his fellow servant, so too will God withdraw His forgiveness if we do not show mercy to our fellow humans.

In this we should have great hope, for what God asks of us is not difficult. For most of us He does not ask that we endure severe hardship, torture, suffering, pain and sorrow. And to those of whom He does ask such things, He gives the means to not only endure them, but also to succeed in the endeavor.

But to most of us He simply asks that we live decent lives for the sake of He Himself - for the sake of Jesus. And there really is nothing difficult in leading a basically decent life. The difficulty comes in some few of the details as they apply to each individual.

There are only a limited number of sins, and a limited number of basic ways which we can sin. Technology seems to increase the near occasions of sin, the instances of temptation and the types of temptation, but it does not increase the types of sins. Because of this most of us are familiar with the basic sin situations - and these sins and sin situations have not changed throughout the history of mankind.



When we are tempted, if we can resist the temptation we have won that battle. Sometimes the sin is a sin of impulse. We just do something without real thought. We have fallen into a habit of that particular sin. To avoid that type of sin we have to change our habits and try very much to think before we say or do anything. This can be difficult, especially since most employment or work involves trained reaction or response. A sales clerk is trained to tally the customer's purchases and sometimes they are also trained to be polite. A machinist is trained to do certain things in response to different levels of progress in his work. A lawyer is trained to respond logically and quickly to his adversary's comments and witness examination. Any thoughtful delay in these responses at work can be detrimental to the work itself; yet that same spontaneity of response at work is part of the factor which leads us to sin through habit.

So we have to apply that spontaneity to our lives in a more proper manner, so that we can break the habitual sins. We have to be spontaneous in our work, but not in most circumstances our lives outside of our work. We have to measure or control our spontaneity. And if we fail, and sin, then we must have a contrite heart.

The greedy servant did not have a contrite heart. He did not even have a thankful heart, for if he had possessed a thankful heart, the thankfulness would have overflowed and applied to his fellow servant. All the greedy servant had was focus on himself and what he desired.

If your focus is not on yourself, but is on Jesus Christ - God, then you will more easily overcome those seemingly spontaneous sins, and more easily overcome those which are not spontaneous.

But not only will you then more easily overcome sin. You will more easily serve Christ, and assist others in their journey to eternal salvation.

Unfortunately there are other great bar-

riers to eternal salvation. One is technically known as Gnosticism. A Gnostic is one who believes he or she has secret knowledge of God and of how God works, or of how the universe works, and can therefore manipulate God or the universe. And there are many other great barriers to eternal salvation. But all of them are nothing more than sins.

If we simply acknowledge as fact, that God established the standards by which we attain eternal union with Him in Heaven. Then attempt our best to attain those standards solely for the purpose of pleasing Him by being with Him for all eternity ( and thus pleasing ourselves as well), we will actually be well on the road to eternal salvation. And a very large per centage of the human race is on that road.

But leaving that road is so easy that we must be vigilant in our journey to eternity. So from time to time check to be sure that you are doing what Christ the King showed us to do, and doing what He did for the same reason, which is Charity - also known as Agape Love or Divine Love.

Then the deviations from that path will become fewer, which means our sins will become fewer, and we will become happier in this life as we follow Christ into the life to come.

Ref: Eph. 6:10-17; Mat. 18:23-35

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## AN ASPECT OF GOD IS LIFE - MORE THAN MERE EXISTENCE

What is God? We can only talk about aspects of God, because the totality of God is impossible for us to comprehend. Since we really can not fully explain what man is, it would be foolish to attempt to explain what God is.

With that said, and understanding that we really are discussing aspects of God; God is said to be Charity, agape love, an expression now corrupted into the saying, "God is Love".

We often think of God the Father and God the Holy Spirit as being Spirit, and of Jesus the Son of God as being Spirit which took on flesh and therefore as now being both Spirit and flesh. This is a proper reasoning.

Therefore, in a very real sense, God is flesh. Again, in a very real sense, before God took on flesh, it can be said God is Spirit. But before it could be said God is Spirit, it must be said that God is Life. Self-existing life.

And this Life, with a capital "L", is what God wishes to share with us for all eternity.

Let us think about the man with the palsy. There he was, unable to walk, lying in a bed and being brought to this man named Jesus. He must have had the palsy for quite some time to have reached the status of being unable to walk, of being bedridden. Death must have been something which he contemplated every day, and pending death has a way of making some people wise, for it has a way of making a person contemplate their sins and have sorrow for them. Only the foolish and stupid ignore their sins when death is near.

If he could be cured of the palsy, he could support himself, live a longer life, and perhaps change his life so that he did not sin, or at least not sin as much as in the past. Perhaps he could make a special sin offering, or do something to

correct his relationship with God.

When he met Jesus, Jesus told him, "Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee." Can you imagine the relief felt by someone near death, to know their sins are forgiven? Jesus, being Life with a capital "L", focused on the man's most pressing need, the need for eternal life, and gave it to him. Then Jesus focused on the needs of some of the scribes, the learned people, who did not believe He is God, and to prove He is God and can forgive sins, Jesus cured the man of his palsy.

But Jesus also cured the man of the palsy because it was in the nature of the cure He worked in that man, that the man would receive cure of the spirit and cure of the flesh.

So when Jesus gave the man Life with a capital "L", He resurrected the man's soul from the sickness of sin, and He resurrected his body from the sickness of the palsy. And that infusion of Life with a capital "L" was an inoculation to cure the scribes of their sin of self-righteous "all knowingness" which is reserved to God..

Ref: 1 Cor. 1:4-8; Mat. 9:1-8

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### WHAT IS AN EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION?

The following is a verbatim press release from the Vatican Information Service from several years ago. We have been considering it for several years, with one main question, one main problem. *What is an Eucharistic celebration?*

=== begin press release ===

Vatican Information Service.

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VIS-Press releases

#### ARCHBISHOP FOLEY TO ADDRESS KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS IN U.S.

VATICAN CITY, JUL 29, 2003 (VIS) - Archbishop John Foley, president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, will be in the United States during the month of August. On two occasions during the first two weeks he will preside at Eucharistic celebrations and on two other occasions he will address the Knights of Columbus.

On Sunday, August 3, the archbishop will deliver a homily at the Mass for the 165th anniversary of St. Malachy Church in Doe Run, Chester County, Pennsylvania. On August 7 he will speak to the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus in Washington, D.C. Later that same day he will give an address to the Knights of Columbus Eucharistic Congress at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington on the topic "What is the Purpose of a Eucharistic Congress?" On August 15, feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Archbishop Foley will deliver a homily at Mass in the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

CON-CS/SPEECHES:USA/FOLEY  
VIS 030729 (170)

=== end press release ===

Mass we understand as Divine Liturgy.  
Sacrifice of the Mass we understand as

the the confection of the Eucharist, changing bread and wine into the Sacred Body and Blood of Jesus Christ God while retaining all the physical appearances and properties of bread and wine, and the offering and reception Thereof.

The Eucharist we understand as being the same in Orthodox and Roman terminology: Sacred Body and Blood of Jesus Christ God.

But what is *an Eucharistic celebration?*

Do they have a party? Are there balloons, confetti, noise makers (those little whistle things you blow into, or those rattles you shake)? Do they serve appetizers, alcoholic beverages, and finger sandwiches?

If Eucharistic celebration actually is a reference to the Divine Liturgy (Mass) and specifically in it the confection of the Sacred Eucharist and the offering of the Sacred Body and Blood of Christ in the Sacrifice of Calvary initiated at the Last Supper, and this has been reduced to the Eucharist alone, then all of the prayers prior to confection of the Eucharist and the focus and intent of those prayers, as well as those which follow the confection of the Eucharist - are they no meaningless in the new Roman liturgy?

It would be best if Eucharistic celebration referred to a party rather than to the Divine Liturgy (Mass). A party can be comprehended. But if Eucharistic celebration is a reference to the Roman Divine Liturgy, then a whole new concept has been infused into Roman theology and it seems to preclude the traditional and actual focus of the Divine Liturgy.

Perhaps Eucharistic celebration fits in with the banquet table altar concept of the new Roman Mass.

Intelligent change is good. but stupid change is . . . stupid.

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**IMITATION OF CHRIST**  
**By Thomas a Kempis**

BOOK THREE  
 The Forty-Seventh Chapter

Every Trial Must Be Borne for the  
 Sake of Eternal Life

The Voice of Christ

My child, do not let the labors which you have taken up for My sake break you, and do not let troubles, from whatever source, cast you down; but in everything let My promise strengthen and console you. I am able to reward you beyond all means and measure.

You will not labor here long, nor will you always be oppressed by sorrows. Wait a little while and you will see a speedy end of evils. The hour will come when all labor and trouble shall be no more. All that passes away with time is trivial.

What you do, do well. Work faithfully in My vineyard. I will be your reward. Write, read, sing, mourn, keep silence, pray, and bear hardships like a man. Eternal life is worth all these and greater battles. Peace will come on a day which is known to the Lord, and then there shall be no day or night as at present but perpetual light, infinite brightness, lasting peace, and safe repose. Then you will not say: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" nor will you cry: "Woe is me, because my sojourn is prolonged." For then death will be banished, and there will be health unfailing. There will be no anxiety then, but blessed joy and sweet, noble companionship.

If you could see the everlasting crowns of the saints in heaven, and the great glory wherein they now rejoice -- they who were once considered contemptible in this world and, as it were, unworthy of life itself -- you would certainly humble yourself at once to the very earth, and seek to be subject to all rather than to command even one. Nor would you desire the pleasant days of

this life, but rather be glad to suffer for God, considering it your greatest gain to be counted as nothing among men.

Oh, if these things appealed to you and penetrated deeply into your heart, how could you dare to complain even once? Ought not all trials be borne for the sake of everlasting life? In truth, the loss or gain of God's kingdom is no small matter.

Lift up your countenance to heaven, then. Behold Me, and with Me all My saints. They had great trials in this life, but now they rejoice. They are consoled. Now they are safe and at rest. And they shall abide with Me for all eternity in the kingdom of My Father.

The Forty-Eighth Chapter

The Day of Eternity and the Distresses  
 of This Life

The Disciple

O most happy mansion of the city above! O most bright day of eternity, which night does not darken, but which the highest truth ever enlightens! O day, ever joyful and ever secure, which never changes its state to the opposite! Oh, that this day shine forth, that all these temporal things come to an end! It envelops the saints all resplendent with heavenly brightness, but it appears far off as through a glass to us wanderers on the earth. The citizens of heaven know how joyful that day is, but the exiled sons of Eve mourn that this one is bitter and tedious.

The days of this life are short and evil, full of grief and distress. Here man is defiled by many sins, ensnared in many passions, enslaved by many fears, and burdened with many cares. He is distracted by many curiosities and entangled in many vanities, surrounded by many errors and worn by many labors, oppressed by temptations, weakened by pleasures, and tortured by want.

Oh, when will these evils end? When shall I be freed from the miserable slav-

ery of vice? When, Lord, shall I think of You alone? When shall I fully rejoice in You? When shall I be without hindrance, in true liberty, free from every grievance of mind and body? When will there be solid peace, undisturbed and secure, inward peace and outward peace, peace secured on every side? O good Jesus, when shall I stand to gaze upon You? When shall I contemplate the glory of Your kingdom? When will You be all in all to me? Oh, when shall I be with You in that kingdom of Yours, which You have prepared for Your beloved from all eternity?

I am left poor and exiled in a hostile land, where every day sees wars and very great misfortunes. Console my banishment, assuage my sorrow. My whole desire is for You. Whatever solace this world offers is a burden to me. I desire to enjoy You intimately, but I cannot attain to it. I wish to cling fast to heavenly things, but temporal affairs and unmortified passions bear me down. I wish in mind to be above all things, but I am forced by the flesh to be unwillingly subject to them. Thus, I fight with myself, unhappy that I am, and am become a burden to myself, while my spirit seeks to rise upward and my flesh to sink downward. Oh, what inward suffering I undergo when I consider heavenly things; when I pray, a multitude of carnal thoughts rush upon me!

O my God, do not remove Yourself far from me, and depart not in anger from Your servant. Dart forth Your lightning and disperse them; send forth Your arrows and let the phantoms of the enemy be put to flight. Draw my senses toward You and make me forget all worldly things. Grant me the grace to cast away quickly all vicious imaginings and to scorn them. Aid me, O heavenly Truth, that no vanity may move me. Come, heavenly Sweetness, and let all impurity fly from before Your face.

Pardon me also, and deal mercifully with me, as often as I think of anything

*(Continued KEMPIS on page 28)*

(Continued **KEMPIS** from page 27)

besides You in prayer. For I confess truly that I am accustomed to be very much distracted. Very often I am not where bodily I stand or sit; rather, I am where my thoughts carry me. Where my thoughts are, there am I; and frequently my thoughts are where my love is. That which naturally delights, or is by habit pleasing, comes to me quickly. Hence You Who are Truth itself, have plainly said: "For where your treasure is, there is your heart also." If I love heaven, I think willingly of heavenly things. If I love the world, I rejoice at the happiness of the world and grieve at its troubles. If I love the flesh, I often imagine things that are carnal. If I love the spirit, I delight in thinking of spiritual matters. For whatever I love, I am willing to speak and hear about.

Blessed is the man who for Your sake, O Lord, dismisses all creatures, does violence to nature, crucifies the desires of the flesh in fervor of spirit, so that with serene conscience he can offer You a pure prayer and, having excluded all earthly things inwardly and outwardly, becomes worthy to enter into the heavenly choirs.

#### The Forty-Ninth Chapter

The Desire of Eternal Life;  
the Great Rewards Promised to Those  
Who Struggle

#### The Voice of Christ

My child, when you feel the desire for everlasting happiness poured out upon you from above, and when you long to depart out of the tabernacle of the body that you may contemplate My glory without threat of change, open wide your heart and receive this holy inspiration with all eagerness. Give deepest thanks to the heavenly Goodness which deals with you so understandingly, visits you so mercifully, stirs you so fervently, and sustains you so powerfully lest under your own weight you sink down to earthly things. For you obtain this not by your own thought or effort, but simply by the condescension of

heavenly grace and divine regard. And the purpose of it is that you may advance in virtue and in greater humility, that you may prepare yourself for future trials, that you may strive to cling to Me with all the affection of your heart, and may serve Me with a fervent will.

My child, often, when the fire is burning the flame does not ascend without smoke. Likewise, the desires of some burn toward heavenly things, and yet they are not free from temptations of carnal affection. Therefore, it is not altogether for the pure honor of God that they act when they petition Him so earnestly. Such, too, is often your desire which you profess to be so strong. For that which is alloyed with self-interest is not pure and perfect.

Ask, therefore, not for what is pleasing and convenient to yourself, but for what is acceptable to Me and is for My honor, because if you judge rightly, you ought to prefer and follow My will, not your own desire or whatever things you wish.

I know your longings and I have heard your frequent sighs. Already you wish to be in the liberty of the glory of the sons of God. Already you desire the delights of the eternal home, the heavenly land that is full of joy. But that hour is not yet come. There remains yet another hour, a time of war, of labor, and of trial. You long to be filled with the highest good, but you cannot attain it now. I am that sovereign Good. Await Me, until the kingdom of God shall come.

You must still be tried on earth, and exercised in many things. Consolation will sometimes be given you, but the complete fullness of it is not granted. Take courage, therefore, and be strong both to do and to suffer what is contrary to nature.

You must put on the new man. You must be changed into another man. You must often do the things you do not wish to do and forego those you do wish. What pleases others will succeed; what pleases you will not. The words of others will be heard; what you say will be accounted as nothing. Others will ask and receive; you will ask and not receive. Others will gain great fame among men; about you nothing will be said. To others the doing of this or that will be entrusted; you will be judged useless. At all this nature will sometimes be sad, and it will be a great thing if you bear this sadness in silence. For in these and many similar ways the faithful servant of the Lord is wont

to be tried, to see how far he can deny himself and break himself in all things.

There is scarcely anything in which you so need to die to self as in seeing and suffering things that are against your will, especially when things that are commanded seem inconvenient or useless. Then, because you are under authority, and dare not resist the higher power, it seems hard to submit to the will of another and give up your own opinion entirely.

But consider, my child, the fruit of these labors, how soon they will end and how greatly they will be rewarded, and you will not be saddened by them, but your patience will receive the strongest consolation. For instead of the little will that you now readily give up, you shall always have your will in heaven. There, indeed, you shall find all that you could desire. There you shall have possession

of every good without fear of losing it. There shall your will be forever one with Mine. It shall desire nothing outside of Me and nothing for itself. There no one shall oppose you, no one shall complain of you, no one hinder you, and nothing stand in your way. All that you desire will be present there, replenishing your affection and satisfying it to the full. There I shall render you glory for the reproach you have suffered here; for your sorrow I shall give you a garment of praise, and for the lowest place a seat of power forever. There the fruit of glory will appear, the labor of penance rejoice, and humble subjection be gloriously crowned.

Bow humbly, therefore, under the will of all, and do not heed who said this or commanded that. But let it be your special care when something is commanded, or even hinted at, whether by a superior or an inferior or an equal, that you take it in good part and try honestly to perform it. Let one person seek one thing and another something else. Let one glory in this, another in that, and both be praised a thousand times over. But as for you, rejoice neither in one or the other, but only in contempt of yourself and in My pleasure and honor. Let this be your wish: That whether in life or in death God may be glorified in you.

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## THE CONFESSIONS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

### CHAPTER VII

12. For as soon as it became plain to me that Faustus was ignorant in those arts in which I had believed him eminent, I began to despair of his being able to clarify and explain all these perplexities that troubled me -- though I realized that such ignorance need not have affected the authenticity of his piety, if he had not been a Manichean. For their books are full of long fables about the sky and the stars, the sun and the moon; and I had ceased to believe him able to show me in any satisfactory fashion what I so ardently desired: whether the explanations contained in the Manichean books were better or at least as good as the mathematical explanations I had read elsewhere. But when I proposed that these subjects should be considered and discussed, he quite modestly did not dare to undertake the task, for he was aware that he had no knowledge of these things and was not ashamed to confess it. For he was not one of those talkative people -- from whom I had endured so much -- who undertook to teach me what I wanted to know, and then said nothing. Faustus had a heart which, if not right toward thee, was at least not altogether false toward himself; for he was not ignorant of his own ignorance, and he did not choose to be entangled in a controversy from which he could not draw back or retire gracefully. For this I liked him all the more. For the modesty of an ingenious mind is a finer thing than the acquisition of that knowledge I desired; and this I found to be his attitude toward all abstruse and difficult questions.

13. Thus the zeal with which I had plunged into the Manichean system was checked, and I despaired even more of their other teachers, because Faustus who was so famous among them had turned out so poorly in the various matters that puzzled me. And so I began to occupy myself with him in the study of his own favorite pursuit, that of litera-

ture, in which I was already teaching a class as a professor of rhetoric among the young Carthaginian students. With Faustus then I read whatever he himself wished to read, or what I judged suitable to his bent of mind. But all my endeavors to make further progress in Manicheism came completely to an end through my acquaintance with that man. I did not wholly separate myself from them, but as one who had not yet found anything better I decided to content myself, for the time being, with what I had stumbled upon one way or another, until by chance something more desirable should present itself. Thus that Faustus who had entrapped so many to their death -- though neither willing nor witting it -- now began to loosen the snare in which I had been caught. For thy hands, O my God, in the hidden design of thy providence did not desert my soul; and out of the blood of my mother's heart, through the tears that she poured out by day and by night, there was a sacrifice offered to thee for me, and by marvelous ways thou didst deal with me. For it was thou, O my God, who didst it: for "the steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and he shall choose his way." [135] How shall we attain salvation without thy hand remaking what it had already made?

### CHAPTER VIII

14. Thou didst so deal with me, therefore, that I was persuaded to go to Rome and teach there what I had been teaching at Carthage. And how I was persuaded to do this I will not omit to confess to thee, for in this also the profoundest workings of thy wisdom and thy constant mercy toward us must be pondered and acknowledged. I did not wish to go to Rome because of the richer fees and the higher dignity which my friends promised me there -- though these considerations did affect my decision. My principal and almost sole motive was that I had been informed that the students there studied more quietly and were better kept under the control of stern discipline, so that they did not capriciously and impudently rush into the classroom of a teacher not their own

-- indeed, they were not admitted at all without the permission of the teacher. At Carthage, on the contrary, there was a shameful and intemperate license among the students. They burst in rudely and, with furious gestures, would disrupt the discipline which the teacher had established for the good of his pupils. Many outrages they perpetrated with astounding effrontery, things that would be punishable by law if they were not sustained by custom. Thus custom makes plain that such behavior is all the more worthless because it allows men to do what thy eternal law never will allow. They think that they act thus with impunity, though the very blindness with which they act is their punishment, and they suffer far greater harm than they inflict.

The manners that I would not adopt as a student I was compelled as a teacher to endure in others. And so I was glad to go where all who knew the situation assured me that such conduct was not allowed. But thou, "O my refuge and my portion in the land of the living," [136] didst goad me thus at Carthage so that I might thereby be pulled away from it and change my worldly habitation for the preservation of my soul. At the same time, thou didst offer me at Rome an enticement, through the agency of men enchanted with this death-in-life -- by their insane conduct in the one place and their empty promises in the other. To correct my wandering footsteps, thou didst secretly employ their perversity and my own. For those who disturbed my tranquillity were blinded by shameful madness and also those who allured me elsewhere had nothing better than the earth's cunning. And I who hated actual misery in the one place sought fictitious happiness in the other.

15. Thou knewest the cause of my going from one country to the other, O God, but thou didst not disclose it either to me or to my mother, who grieved deeply over my departure and followed me down to the sea. She clasped me tight in her embrace, willing either to

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keep me back or to go with me, but I deceived her, pretending that I had a friend whom I could not leave until he had a favorable wind to set sail. Thus I lied to my mother -- and such a mother! -- and escaped. For this too thou didst mercifully pardon me -- fool that I was -- and didst preserve me from the waters of the sea for the water of thy grace; so that, when I was purified by that, the fountain of my mother's eyes, from which she had daily watered the ground for me as she prayed to thee, should be dried. And, since she refused to return without me, I persuaded her, with some difficulty, to remain that night in a place quite close to our ship, where there was a shrine in memory of the blessed Cyprian. That night I slipped away secretly, and she remained to pray and weep. And what was it, O Lord, that she was asking of thee in such a flood of tears but that thou wouldst not allow me to sail? But thou, taking thy own secret counsel and noting the real point to her desire, didst not grant what she was then asking in order to grant to her the thing that she had always been asking.

The wind blew and filled our sails, and the shore dropped out of sight. Wild with grief, she was there the next morning and filled thy ears with complaints and groans which thou didst disregard, although, at the very same time, thou wast using my longings as a means and wast hastening me on to the fulfillment of all longing. Thus the earthly part of her love to me was justly purged by the scourge of sorrow. Still, like all mothers -- though even more than others -- she loved to have me with her, and did not know what joy thou wast preparing for her through my going away. Not knowing this secret end, she wept and mourned and saw in her agony the inheritance of Eve -- seeking in sorrow what she had brought forth in sorrow. And yet, after accusing me of perfidy and cruelty, she still continued her intercessions for me to thee. She returned to her own home, and I went on to Rome.

## CHAPTER IX

16. And lo, I was received in Rome by the scourge of bodily sickness; and I was very near to falling into hell, burdened with all the many and grievous sins I had committed against thee, myself, and others -- all over and above that fetter of original sin whereby we all die in Adam. For thou hadst forgiven me none of these things in Christ, neither had he abolished by his cross the enmity[137] that I had incurred from thee through my sins. For how could he do so by the crucifixion of a phantom, which was all I supposed him to be? The death of my soul was as real then as the death of his flesh appeared to me unreal. And the life of my soul was as false, because it was as unreal as the death of his flesh was real, though I believed it not.

My fever increased, and I was on the verge of passing away and perishing; for, if I had passed away then, where should I have gone but into the fiery torment which my misdeeds deserved, measured by the truth of thy rule? My mother knew nothing of this; yet, far away, she went on praying for me. And thou, present everywhere, didst hear her where she was and had pity on me where I was, so that I regained my bodily health, although I was still disordered in my sacrilegious heart. For that peril of death did not make me wish to be baptized. I was even better when, as a lad, I entreated baptism of my mother's devotion, as I have already related and confessed.[138] But now I had since increased in dishonor, and I madly scoffed at all the purposes of thy medicine which would not have allowed me, though a sinner such as I was, to die a double death. Had my mother's heart been pierced with this wound, it never could have been cured, for I cannot adequately tell of the love she had for me, or how she still travailed for me in the spirit with a far keener anguish than when she bore me in the flesh.

17. I cannot conceive, therefore, how she could have been healed if my death (still in my sins) had pierced her

inmost love. Where, then, would have been all her earnest, frequent, and ceaseless prayers to thee? Nowhere but with thee. But couldst thou, O most merciful God, despise the "contrite and humble heart"[139] of that pure and prudent widow, who was so constant in her alms, so gracious and attentive to thy saints, never missing a visit to church twice a day, morning and evening -- and this not for vain gossiping, nor old wives' fables, but in order that she might listen to thee in thy sermons, and thou to her in her prayers? Couldst thou, by whose gifts she was so inspired, despise and disregard the tears of such a one without coming to her aid -- those tears by which she entreated thee, not for gold or silver, and not for any changing or fleeting good, but for the salvation of the soul of her son? By no means, O Lord. It is certain that thou wast near and wast hearing and wast carrying out the plan by which thou hadst predetermined it should be done. Far be it from thee that thou shouldst have deluded her in those visions and the answers she had received from thee -- some of which I have mentioned, and others not -- which she kept in her faithful heart, and, forever beseeching, urged them on thee as if they had thy own signature. For thou, "because thy mercy endureth forever,"[140] hast so condescended to those whose debts thou hast pardoned that thou likewise dost become a debtor by thy promises.

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\* **Apparently religious freedom and the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America only apply to those who have no religious values and do not believe in moral absolutes dictated by God.** page 15

\* **Eighteen Roman Catholic Members of the United States Congress believe they can dictate Church dogma.** age 15

\* **While thinking of Roman Catholics, Saint Louis Archbishop Raymond Burke declared he would deny Holy Communion to pro abortion Senator Kerry, forced Saint Joseph's Academy to rescind an invitation to pro abortion page 15**

\* **Senator Barbara Boxer, a California Democrat, called legislation which would make it a federal crime to take a minor across state lines so the minor could murder her unborn child through abortion, ". . . a bill that protects incest predators . . ." page 15**

\* **The "press" and "news" media continue to attempt to make legal abortion seem desirable and those who perform abortions seem to be heroic as shown by a recent article by Stephanie Simon, Los Angeles Times, page 15**

\* **The Cannes Film Festival gave first prize to a film about the "horrors a student goes through to ensure her friend can have a secret abortion" page 15**

\* **What do some Jews and some Roman Catholic clergy have in com-**

**mon?** An opposition to the Good Friday liturgy wherein there are prayers for the conversion of the Jews. page 16

\* **Journalistic idiocy** found its way into a piece under the by-line of Tom Johnson (Newhouse News Service) wherein he wrote the recent postal rate increase "will boost the cost of mailings for homeowners page 16

\* **And God forbid a "journalist" should ever attribute Christian precepts to anyone who does something good, especially a nun.** Well, there are a few journalists left, and not even all "journalists" (the species with the "") are of this bent. But! page 16

\* **OK, One more Journalistic whatever:** Headline reads, "Police say slain man was target of attack" (*T-P B-2, Sep. 26, 2007*). Duuhh! page 16

\* **And . . . the headline stated: Chinese Paddies go back 7,700 years.** Does this mean the Chinese are Irish? page 16

\* **The Hmong fought besides U. S. forces in Vietnam, but are now prevented from obtaining refuge in the U. S. A. because their fighting on the side of U. S. forces classifies them as terrorist under the Patriot Act** page 16

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\* **ONE OF YOUR PRIESTLY DUTIES** And the consequence of failure to perform this duty. Ezechiel 33:7-9. page 4

\* **A PRIEST NEVER "GIVES UP", NEVER QUILTS** Well, at least not for very long. One of the "marks" of a Priest is he never quits, never gives up. He may from time to time be discouraged, but he rebounds . . . Why does the Priest persist? Because he follows God's lead, and that is what God does. page 4

\* **PEOPLE ARE CONSTANTLY**

**MAKING UP, CREATING, THEIR OWN RELIGIONS.** Some of these have exerted sincere effort in an attempt to determine spiritual reality and in that effort have concocted a belief system. But they always insist on maintaining control and therefore refuse to accept in their belief system anything which has even the potential of diminishing their control. They therefore have not really been sincere in their inquiries into spiritual reality. page 5

\* **EVERY PRIEST IS A LAMP** The world is in darkness, illuminated only by the light which shines from every true Priest, for every true Priest is a lamp. page 6

\* **ST. MARY MAGDALENE NEWS** We have therefore decided to sell the land page 6

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**It is only the God based love and respect we have for others of mankind that creates civilization. Without that a human is simply a rodent scavenging the planet, and society, masking itself as civilization, is an association of scavengers.**

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