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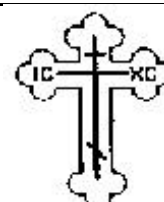
CRUCIFIED IN DEATH TO THIS WORLD If we possess the death of Jesus in ourselves, then we will also possess the Life of Jesus in ourselves. page *(Continued CONTENTS on page 31)*

Even though someone constantly makes the wrong decisions, and follows the least wise course of action, it does not necessarily follow they will always so do.

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REUNION

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



Volume 17 No. 3 OF THE CHURCH OF MAN WITH GOD November 2007 A.D.

~ WHAT DID THEY EXPECT WHEY THEY DISCARDED MORALITY?
This is a society where the only evil is to “get caught” and be punished. ~



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

These days we constantly hear that our community is in the midst of a crime wave the likes of which has never before been experienced. Every type of theft imaginable, use of mind altering drugs, and especially murder far beyond what any reasonable person would expect, are common daily occurrence.

But that last part really is not true. The increase in crime or the level or amount of crime, and especially violent crime and murder, and of theft and use of drugs, is not far beyond what any reasonable person would expect. It actually is surprisingly low considering the lack of morality, moral values, teaching of morals, and moral example which is the standard in our community.

Considering the percentage of children who are bastards it is obvious very few parents teach morality either by word or example. But it is not just through sexual sins that parents teach immorality rather than teach morals. Whether mom or dad is a lazy slob, a skinny knaver (a practitioner of knavery), an “Oilcan Harry” type of Uriah Heep, or some other type of moral deviant, in their sinfulness they teach their children to sin and think nothing of their sins nor of the evil example they give to their own children and to others. If they think about their sins at all, the parents of today think along the lines

(Continued MORALITY on page 7)

SPIRITUAL TRAINING IS ADVANCED THROUGH LEARNING MORALLY ACCEPTABLE RESPONSES TO GENERALIZED SITUATIONS

Often sin is often thought of as planned, considered and thought out, actions or thoughts. Occasionally this is true, but more often sin is reaction to a specific situation or a specific environment. The reaction is learned or acquired through reaction to similar situations or environments. Most of what we do or think actually is the result of the various courses of actions and thought patterns which we have *(Continued RESPONSE on page 8)*

**The Koran
Author: Muhammad
Sura IX (verse 5)**

And when the sacred months are passed, kill those who join other gods with God (specifically kill Christians who believe God is a Trinity of Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and therefore are considered by Moslems to have joined Christ and the Holy Spirit to the Father) **wherever ye shall find them; and seize them, besiege them, and lay wait for them with every kind of ambush:**

Are Christians supposed to ignore this? ~~~

Not an endorsement, but an acknowledgment

As a general rule we do not carry advertisements - except for our own liturgical material - and neither endorse nor recommend any product for that is not our function.

We do wish to render some assistance to one of the companies whose products we use for reference material including Patrology, writings of the Church Fathers, and The Douay-Rheims translation of the Bible - by mentioning the company and that we have ordered their latest program, Catholic Bible 4.0

That company is:
**Catholic Software
2440 University Station
Murray, KY 42071
Telephone (270) 753-8198**

It is a small company which has been around for many years, and though it is Roman Catholic oriented, Orthodox and Roman early writings are the same. We wish this company to be around for a long time. *Ed.*

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COMPASSION

Jesus did not make the parable about the compassionate king and the servant with no compassion as strong as it is so that it would remain in the minds of the people. He was simply relating common, every day occurrences. If anything would have surprised the people as being improbable, it would have been that a king forgave a debt, not that a servant who had the debt he owed forgiven would then not forgive the much smaller debt of a fellow servant.

(Continued COMPASSION on page 12)

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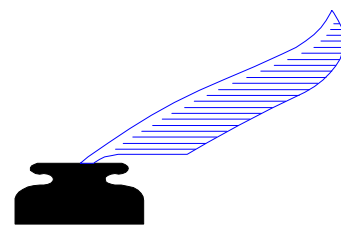
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+ Paul, S.S.B.,
Publisher

+ 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.)

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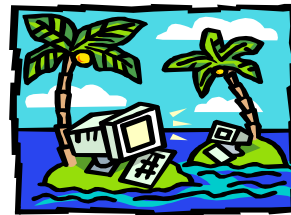
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On Line Chat Room: at the main web site log-in <http://www.reu.org> You have to register with the system before you can use it, and it is best to send e-mail to set a "chat schedule".

**Current Active Mailing Lists
Originating From BasilNet ReuNet
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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

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GOD'S GIFTS TO US God did not create us so that He could punish us. He created us so that we could be eternally happy with Him page 17

THE WICKED ARE TO BE PITIED AND RECEIVE OUR PRAYERS page 18

FILTH Humankind wallows in its filth, its nobility suffocated, dying, dead; Despised by itself, by itself mislead, outraging its heavenless leader of death. page 19

COMMENTS ON SOME INDICATORS OF OUR TIMES The CIA secret prisons go far beyond any morally acceptable prison related practice; Justice Clarence Thomas has written his memoirs in "My Grandfather's Son". The Los Angeles Times review; A new test indicates whether or not "test tube babies" have defects so those with defects can be killed; Global Warming is causing the climate in Greenland to return to that state which existed before the Little Ice Age of the sixteenth century (after 1500 A.D.); A United States Senate resolution calls for partition of Iraq into regions according to religious and ethnic divisions. This resolution ignores the fact that Iraq is a separate, independent country page 19

THAT FOR WHICH TO BE THANKFUL page 21

OUR WEAK FAITH For most of us our Faith is so weak it really is a shame. Faith can be thought of as having two aspects. page 21

DESPAIR OF HOLINESS - HOPE Each of us from time to time has thoughts along these lines: I will never become holy page 22

THE REALITY OF CHRIST Many people attempt to discern when the end of the world will come. They look at the signs which Our Saviour enumerated,

and those in the Apocalypse page 23

WHEN OUR STUPIDITY HAUNTS US Often it seems as though we can never do anything correctly page 24

DO YOU THINK EVERYONE IS TRYING TO USE AND ABUSE YOU page 25

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IMITATION OF CHRIST By Thomas a Kempis BOOK THREE The Fiftieth Chapter page 27

THE CONFESSIONS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE CHAPTER X page 29

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(Continued AUGUSTINE from page 29)

One of their answers they did not give forth publicly, but only to us in private -- when they said that the writings of the New Testament had been tampered with by unknown persons who desired to ingraft the Jewish law into the Christian faith. But they themselves never brought forward any uncorrupted copies. Still thinking in corporeal categories and very much ensnared and to some extent stifled, I was borne down by those conceptions of bodily substance. I panted under this load for the air of thy truth, but I was not able to breathe it pure and undefiled.

CHAPTER XII

22. I set about diligently to practice what I came to Rome to do -- the teaching of rhetoric. The first task was to bring together in my home a few people to whom and through whom I had begun to be known. And lo, I then began to learn that other offenses were committed in Rome which I had not had to bear in Africa. Just as I had been told, those riotous disruptions by young blackguards were not practiced here. Yet, now, my friends told me, many of the Roman students -- breakers of faith, who, for the love of money, set a small value on justice -- would conspire together and suddenly transfer to another teacher, to evade paying their master's fees. My heart hated such people, though not with a "perfect hatred"[145]; for doubtless I hated them more because I was to suffer from them than on account of their own illicit acts. Still, such people are base indeed; they fornicate against thee, for they love the transitory mockeries of temporal things and the filthy gain which begrimes the hand that grabs it; they embrace the fleeting world and scorn thee, who abidest and invitest us to return to thee and who pardonest the prostituted human soul when it does return to thee. Now I hate such crooked and perverse men, although I love them if they will be corrected and come to prefer the learning they obtain to money and, above all, to prefer thee to such learning, O God, the

truth and fullness of our positive good, and our most pure peace. But then the wish was stronger in me for my own sake not to suffer evil from them than was my desire that they should become good for thy sake.

CHAPTER XIII

23. When, therefore, the officials of Milan sent to Rome, to the prefect of the city, to ask that he provide them with a teacher of rhetoric for their city and to send him at the public expense, I applied for the job through those same persons, drunk with the Manichean vanities, to be freed from whom I was going away -- though neither they nor I were aware of it at the time. They recommended that Symmachus, who was then prefect, after he had proved me by audition, should appoint me.

And to Milan I came, to Ambrose the bishop, famed through the whole world as one of the best of men, thy devoted servant. His eloquent discourse in those times abundantly provided thy people with the flour of thy wheat, the gladness of thy oil, and the sober intoxication of thy wine.[146] To him I was led by thee without my knowledge, that by him I might be led to thee in full knowledge. That man of God received me as a father would, and welcomed my coming as a good bishop should. And I began to love him, of course, not at the first as a teacher of the truth, for I had entirely despaired of finding that in thy Church -- but as a friendly man. And I studiously listened to him -- though not with the right motive -- as he preached to the people. I was trying to discover whether his eloquence came up to his reputation, and whether it flowed fuller or thinner than others said it did. And thus I hung on his words intently, but, as to his subject matter, I was only a careless and contemptuous listener. I was delighted with the charm of his speech, which was more erudite, though less cheerful and soothing, than Faustus' style. As for subject matter, however, there could be no comparison, for the latter was wandering around in

Manichean deceptions, while the former was teaching salvation most soundly. But "salvation is far from the wicked,"[147] such as I was then when I stood before him. Yet I was drawing nearer, gradually and unconsciously.

CHAPTER XIV

24. For, although I took no trouble to learn what he said, but only to hear how he said it -- for this empty concern remained foremost with me as long as I despaired of finding a clear path from man to thee -- yet, along with the eloquence I prized, there also came into my mind the ideas which I ignored; for I could not separate them. And, while I opened my heart to acknowledge how skillfully he spoke, there also came an awareness of how truly he spoke -- but only gradually. First of all, his ideas had already begun to appear to me defensible; and the Catholic faith, for which I supposed that nothing could be said against the onslaught of the Manicheans, I now realized could be maintained without presumption. This was especially clear after I had heard one or two parts of the Old Testament explained allegorically -- whereas before this, when I had interpreted them literally, they had "killed" me spiritually.[148] However, when many of these passages in those books were expounded to me thus, I came to blame my own despair for having believed that no reply could be given to those who hated and scoffed at the Law and the Prophets. Yet I did not see that this was reason enough to follow the Catholic way, just because it had learned advocates who could answer objections adequately and without absurdity. Nor could I see that what I had held to heretofore should now be condemned, because both sides were equally defensible. For that way did not appear to me yet vanquished; but neither did it seem yet victorious.

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(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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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.

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THE BASILIAN FATHERS

(The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil)

A VERY IMPORTANT CONTINUING ARTICLE IN THIS ISSUE

The Confessions of Saint Augustine, Chapter X, at page 29 in this issue of REUNION, contain a very significant exploration of aspects of God and of Evil. We find many Roman Catholic Priests, and many reared in Western conceptualology (I think we just made up a word) hold similar erroneous concepts. Saint Augustine presents this with great clarity, which may prove beneficial to everyone, including those who hold themselves to be Agnostic and those who profess to be Atheist.

ROMANIAN PATRIARCH

Metropolitan Daniel of Moldova and Bucovna was made Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church on 12 September 2007 A. D. He succeeds His Beatitude Teoctist, Memory Eternal.

NEW MOTHER HOUSE

We thought we had completed negotiations to purchase a new Mother House but the seller declined to sign the sales agreement even though agreement had been reached on all the terms, conditions, and price - and the "deal" "fell through" Sorry guys and gals.

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.

PRAYING FOR THE DEAD

This season, just preceding the celebration of the birth of Our Saviour, and His making Himself known to us Gentiles on Epiphany, is a season wherein we traditionally pray for our dead and contemplate them, their lives, and their effects upon us - not to mention our continuing love for them and how much we miss them.

This tradition, which has existed for millenniums, is now endangered by Protestants who label themselves Orthodox. They insist it is useless to pray for the dead. That when one dies that is it, that nothing can be done for the dead. They also usually insist it is useless to pray to the dead, to the Saints. That no Saint can assist the living. That no Saint can or will intercede for the living. That only Jesus can assist us. They hold these heretical positions with such vehemence that they sometimes persuade those who are weak in knowledge of dogma, tradition, and practice of true Faith, bow to their apparent superior knowledge, to their vehemence.

Do not, ever, allow anyone to interfere with your praying for the dead, with your belief that prayers for the dead are or can be useful to and for the dead. And do not ever allow them to influence you to neglect praying to the Saints. If you allow these heretics to persuade you in any manner, you will be denying the truth of The Communion of Saints, and two thousand years of dogma, tradition, and Faith.

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THE CONFESSIONS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

CHAPTER X

18. Thou didst restore me then from that illness, and didst heal the son of thy handmaid in his body, that he might live for thee and that thou mightest endow him with a better and more certain health. After this, at Rome, I again joined those deluding and deluded "saints"; and not their "hearers" only, such as the man was in whose house I had fallen sick, but also with those whom they called "the elect." For it still seemed to me "that it is not we who sin, but some other nature sinned in us." And it gratified my pride to be beyond blame, and when I did anything wrong not to have to confess that I had done wrong -- "that thou mightest heal my soul because it had sinned against thee"[141] -- and I loved to excuse my soul and to accuse something else inside me (I knew not what) but which was not I. But, assuredly, it was I, and it was my impiety that had divided me against myself. That sin then was all the more incurable because I did not deem myself a sinner. It was an execrable iniquity, O God Omnipotent, that I would have preferred to have thee defeated in me, to my destruction, than to be defeated by thee to my salvation. Not yet, therefore, hadst thou set a watch upon my mouth and a door around my lips that my heart might not incline to evil speech, to make excuse for sin with men that work iniquity.[142] And, therefore, I continued still in the company of their "elect."

19. But now, hopeless of gaining any profit from that false doctrine, I began to hold more loosely and negligently even to those points which I had decided to rest content with, if I could find nothing better. I was now half inclined to believe that those philosophers whom they call "The Academics"[143] were wiser than the rest in holding that we ought to doubt everything, and in maintaining that man does not have the power of comprehending any certain truth, for, although I had not yet under-

stood their meaning, I was fully persuaded that they thought just as they are commonly reputed to do. And I did not fail openly to dissuade my host from his confidence which I observed that he had in those fictions of which the works of Mani are full. For all this, I was still on terms of more intimate friendship with these people than with others who were not of their heresy. I did not indeed defend it with my former ardor; but my familiarity with that group -- and there were many of them concealed in Rome at that time[144] -- made me slower to seek any other way. This was particularly easy since I had no hope of finding in thy Church the truth from which they had turned me aside, O Lord of heaven and earth, Creator of all things visible and invisible. And it still seemed to me most unseemly to believe that thou couldst have the form of human flesh and be bounded by the bodily shape of our limbs. And when I desired to meditate on my God, I did not know what to think of but a huge extended body -- for what did not have bodily extension did not seem to me to exist -- and this was the greatest and almost the sole cause of my unavoidable errors.

20. And thus I also believed that evil was a similar kind of substance, and that it had its own hideous and deformed extended body -- either in a dense form which they called the earth or in a thin and subtle form as, for example, the substance of the air, which they imagined as some malignant spirit penetrating that earth. And because my piety -- such as it was -- still compelled me to believe that the good God never created any evil substance, I formed the idea of two masses, one opposed to the other, both infinite but with the evil more contracted and the good more expansive. And from this diseased beginning, the other sacrileges followed after.

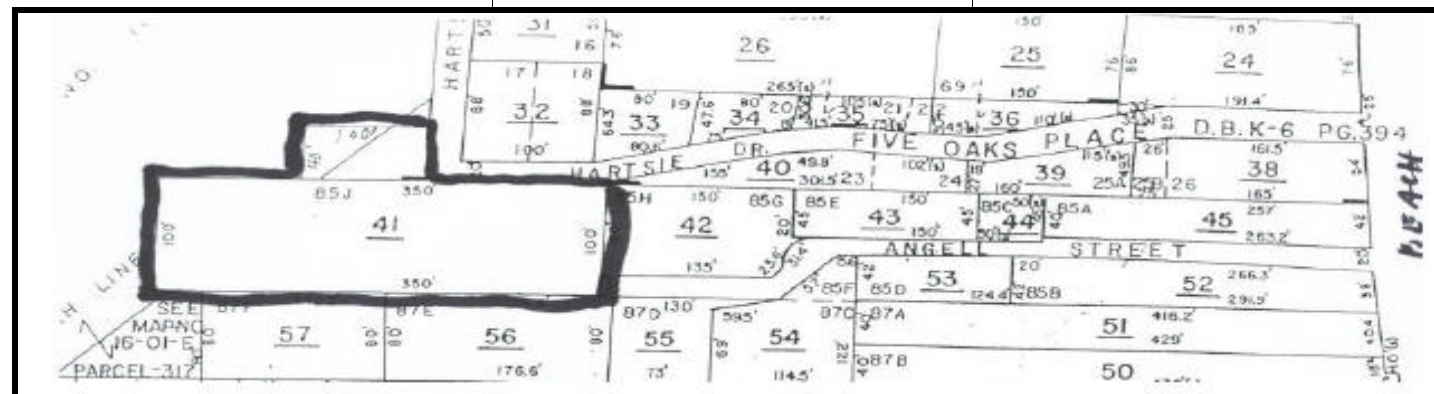
For when my mind tried to turn back to the Catholic faith, I was cast down, since the Catholic faith was not what I judged it to be. And it seemed to me a greater piety to regard thee, my God -- to whom I make confession of thy mercies -- as infinite in all respects save

that one: where the extended mass of evil stood opposed to thee, where I was compelled to confess that thou art finite -- than if I should think that thou couldst be confined by the form of a human body on every side. And it seemed better to me to believe that no evil had been created by thee -- for in my ignorance evil appeared not only to be some kind of substance but a corporeal one at that. This was because I had, thus far, no conception of mind, except as a subtle body diffused throughout local spaces. This seemed better than to believe that anything could emanate from thee which had the character that I considered evil to be in its nature. And I believed that our Saviour himself also -- thy Only Begotten -- had been brought forth, as it were, for our salvation out of the mass of thy bright shining substance. So that I could believe nothing about him except what I was able to harmonize with these vain imaginations. I thought, therefore, that such a nature could not be born of the Virgin Mary without being mingled with the flesh, and I could not see how the divine substance, as I had conceived it, could be mingled thus without being contaminated. I was afraid, therefore, to believe that he had been born in the flesh, lest I should also be compelled to believe that he had been contaminated by the flesh. Now will thy spiritual ones smile blandly and lovingly at me if they read these confessions. Yet such was I.

CHAPTER XI

21. Furthermore, the things they censured in thy Scriptures I thought impossible to be defended. And yet, occasionally, I desired to confer on various matters with someone well learned in those books, to test what he thought of them. For already the words of one Elpidius, who spoke and disputed face to face against these same Manicheans, had begun to impress me, even when I was at Carthage; because he brought forth things out of the Scriptures that were not easily withstood, to which their answers appeared to me feeble.

(Continued AUGUSTINE on page 30)



(Continued **KEMPIS** from page 27)

you must sometimes descend to lower things and bear the burden of this corruptible life, albeit unwillingly and wearily. As long as you wear a mortal body you will suffer weariness and heaviness of heart. You ought, therefore, to bewail in the flesh the burden of the flesh which keeps you from giving yourself unceasingly to spiritual exercises and divine contemplation.

In such condition, it is well for you to apply yourself to humble, outward works and to refresh yourself in good deeds, to await with unshaken confidence My heavenly visitation, patiently to bear your exile and dryness of mind until you are again visited by Me and freed of all anxieties. For I will cause you to forget your labors and to enjoy inward quiet. I will spread before you the open fields of the Scriptures, so that with an open heart you may begin to advance in the way of My commandments. And you will say: the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the future glory which shall be revealed to us.

The Fifty-Second Chapter

A Man Ought Not to Consider Himself Worthy of Consolation, But Rather Deserving of Chastisement

The Disciple

Lord, I am not worthy of Your consolation or of any spiritual visitation. Therefore, You treat me justly when You leave me poor and desolate. For though I could shed a sea of tears, yet I should not be worthy of Your consolation. Hence, I deserve only to be scourged and punished because I have offended You often and grievously, and have sinned greatly in many things. In all justice, therefore, I am not worthy of any consolation.

But You, O gracious and merciful God, Who do not will that Your works should perish, deign to console Your servant beyond all his merit and above

human measure, to show the riches of Your goodness toward the vessels of mercy. For Your consolations are not like the words of men.

What have I done, Lord, that You should confer on me any heavenly comfort? I remember that I have done nothing good, but that I have always been prone to sin and slow to amend. That is true. I cannot deny it. If I said otherwise You would stand against me, and there would be no one to defend me. What have I deserved for my sins except hell and everlasting fire?

In truth, I confess that I am deserving of all scorn and contempt. Neither is it fitting that I should be remembered among Your devoted servants. And although it is hard for me to hear this, yet for truth's sake I will allege my sins against myself, so that I may more easily deserve to beg Your mercy. What shall I say, guilty as I am and full of all confusion? My tongue can say nothing but this alone: "I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned; have mercy on me and pardon me. Suffer me a little that I may pour out my grief, before I go to that dark land that is covered with the shadow of death."

What do you especially demand of a guilty and wretched sinner, except that he be contrite and humble himself for his sins? In true sorrow and humility of heart hope of forgiveness is born, the troubled conscience is reconciled, grace is found, man is preserved from the wrath to come, and God and the penitent meet with a holy kiss.

To You, O Lord, humble sorrow for sins is an acceptable sacrifice, a sacrifice far sweeter than the perfume of incense. This is also the pleasing ointment which You would have poured upon Your sacred feet, for a contrite and humble heart You have never despised. Here is a place of refuge from the force of the enemy's anger. Here is amended and washed away whatever defilement has been contracted elsewhere.

The Fifty-Third Chapter

God's Grace Is Not Given to the Earthly Minded

The Voice of Christ

My child, my grace is precious. It does not allow itself to be mixed with external things or with earthly consolations. Cast away all

obstacles to grace, therefore, if you wish to receive its infusion.

Seek to retire within yourself. Love to dwell alone with yourself. Seek no man's conversation, but rather pour forth devout prayer to God that you may keep your mind contrite and your heart pure.

Consider the whole world as nothing. Prefer attendance upon God to all outward occupation, for you cannot attend upon Me and at the same time take delight in external things. You must remove yourself from acquaintances and from dear friends, and keep your mind free of all temporal consolation. Thus the blessed Apostle St. Peter begs the faithful of Christ to keep themselves as strangers and pilgrims in the world.[39]

What great confidence at the hour of death shall be his who is not attached to this world by any affection. But the sickly soul does not know what it is to have a heart thus separated from all things, nor does the natural man know the liberty of the spiritual man. Yet, if he truly wishes to be spiritual, he must renounce both strangers and friends, and must beware of no one more than himself.

If you completely conquer yourself, you will more easily subdue all other things. The perfect victory is to triumph over self. For he who holds himself in such subjection that sensuality obeys reason and reason obeys Me in all matters, is truly his own conqueror and master of the world.

Now, if you wish to climb to this high position you must begin like a man, and lay the ax to the root, in order to tear out and destroy any hidden unruly love of self or of earthly goods. From this vice of too much self-love comes almost every other vice that must be uprooted. And when this evil is vanquished, and brought under control, great peace and quiet will follow at once.

But because few labor to die entirely to self, or tend completely away from self, therefore they remain entangled in self, and cannot be lifted in spirit above themselves. But he who desires to walk freely with Me must mortify all his low and inordinate affections, and must not cling with selfish love or desire to any creature.

[39] Peter 2:11.

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EVIL PERSONS OFTEN STRUCTURE LIES AND UNTRUTHS TO ATTACK WHAT IS GOOD AND WHAT IS INNOCENT

We are therefore obligated to examine every statement and opinion and ascertain whether or not it is supported by what facts and circumstances we know to be true, and then formulate a viable opinion.

What were the events which lead to Jesus giving us the instruction, "**Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God, the things that are God's.**"? (Mat. 22:21)

The Pharisees and the Herodians, two groups of evil people who had opposed and actually hated each other, conspired together to entrap Jesus by asking Him if it were lawful to give tribute to Caesar. They used the term "lawful" because it has two applications: lawful according to the law of man and the government, and lawful according to the law of God and of Moses.

The evil people thought, if Christ says it is not lawful to give tribute to Caesar, then the government will attack Him as a threat. If He were to say it is lawful, then the evil people could tell the Jewish people that Christ supports the Romans and their Pagan religion, and thus lose His followers. The Pharisees and Herodians thought there was no means by which Jesus could escape their trap.

To make sure Jesus would at least attempt to give an answer to what they thought was an impossible riddle, they attempted to appeal to His vanity, and did so in a manner calculated to have Him inclined to say the tribute to Caesar was not lawful. They did this by saying, ". . . **we know that thou art a true speaker and teachest the way of God in truth. Neither carest thou for any man: for thou dost not regard the person of men.**" (Mat. 22:16)

In this the lie of the Pharisees and Hero-

dians was not in the question they asked, but in their false humility, and in pretending to have respect for Jesus, for His opinion and insight, His teachings, and the implication they would follow His teachings.

It is probable that very few of the multitude of people present were aware of the lie of the Pharisees and Herodians. The question itself was an interesting one; one designed to catch the attention of almost everyone. It was a very good "set-up", but the tactic is not unusual and it is successful very often. We see the tactic in use often in law - the old question, "When did you stop beating your wife, Mr. Jones," or, "Have you stopped beating your wife Mr. Jones," followed by, "Answer yes or no!" when Mr. Jones has never beaten his wife. Incidentally, the proper response is, "Objection, there has been no evidence or proof that Mr. Jones has ever beaten his wife," but if the judge is in conspiracy with the evil lawyer, the judge can overrule the objection and attempt to force Mr. Jones to answer yes or no. In any event, the evil lawyer has planted in the minds of the jury and of the people in general, the concept that Mr. Jones is a wife beater, and this concept quickly becomes considered to be fact.

This tactic is also often used in politics, business, and in every day life. But we will not give any additional examples because the best examples involve current day politics and those who have been duped into believing the current political lies will cease to pay attention, and will neglect the important part.

This is the important part.

If we seek the truth, we must examine the facts. Who is making a statement?

What is their relationship with the one to or about whom they are making the statement? Is the timing of the statement of any significance; what is going on, what is occurring during this time in which the statement is being made? What about the place or situation in which the statement is made, is this of any significance? How is the statement being made? Why is the statement being made; what prompted it; what are the circumstances of the statement?

Who was asking Christ for His opinion about a very important matter? Pharisees and Herodians. What is their relationship with Christ? They hate Him. Why would they appear to seek His opinion or advice? So-as-to destroy Him through His answer or lack of answer.

They are winning because the public, because people in general, are too lazy to properly investigate a situation and then exert the effort to formulate a valid opinion. It is simply easy to accept propaganda presented in the form of a considered opinion .

. .

Who asked Mr. Jones if he had stopped beating his wife? His wife's lawyer. Why did the wife's lawyer fail to establish a factual basis for the question? Stated in a different manner, why did not the lawyer first put someone on the stand who would say that Mr. Jones beat his wife and then ask Mr. Jones if he had stopped beating his wife? Because Mr. Jones had never beat his wife, and therefore any evidence would have had to be manufactured, and manufactured evidence can often be proven to be false. But it is important to destroy Mr. Jones' reputation. What is the relationship between Mr. Jones and the lawyer asking the question? They are on opposite sides in a legal battle.

In political situations, ask these types of questions.

In business relationships and situations, especially when exposed to advertising, ask these types of questions.

In personal relationships, especially

(Continued **EVIL PEOPLE** on page 6)

(Continued **EVIL PEOPLE** from page 5)

when someone is attempting to get something out of you, ask these types of questions.

We must ask these types of questions and ascertain the answers truthfully if we wish to have valid opinions.

But very few people are willing to expend the effort necessary to just think, much less the effort necessary to evaluate and ascertain truthful answers. It is much easier to just emote, to operate not on gut feeling, but to be easily persuaded, to have one's mind filed with propaganda presented in the form of considered opinion so that one does not have to go through the efforts required to formulate their own, valid, opinion.

The Pharisees and Herodians had every reason to expect they would win in their attack on Jesus. And they have every reason to expect they will win in their current attacks against goodness and integrity.

They did not win against Jesus. But they are winning in their current attacks against good people of integrity. They are winning for the same reasons they have usually won; for the same reasons the Nazi won in their attacks against the Jews, Slavs, Poles, and all "non Aryans" - remember that even the Nazi concept of "Aryan" is a complete fabrication, a total lie. They are winning because the public, because people in general, are too lazy to properly investigate a situation and then exert the effort to formulate a valid opinion. It is simply easy to accept propaganda presented in the form of a considered opinion, and presented or delivered in a learned manner, especially when it attacks someone who appears to be less sophisticated, or more "common", or who does not have the physical attributes or presence with which we are accustomed to associate being worthy of due consideration.

And **THAT** is very far from being holy.

Ref: Phil. 1:6-11; Mat. 22:15-21

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WE AND CHRIST ARE BOTH PERSONS,

But while Christ is person just like us, we are not persons just like Christ

We often forget that if we make an error in our perception of Christ, the error could very well have an effect on what we seek from Christ, **and** on what we receive from Christ.

Those who think of Christ as being just a holy man will not ask what the world deems to be impossible from Him. Those who think of God as just being some form of really powerful human, a type of superman, or someone who knows the secret of manipulating the elements, chemistry, physics, and the material world, will be limited in their expectations, which will limit both their requests and what they receive. Those who perceive God as being someone whom they must learn to manipulate may well receive devious and manipulated fruit in response to their requests.

But those who realize in some small manner, even just a small portion, the reality of Jesus Christ - God, of God the Blessed Trinity, and each Person thereof, will seek what this world deems to be impossible; they will seek not just life after death, but eternal life before, during, and after death.

Those who do not have at least this small realization of the reality of Christ will belittle or at least not acknowledge and realize the importance of His teachings and of all of the Sacraments and the other aids which He has provided for our welfare. They also will not have a good grasp on the evil importance of sin and its devastating effects on us.

We think of Christ as being a person just like us. This is true. But it is not true that we are persons just like Christ. We and Christ are both persons, but while Christ is a person just like us, we are not persons just like Christ. Christ is God. We are not.

The woman who was troubled with an

issue of blood for twelve years understood Christ was different. She actually understood that Christ is God, for Christ told her her faith had made her whole and she was cured as He said those words. He did not say her belief - belief that if she but touched His garment she would be cured - had cured her. He said her faith had cured her.

The ruler who asked Jesus to raise his daughter from the dead was not making a last, desperate, attempt to save his daughter's life. He knew she was dead. He was not clutching at straws. He was asking a person he knew to be God, there present in his own time in the flesh, physically present for the first time in history, to come and return his daughter to life, and to him. He knew Jesus could do it, and that Jesus, being God, loved him and his daughter, and in that love would grant his request.

When we realize at least a small portion of the reality of the Person Jesus Christ, we change the focus of our life, of what we seek from life, and how we wish to live our life. The necessities, comforts, and even luxuries of this world remain desirable to us but are no longer overwhelmingly desirable if they interfere with our relationship with that most wonderful Person, Jesus Christ, and His and our Father, and the most fervent Paraclete who is not just our advocate but also our guide, teacher, and main stay.

Our disgust with our constant failure to become more holy and pleasing to God, to become worthy of such friends as we have in each Person of the Blessed Trinity, drive us to continue to strive to become worthy of such friends and such friendship, and to attain some level of success in that endeavor.

All because we are very conscious of that important fact. The fact that each Person of the Blessed Trinity actually and really is a Person, just like each of us. But that while all of us are also persons, none of us is a Person like God is.

Ref: Phil. 3:17-24;4:1-3; Mat. 9:18-26 +

IMITATION OF CHRIST By Thomas a Kempis

BOOK THREE

The Fiftieth Chapter

How a Desolate Person Ought to Commit Himself
Into the Hands of God

The Disciple

Lord God, Holy Father, may You be blessed now and in eternity. For as You will, so is it done; and what You do is good. Let Your servant rejoice in You -- not in himself or in any other, for You alone are true joy. You are my hope and my crown. You, O Lord, are my joy and my honor.

What does Your servant possess that he has not received from You, and that without any merit of his own? Yours are all the things which You have given, all the things which You have made.

I am poor and in labors since my youth, and my soul is sorrowful sometimes even to the point of tears. At times, also, my spirit is troubled because of impending sufferings. I long for the joy of peace. Earnestly I beg for the peace of Your children who are fed by You in the light of consolation. If You give peace, if You infuse holy joy, the soul of Your servant shall be filled with holy song and be devout in praising You. But if You withdraw Yourself, as You so very often do, he will not be able to follow the way of Your commandments, but will rather be obliged to strike his breast and bend the knee, because his today is different from yesterday and the day before when Your light shone upon his head and he was protected in the shadow of Your wings from the temptations rushing upon him.

Just Father, ever to be praised, the hour is come for Your servant to be tried. Beloved Father, it is right that in this hour Your servant should suffer something for You. O Father, forever to be honored, the hour which You knew

from all eternity is at hand, when for a short time Your servant should be outwardly oppressed, but inwardly should ever live with You.

Let him be a little slighted, let him be humbled, let him fail in the sight of men, let him be afflicted with sufferings and pains, so that he may rise again with You in the dawn of the new light and be glorified in heaven.

Holy Father, You have so appointed and wished it. What has happened is what You commanded. For this is a favor to Your friend, to suffer and be troubled in the world for Your love, no matter how often and by whom You permit it to happen to him.

Nothing happens in the world without Your design and providence, and without cause. It is well for me, O Lord, that You have humbled me, that I may learn the justice of Your judgments and cast away all presumption and haughtiness of heart. It is profitable for me that shame has covered my face that I may look to You rather than to men for consolation. Hereby I have learned also to fear Your inscrutable judgment falling alike upon the just and unjust yet not without equity and justice.

Thanks to You that You have not spared me evils but have bruised me with bitter blows, inflicting sorrows, sending distress without and within. Under heaven there is none to console me except You, my Lord God, the heavenly Physician of souls, Who wound and heal, Who cast down to hell and raise up again. Your discipline is upon me and Your very rod shall instruct me.

Behold, beloved Father, I am in Your hands. I bow myself under Your correcting chastisement. Strike my back and my neck, that I may bend my crookedness to Your will. Make of me a pious and humble follower, as in Your goodness You are wont to do, that I may walk according to Your every nod. Myself and all that is mine I commit to You to be corrected, for it is better to be punished here than hereafter.

You know all things without exception, and nothing in man's conscience is hidden from You. Coming events You know before they happen, and there is no need for anyone to teach or admonish You of what is being done on earth. You know what will promote my progress, and how much tribulation will serve to cleanse away the rust of vice. Deal with me according to Your good pleasure and do not despise my sinful life, which is known to none so well or so clearly as to You alone.

Grant me, O Lord, the grace to know what should be known, to praise what is most pleasing to You, to esteem that which appears most precious to You, and to abhor what is unclean in Your sight.

Do not allow me to judge according to the light of my bodily eyes, nor to give sentence according to the hearing of ignorant men's ears. But let me distinguish with true judgment between things visible and spiritual, and always seek above all things Your good pleasure. The senses of men often err in their judgments, and the lovers of this world also err in loving only visible things. How is a man the better for being thought greater by men? The deceiver deceives the deceitful, the vain man deceives the vain, the blind deceives the blind, the weak deceives the weak as often as he extols them, and in truth his foolish pride shames them the more. For, as the humble St. Francis says, whatever anyone is in Your sight, that he is and nothing more.

The Fifty-First Chapter

When We Cannot Attain to the Highest,
We Must Practice the Humble Works

The Voice of Christ

My child, you cannot always continue in the more fervent desire of virtue, or remain in the higher stage of contemplation, but because of humanity's sin

(Continued **KEMPIS** on page 28)

HUMOR

AMERICAN (U.S.A.) HISTORY
(Thank you Fr. Nicholas)

Once upon a time in the kingdom of Heaven , God was missing for six days. Eventually, Michael the Archangel found him, resting on the seventh day.

He inquired of God. "Where have you been?"

God sighed a deep sigh of satisfaction and proudly pointed downwards through the clouds, "Look, Michael. Look what I've made."

Archangel Michael looked puzzled and said, "What is it?"

"It's a planet," replied God, "and I've put Life on it. I'm going to call it Earth and it's going to be a great place of balance."

"Balance?" Inquired Michael, still confused.

God explained, pointing to different parts of earth. "For example, northern Europe will be a place of great opportunity and wealth but cold and harsh while southern Europe is going to be poor but sunny and pleasant."

"I have made some lands abundant in water and other lands parched deserts. This one will be extremely hot and while this one will be very cold and covered in ice. "

The Archangel, impressed by God's work, then pointed to a land mass and said "What's that one?"

"Ah," said God. "That's America and that part of it is the United States of America -- the most glorious place on earth. There are beautiful swamps, flowing bayou's, rolling hills, and dense forests, spacious plains and towering mountains, and even volcanoes. The people from America are going to be handsome, modest, intelligent, humorous and love good food and music. They are going to be found traveling the world. They will be extremely sociable,

hardworking and high achieving, and they will be known throughout the world as diplomats and carriers of peace as well as staunch supporters of justice and willing to place their lives in jeopardy for the well being of all of mankind."

Michael gasped in wonder and admiration but then proclaimed, "What about balance, God? You said there would be balance!"

God replied wisely, "Wait until you see the idiots I put in Washington D. C. "

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GRANDMA IN COURT
(Thank you Richard)

Lawyers should never ask a Louisiana grandma a question if they aren't prepared for the answer.

In a trial, a Southern small-town prosecuting attorney called his first witness, a grandmotherly, elderly woman to the stand.

He approached her and asked, "Mrs. Jones, do you know me? "

She responded, "Why, yes, I do know you, Mr. Williams. I've known you since you were a young boy, and frankly, you've been a big disappointment to me. You lie, you cheat on your wife, and you manipulate people and talk about them behind their backs. You think you're a big shot when you haven't the brains to realize you never will amount to anything more than a two-bit paper pusher. Yes, I know you."

The lawyer was stunned! Not knowing what else to do, he pointed across the room and asked, "Mrs. Jones, do you know the defense attorney?"

She again replied, "Why, yes, I do. I've known Mr. Bradley since he was a youngster, too. He's lazy, and he has a drinking problem. He can't build a normal relationship with anyone and his law practice is one of the worst in the

entire state. Not to mention he cheated on his wife with three different women. One of them was your wife. Yes, I know him."

The defense attorney almost died.

The judge asked both counselors to approach the bench and, in a very quiet voice, said, "If either of you idiots asks her if she knows me, I'll send you to the electric chair."

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Adam and Eve had an ideal marriage. He didn't have to hear about all the men she could have married, and she didn't have to hear about the way his mother cooked.

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An elderly woman died last month. Having never married, she requested no male pallbearers. In her handwritten instructions for her memorial service, she wrote, "They wouldn't take me out while I was alive, I don't want them to take me out when I'm dead.

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A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds. After explaining the commandment to "honor thy father and thy mother," she asked "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?" Without missing a beat one little boy answered, "Thou shall not kill."

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(Continued MORALITY from page 1)
of, "After all, what is so bad about my little sins? I don't hurt anyone by having sex with people to whom I am not married. Anything I steal is insured and the insurance companies have lots of money. And I can live very easily with money, food, housing, and medical care provided by the government so why should I even try to support myself when the government has so much money?" But it is readily apparent the parents of today do not think about their sins, nor do they consider their sins to be sins.

It is not just the parents of today who give evil, sinful example. Virtually every entertainer, celebrity, and politician of today lives an openly sinful life.

Young people are not fools. They quickly discern that the vast majority of the most popular "clergy" or "religious" beacons are those who use religion to make money. They quickly realize their parents follow such leaders because such leaders teach that sin is permissible and that God is all forgiving and does not require one meet any standard to get into heaven. These religious leaders prove their belief in their doctrine by not living up to any standards themselves.

Then, when the children of today do stumble on someone who appears to have some moral values what do they most often discover? A person who is Gnostic - a person who believes they know God's mind, how to manipulate God, God's time table for "the last days", that they will be "raptured up", that they are so special that God virtually can not function without them - a charismatic psychopath.

Government officials also actively preach that certain types of activities are acceptable, even though God has declared these activities to be sin. Such approved activities include murder of unborn children at any time even in the midst of being born, fornication, adultery, homosexuality be it male or

lesbian, bold and complete lies about one's political opponents, accepting bribes including bribes from foreign governments and organizations which wish to overthrow one's own government, giving favorable contracts to companies in return for the expectation of being hired by such companies upon retirement from government service, bribing voters with token "freebies" (voters sell their votes very cheaply), and inflaming envy to enact policies which assuage that envy. A classic example of inflaming envy is the federal income tax. The Constitutional Amendment which allowed a federal income tax was touted to the poor and especially the middle class as a means of "soaking" or taking from the wealthy, but the wealthy are only nominally effected by income taxation while the middle class is the one being "soaked".

The young people of today learn the lessons taught by their elders, including their supposed protectors their government officials. In learning the lessons they emulate their teachers within their own sphere of society.

The lessons taught through popular entertainment also are a direct cause of sin and the crimes which inflict society - remember, crime is nothing more or less than sin.

Most movies, television programs, and music, teach that fornication is permissible. Homosexuality and bestiality are taught as being cute and funny. Murder is permissible if the one being killed is "really bad" or not attractive - unless they are unattractive and funny. Freeing a criminal because the criminal really is not all that bad, or because they are really pretty or cute or nice in some way, is taught as being a good thing to do. Manipulating people and any system for one's own benefit or just for the joy of manipulation is presented as acceptable.

Having standards and holding up those standards to measure anyone, be it one's self or others or both, is taught as

improper because doing what one is able to do simply because one is able to do it is taught as the only standard. It is taught as the only standard by the lives lead by even those who state they are opposed to violent crime; for these same people reject at least some of what God has demanded be the standards by which we live.

And in rejecting even those few standards, sin, including crimes of all types, are taught.

What should one expect God to do when His invitation to life is ignored? What should be expected will happen happen when the rules and regulations established by the One who made everything including each of us, and Who keeps everything in existence including every one of us, when those rules and regulations which were established for the well being of humankind in this life and so that individual humans could attain eternal salvation - what should be expected when these rules and regulations are intentionally ignored and violated?

What should be expected is exactly what is being experienced.

This situation will not change until morality is lived and taught by word and example.

In our world where the standard seem to be that the only evil is to "get caught" and be punished, the ultimate evil seemingly awaits a very large percentage of the population.



+ Paul, S.S.B.

Ref: Eph. 4:23-28; Mat. 22:2-14

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(Continued RESPONSE from page 1)
 developed throughout our lives in response to specific situations, environments, and stimulations. We then correlate these specific responses to generalized situations, and in turn apply the generalizations to similar situations, environments, and stimulations as we encounter them. It is a system constantly under revision and adjustment as new or dissimilar situations, stimulations, and environments are encountered. But the basic responses become ingrained.

The military is very conscious of this and utilizes this process of learned response in training its personnel.

Spiritually and morally each of us individually as well as collectively in our various roles, as role models and teachers, and especially Priests, individuals,

and parents, and most especially each of us individually as custodians of our own individual consciences, should learn morally acceptable responses to generalized situations. **REPEAT: each of us individually AS CUSTODIANS OF OUR OWN INDIVIDUAL CONSCIENCES, should learn morally acceptable responses to generalized situations.** If this is done we will be inclined to engage in morally acceptable behavior and thought.

One of the more enjoyable results of this is that when you are faced with a situation which requires a moral response you need not respond with what may be considered a "holier than thou" attitude, nor will you be at a loss of how to respond in a manner which does not demean others. You will remain able to express yourself and to perform deeds and actions which will neither overtly insult others nor be deemed unacceptable by others. You will also be more satisfied with your conduct and thoughts, as will be God.

In doing this you will be strengthened in the Lord and in the might of his power. You will be putting on the armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil. You will have your loins girt about with truth, wear the breastplate of justice. Your feet will be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. You will bear the shield of faith, wherewith you **will** be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one. You **will** be clothed with the helmet of salvation and not only hold the sword of the Spirit but have the ability,

knowledge, and wisdom to properly wield that sword, and you **will** wield that sword.

You will find that you will not only desire to, and be able to, but actually will overcome your injustices to yourself and your injustices to others.

Repeat: You will find that you will not only desire to, and be able to, but actually WILL overcome your injustices to yourself and your injustices to others.

Every sin is an injustice, a transgression of justice. These is no such thing as a sin which effects only the sinner for the effect on the sinner effect the sinner's relationships and interactions with others. Each sin also serves to strengthen evil which is a force created by creatures and fed by their sins.

Consider but one type of sin, that of ethnic slurs, bigoted thoughts, and racial enmity, and you will discover what is applicable to these is applicable to all sins. These sins are not like a river which flows in one direction. They are like a stagnant pond which breeds illness; or a violent tidal water or

estuary which ebbs and flows in all directions pulled by a multitude of forces inflicting harm everywhere.

If a person is dissatisfied with their situation or condition or some aspect thereof, that person should first consider whether or not they **should** be dissatisfied with their situation or condition. If they determine they should be dissatisfied, they should next determine whether nor not is possible to improve their condition or situation through moral means, and whether or not the changed situation or condition will itself be moral and lead to a strengthening of their own morality and that of others. But, since it also is possible they could determine they **should not** be dissatisfied with their situation of condition, each individual should be ready to be happy with that aspect of their life with which they were dissatisfied.

In the middle of this is the additional moral obligation to ascertain the effects on others which will result from any acts on our part.

An individual who consciously trains his or her response to a multitude of situations will often become conscious of his or her current responses to those situations. This will induce the individual to become conscious of their inclination to sin under certain situations.

By way of example, the person who has responded to stress, or to disagreeable situations, with food or sex, even food in moderation or

sex with their spouse, has developed a sinful response to such situations, quite possibly without realization. Such situations and such responses are insidious. The insidious nature of the response is more readily made apparent in the sexual response, for while sex between husband and wife is good and proper, sex for the purpose of

(Continued RESPONSE on page 9)

each of us individually AS CUSTODIANS OF OUR OWN INDIVIDUAL CONSCIENCES, should learn morally acceptable responses to generalized situations

You will find that you will not only desire to, and be able to, but actually WILL overcome your injustices to yourself and your injustices to others.

DO YOU THINK EVERYONE IS TRYING TO USE AND ABUSE YOU

We should all be thankful because the Sign which is the Son of Man and the Son of God has already come. He has redeemed us. We each need but accept His redemption according to His terms.

In the course of an ordinary life there are trial and tribulations sufficient to cause one without Faith, Hope, and Charity (Divine Love) to despair. It would not be a surprise if one without these gifts were to have a life filled with dejection, for even those with these gifts experience dejection.

But we do not have to await the sign of the coming of our Redeemer. He has come and not only done what was needed to be done, but has provided us with continual assistance through the Holy Spirit, and access to the very essence of God in Grace through the Sacraments.

And even more than that, He has organized humankind into His own Church, so that we may associate with each other and give spiritual, emotional, mental, physical, and all other forms of support to each other; support founded in Christ Himself.

Despite this, there is a large portion of humankind which rejects Christ the Redeemer. They may pay lip service to Him, and may even acknowledge Him, but they are concerned with what they can obtain of this material world. They will use honest means to obtain the things of this world if honest means seem to be the best methods of accumulating the things of this world. But more often than not, dishonesty appears to them to provide the means of accumulating more of the things of this world. They therefore employ dishonesty to accumulate that which can not last. These people view constant revelry, drunkenness, sexual promiscuity, and all forms of impurity, as being goals. Often they also enjoy disruption, arguing, anger, and harming others, just for the sake of

engaging in those forms of activities. Very often they are filled with envy - envy of those who are able to engage in more excesses than they are able, and envious of those who reject the evil life and instead attempt to pursue a life of goodness, holiness, and quiet happiness.

If a person believes there is no goodness in their life, that everyone they know is attempting to use or abuse them, such a person should stop. Just stop. Then think the question, is there anyone I know who does care about me? The answer will be yes.

The immediate answer is, Jesus cares about you. God cares about you. The millions of angels and saints care about you.

But it is difficult to accept the love of God, the angels, and saints, in the personal realm of those living in this world because that love is not easily experienced physically. It is more easily experienced spiritual, mentally, and intellectually. Even when it is experience emotionally, it seems mainly to be experienced through the spirit, mind, and intellect, and not physically. Since we are both spiritual and physical, and since we have difficulty experiencing aspects of God physically, some people often feel abandoned by God. This is true particularly in times of distress, and in times which are supposed to be happy but require relationships with others to reach happy fulfillment.

If we accept the friendships God has arranged for us; the friendships amongst those who are members of Christ's true Church, and not the churches founded by men and by the devil, then we will have the physical relationships which allow experiencing God's Charity (Divine Love) for us in the physical as well as in the spiritual and intellectual realms. There are those who will use this need to experience God in the physical realm, as a license to engage in lustful pursuits, but lustful and other sinful pursuits obviously are not included in what Christ taught, and are not part of

that by which we experience God in the physical realm.

The true love founded in Charity, in Agape Love, the Divine Love which is God's Love, is the only love which satisfies. It is the only "thing" that satisfies, fulfills, calms, makes one exuberant in a good manner, and in it is found true happiness. And it does exist in both the spiritual and physical realms.

However, we must always remember, that while the expression of Divine Love is always perfect in the spiritual realm, because it comes from God through those perfected in Him, in the physical realm Divine Love often is imperfect, because while it comes from God it is transmitted through those who have not yet become perfect in Him. It is transmitted through those still living in this world, and all of us who still live in this world are imperfect.

This means those of us who are members of the Body of Christ, who still live in this world, who have not yet died and been judged by Christ at death, can only express the Divine Love we have for each other in an imperfect manner. Imperfect though that love may be, it is there, and it never goes away.

Ref: Rom. 13: 11-14; Luke 21: 25-34

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(Continued REALITY from page 23)
of their actions on others.

Perhaps. But no one except God can know why some people ignore God and what He has taught.

But for us, let us be thankful that God Jesus Christ has come, offered Himself as the accepted sacrifice of atonement for our sins, provided us with the means of receiving His Essence in Grace and of returning our souls to life when they are killed by sin.

And let us pray that those who do not believe in the reality of Christ, or who do believe in the reality of Christ but ignore it, or who warp the reality of Christ and teach their warped concepts; let us pray these will change and follow the reality of Christ.

Ref: Col. 1:9-14; Mat. 24:15-35

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WHEN OUR STUPIDITY HAUNTS US

Often it seems as though we can never do anything correctly. As though we mess up everything which we touch, and that what we have messed up can never be corrected. It is as though we embarrass ourselves constantly.

But the ones who really mess up are those who attempt to predict when the end of the world will come. The ones who really mess up are the ones who consider themselves to be above reproach. The ones who really mess up are the ones who believe they never mess up.

If you look into the sky you will see the sign of the Son of Man which has flashed across the sky from east to west and is permanently imbedded across the entire universe. You do not need to look in the desert, or in a hidden room, to find the Saviour of the world, because He has already come and provided the wherewithal of salvation. And His Father has seen to our continual care through the Holy Ghost Who will remain with us until the time all are judged together. But each of us will be judged at death, so we will already know our own eternity at the time of our own death.

In referring to the signs which will announce Judgment Day, and in telling us not to go back to pick up our coats, and not try to complete something on which we were working, Jesus who is God, is telling us that not only will it be too late to change at the instant of the Judgment of All, but that it will be too late to change at the instant of our individual death.

Jesus is telling us to be prepared not for Judgment Day, not for the end of the world, but to be prepared for our own death, which can come at any time.

If you knew the exact instant at which the end of the world were to occur, or at which you were to die, would that make any difference to you? If it would, then

what is it that you would be doing which is different from what you are doing now? If you might lead a life of sin until the last instant, and think that you them would be able to repent, you are fooling yourself. If you would try more fervently to lead a life of holiness, then why are you not doing so now?

In all likelihood, if you were to know the exact instant of the end of the world, or of your death, it would make little difference in how you would lead your life.

The important factor each of us should consider is to follow the plans established by God by which we attain eternal happiness; and not to make our own plans or follow the plans of someone else.

If we are both blessed and seemingly cursed with remembering all of the stupid things which we have done, and the embarrassing situations we have gotten ourselves into, then we should be thankful. We should be thankful for we will find relief in the arms of those who really love us. And the leader of the ones who really love us is Jesus Christ.

When our stupidity haunts us we actually are blessed, even though it is emotionally painful. We are blessed because we have severe discomfort at our own inadequacies. We are able to acknowledge our mistakes, while many people are unable to acknowledge their mistakes.

And in knowing our mistakes we have a measure of how much God loves us. In the measure of our mistakes and our wishing we had not made them and our wishing we could make them OK, we have the beginning of the measure of God's love for us. For His love for us towers far above all of our mistakes. And the more we wish we had not made them, then the more God loves us.

Ref: Col. 1:9-14; Mat. 24:15-35

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(Continued RESPONSE from page 8)

selfishness even between husband and wife is far below the expression of love and the permissible great and yet often tender passion which is integral in marital sexual relations. Thus is the response insidious, as well as that which triggers the response.

In the process of ingraining moral acts and thoughts into our character we activate a true appreciation for the Love which God constantly bestows upon us, and the kindnesses of others whether that kindness is applied to us directly or mainly to others.

In the process we become aware of the foundation wherein was based our responses in the past. We also become aware of the foundation wherein is based our new response. This in turn induces us to improve the spiritual and moral quality of our current and future responses, and that in which the responses are founded as well as the reasons for our responses.

It is not the process which makes these improvements. We make these improvements. It is the process which assists us in making the improvements, but we, through our own will, through our desire to bring ourselves into harmony with holiness, make these changes with God's willing assistance.

The actual ingrained morality induces us to holiness, which is Godliness.

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

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AN IMMORAL PROVISION OF THE CHILDREN'S HEALTH and MEDICARE PROTECTION ACT (CHAMP)

And an additional immorality very few consider.

There is significant dissention regarding the increases in coverage for children proposed by the Senate and the House of Representatives under The Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act (CHAMP). CHAMP provides an expansion of the coverage currently available under The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). But it also makes extensive cuts to the part of the Medicare program which allows seniors to chose among private plans, the portion currently known as Medicare Advantage.

Not satisfied with the decreases inflicted upon senior citizens by the legislation, the House of Representatives has added an additional provision which would prevent senior citizens from adding their own money to obtain health insurance less likely to withhold or ration life-saving medical treatment.

Medicare actually is mandatory health insurance for older Americans. If the changes go into effect, older Americans **would not be allowed** to obtain unrationed insurance for life-saving medical treatment under Medicare. Restated, if the changes go into effect, senior citizens and the disabled who receive Medicare (not Medicaid, which is free health care, but Medicaid, for which the recipient has paid and continues to pay), will not be allowed to purchase insurance which provides better benefits. They will not be allowed to obtain the same coverage they are able to obtain today - period.

The same people who desire to kill unborn children at will, are using a policy of increasing the number of children covered by government sponsored and controlled insurance so that financial

need is no longer a factor, to also deny insurance and therefore medical coverage presently available to senior citizens.

Such action is immoral.

But there is an additional immorality which is rarely considered. It is the immorality of the supporters of CHAMP who have not explored and researched the provisions of CHAMP. It is the immorality of those who have accepted the public relations propaganda of the politicians who introduced and passed the CHAMP legislation, without examining its provisions. It is the immorality of the physicians and populace in supporting legislation which they have not studied and therefore which they were not aware diminishes not just the medical care available to senior citizens, but actually will prevent senior citizens from using their own money to obtain medical care which, while now available, will no longer be available under CHAMP. It is the immorality of physicians and ordinary citizens in supporting legislation which they have not studied and therefore are not aware that the legislation prevents senior citizens from obtaining life saving insurance coverage which they are able to obtain under existing law.

Not studying legislation is the same as not doing your homework. In this instance it is immoral. In this instance it will kill.

(Source: Chose Life Sep/Oct 2007)

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CHILDREN'S PAGE

The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism

Q. 788. Why is it wrong to accuse ourselves of sins we have not committed?

A. It is wrong to accuse ourselves of sins we have not committed, because, by our so doing, the priest cannot know the true state of our souls, as he must do before giving us absolution.

Q. 789. When is our Confession entire?

A. Our Confession is entire when we tell the number and kinds of our sins and the circumstances which change their nature.

Q. 790. What do you mean by the "kinds of sin?"

A. By the "kinds of sin," we mean the particular division or class to which the sins belong; that is, whether they be sins of blasphemy, disobedience, anger, impurity, dishonesty, etc. We can determine the kind of sin by discovering the commandment or precept of the Church we have broken or the virtue against which we have acted.

Q. 791. What do we mean by "circumstances which change the nature of sins?"

A. By "circumstances which change the nature of sins" we mean anything that makes it another kind of sin. Thus to steal is a sin, but to steal from the Church makes our theft sacrilegious. Again, impure actions are sins, but a person must say whether they were committed alone or with others, with relatives or strangers, with persons married or single, etc., because these circumstances change them from one kind of impurity to another.

Q. 792. What should we do if we cannot remember the number of our sins?

A. If we cannot remember the number of our sins, we should tell the number as nearly as possible, and say how often we may have sinned in a day, a week, or a

month, and how long the habit or practice has lasted.

Q. 793. Is our Confession worthy if, without our fault, we forget to confess a mortal sin?

A. If without our fault we forget to confess a mortal sin, our Confession is worthy, and the sin is forgiven; but it must be told in Confession if it again comes to our mind.

Q. 794. May a person who has forgotten to tell a mortal sin in confession go to Holy Communion before going again to confession?

A. A person who has forgotten to tell a mortal sin in confession may go to communion before again going to confession, because the forgotten sin was forgiven with those confessed, and the confession was good and worthy.

Q. 795. Is it a grievous offense willfully to conceal a mortal sin in Confession?

A. It is a grievous offense willfully to conceal a mortal sin in Confession, because we thereby tell a lie to the Holy Ghost, and make our Confession worthless.

Q. 796. How is concealing a sin telling a lie to the Holy Ghost?

A. Concealing a sin is telling a lie to the Holy Ghost, because he who conceals the sin declares in confession to God and the priest that he committed no sins but what he has confessed, while the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, saw him committing the sin he now conceals and still sees it in his soul while he denies it.

Q. 797. Why is it foolish to conceal sins in confession?

A. It is foolish to conceal sins in confession:

1. Because we thereby make our spiritual condition worse;
2. We must tell the sin sometime if we ever hope to be saved;
3. It will be made known on the day of judgment, before the world, whether we

conceal it now or confess it.

Q. 798. What must he do who has willfully concealed a mortal sin in Confession?

A. He who has willfully concealed a mortal sin in Confession must not only confess it, but must also repeat all the sins he has committed since his last worthy Confession.

Q. 799. Must one who has willfully concealed a mortal sin in confession do more than repeat the sins committed since his last worthy confession?

A. One who has willfully concealed a mortal sin in confession must, besides repeating all the sins he has committed since his last worthy confession, tell also how often he has unworthily received absolution and Holy Communion during the same time.

Q. 800. Why does the priest give us a penance after Confession?

A. The priest gives us a penance after Confession, that we may satisfy God for the temporal punishment due to our sins.

Q. 801. Why should we have to satisfy for our sins if Christ has fully satisfied for them?

A. Christ has fully satisfied for our sins and after our baptism we were free from all guilt and had no satisfaction to make. But when we willfully sinned after baptism, it is but just that we should be obliged to make some satisfaction.

Q. 802. Is the slight penance the priest gives us sufficient to satisfy for all the sins confessed?

A. The slight penance the priest gives us is not sufficient to satisfy for all the sins confessed:

1. Because there is no real equality between the slight penance given and the punishment deserved for sin;
2. Because we are all obliged to do penance for sins committed, and this would not be necessary if the penance given in confession satisfied for all.

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ner whom we admonish. But just as we must be gentle when we admonish another because of their sin, least we chase them away, so too must we be gentle with ourselves in our self admonition. We should remember that when we practice the Spiritual Works of Mercy towards another, we also practice them towards ourselves, which helps to strengthen us against sin.

There are also seven chief Corporal Works of Mercy: To feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to ransom the captive, to harbor the harborless, to visit the sick, and to bury the dead.

Most of us practice the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy to some extent, just as a part of our every day lives. This is a very good character trait, because in making these works of mercy we emulate Christ, we do what Christ did.

And the more we do what Christ did, the less we will do what Christ does not want us to do.

The only drawback in this is that we eventually realize how little we actually practice the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. This could make us inclined to closer approach despair of ever becoming holy - but it can also invigorate our desire to attain holiness.

If we prayerfully seek to assist others for the sake of Christ and for the sake of those whom we assist, without desire for reward or acknowledgment, and if we do good because it is the good thing to do, we will eventually overcome the sin which aggravates us and which seems to be keeping us from becoming more holy. This will happen because we will be becoming more like Christ.

Ref: Eph. 5:15-21; John 4:46-53

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THE REALITY OF CHRIST

Many people attempt to discern when the end of the world will come. They look at the signs which Our Saviour enumerated, and those in the Apocalypse, and the Old Testament, and even the prophecies of people like Nostradamus, and from these they expect to be able to discern when the end of the world will come.

These people would be better employed in thanking God for coming to our rescue, rather than attempting to determine when it will be too late to thank God for coming to our rescue.

Imagine what the world would be like if Our Saviour had not already come. For the most part religion would be a matter of one person's best guess is as good as another person's best guess. No one could be sure the God of the Jews, of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Joshua, was the real God unless God continued to work miracles for the Jews and those miracles were obvious and well known. And even if a person thought the Jewish religion might possibly worship that which is the one true God, very few people would tolerate the profusion of foolishness and surface observances without internalization which has been a hallmark of Judaism since its early times. So people might worship the God of the Jews without being inclined to become Jews.

There would be few guidelines other than the Ten Commandments in the form of the natural law. There would be no means of obtaining forgiveness for one's sins, of correcting one's relationship with God once one strayed from the path of holiness, beyond what little rectification sin sacrifices offered. There would be few if any means of receiving God's Energies, God's Grace. And even worse, being born in sin, there would be no ready means of escaping sin.

If you should ever see the signs which Our Lord indicated, especially if you see the signs coming in the east and stretch-

ing to the west just as lightening which has flashed from east to west and remains imprinted on your eyes, and the sign of Our Saviour, with the sun darkened and no light from the moon, and stars falling from heaven, and Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty, and angels with trumpet and a great voice, if you should see this, then and only then will you know when the end of the world is going to come. In fact, it will have arrived, and it will be for each person just as though they had died a thousand years before that end time. For whether you die in the state of Grace today, or witness the Second Coming of Christ while you are in a state of Grace, the outcome will be the same eternal happiness.

Think of all the insane and crazy systems of belief which are lumped under the umbrella of religion. Consider the vast numbers of people who believe in some sort of god, but for whom god has no importance.

Then think of what we have been given by Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ - God.

All of us have been given the opportunity to attain eternal salvation, eternal union with God, an existence which we can not begin to comprehend other than to know it is happiness which does not end.

Perhaps it is because so few of us find any real measure of happiness here in this life, and what happiness we do find is temporary, perhaps it is because of this that it is so difficult for some people to entertain or contemplate an existence of real happiness and that happiness being forever.

Perhaps it is because they do not wish to take a chance that happiness in the hereafter may not exist for them, that some people grab what ever makes them feel good in this life, without regard as to what God desires or might desire, and without regard to the effects

(Continued REALITY on page 24)

(Continued **WEAK FAITH** from page 21)

mountain would move. But most adults would have a sense of self aggrandizement - which would preclude their being saturated in faith, and the mountain therefore will not move.

Those who have this saturation of faith seem to rarely use it in the manner of a moving a mountain type of miracle. Obviously their integration with God is to such a great extent that they follow God's will in enacting such miracles, and even in contemplating such miracles. And just as obviously, this type of miracle generally is not the type which God turns loose upon mankind at this time. Perhaps moving mountains through faith is such a rare event because even were a follower of Christ to move a mountain, that would not induce acceptance of God by those who reject God.

One truly saturated in faith has a strong inclination to accept that which God causes to happen or which He allows to happen. There is little inclination to change the order which God has established, unless changing that order is in accordance with God's will. It is God's will that we overcome or prevail in difficult situations, and those saturated in faith often are the instrument through they themselves and others overcome or prevail. But most of these are common situations: a lost child is found, a person not responding to medical treatment is cured, an automobile skidding in bad weather does not crash and injure anyone, an airplane losing power lands safely, a person lacking confidence is able to accomplish their goal. But if a person saturated in faith were to determine in God that the top of the mountain must be raised up and the bottom of the mountain lowered without harming anyone or thing on the mountain, so that the airplane could land safely, that is what would happen - or perhaps they would cause the mountain and the airplane to pass one through the other without harm.

No one who aspires to this ability ever attains it because one can not aspire to

this ability and actually be saturated in faith. Only those who are saturated in faith can have this ability, because it grows out of being saturated in faith. One saturated in faith perceives a need which can only be met through extraordinary measures and because of their saturation in God Himself they will the cure into existence because doing that is in accordance with God's will.

The next time you wish you had a mustard seed's amount of faith, focus on doing what Jesus taught us to do, believing what Jesus taught us to believe, being what Jesus taught us to be. That fact that you regularly worship Christ Jesus in Divine Liturgy is proof that your faith is solid, that you know He is God and that God is the Blessed Trinity; that the Church and the Sacraments She administers are true and are God's only Church and Sacraments. It is the next step, the step to holiness, which is difficult for most of us. It is a small step, and faith gives us a firm footing on which to make that step, but as we make that step our legs and feet seem to get very heavy and drag the ground. If we fall down, it is good to remember that we are standing on faith - so all we have to do is stand up on the firm foundation of faith and try again to make that step to holiness - to doing what God does in the manner and extent possible by a creature.

One day we will be successful.

Ref: Eph. 5:15-21; John 4:46-53

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DESPAIR OF HOLINESS - HOPE

Each of us from time to time has thoughts along these lines: I will never become holy; I keep sinning. I believe in Jesus, have Faith, seek Charity, but I am losing Hope or have lost Hope, for how can I enter into Heaven if I keep sinning?

You do not have to see signs and wonders to believe. You believe, and you do have Faith. But you continue to sin. How do you break the cycle of sin?

There is a guaranteed means of breaking the cycle of sin, but it is difficult to explain because it is based in a shift of your character. Most of us already do various things because they are the good and proper things to do. These good and proper things may even have become second nature to us; have become part of our character. This is good because this is an important step.

But breaking the cycle of sin is not a recipe. It is not a matter of three Our Fathers and the sign of the Cross and presto chango sin is gone. Rather, it is a matter of persistence. It is a matter of persistently attempting to become holy and of persistently attempting to remove sin from ourselves, from our character.

Always remember that regular prayer is the foundation to (not of but to) holiness. The Virtues and the Spiritual and Corporal works of Mercy are straight forward means by which we can work to become more Christ like, and becoming more like Christ will help squeeze sin out of our lives.

There are seven chief Spiritual Works of Mercy: To admonish the sinner, to instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubtful, to comfort the sorrowful, to bear wrongs patiently, to forgive all injuries, and to pray for the living and the dead.

We ourselves should be the primary sin-

(Continued **ADMONISH** on page 23)

CHILDREN'S PAGE

requires all persons to give alms in proportion to their means.

Q. 809. What "ills of life" help to satisfy God for sin?

A. The ills of life that help to satisfy God for sin are sickness, poverty, misfortune, trial, affliction, etc., especially, when we have not brought them upon ourselves by sin.

Q. 810. How did the Christians in the first ages of the Church do Penance?

A. The Christians in the first ages of the Church did public penance, especially for the sins of which they were publicly known to be guilty. Penitents were excluded for a certain time from Divine Liturgy (Mass) or the Sacrament, and some were obliged to stand at the door of the Church begging the prayers of those who entered.

Q. 811. What were these severe Penances of the First Ages of the Church called?

A. These severe penances of the first ages of the Church were called canonical penances, because their kind and duration were regulated by the Canons or laws of the Church.

Q. 812. How can we know spiritual from corporal works of mercy?

A. We can know spiritual from corporal works of mercy, for whatever we do for the soul is a spiritual work, and whatever we do for the body is a corporal work.

Q. 813. Which are the chief spiritual works of mercy?

A. The chief spiritual works of mercy are seven:

1. To admonish the sinner, to instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubtful, to comfort the sorrowful, to bear wrongs patiently, to forgive all injuries, and to pray for the living and the dead.

Q. 814. When are we bound to admonish the sinner?

A. We are bound to admonish the sinner

when the following conditions are fulfilled:

1. When his fault is a mortal sin;
2. When we have authority or influence over him, and
3. When there is reason to believe that our warning will not make him worse instead of better.

Q. 815. Who are meant by the "ignorant" we are to instruct, and the "doubtful" we are to counsel?

A. By the ignorant we are to instruct and the doubtful we are to counsel, are meant those particularly who are ignorant of the truths of religion and those who are in doubt about matters of faith. We must aid such persons as far as we can to know and believe the truths necessary for salvation.

Q. 816. Why are we advised to bear wrong patiently and to forgive all injuries?

A. We are advised to bear wrongs patiently and to forgive all injuries, because, being Christians, we should imitate the example of Our Divine Lord, who endured wrongs patiently and who not only pardoned but prayed for those who injured Him.

Q. 817. If, then, it be a Christian virtue to forgive all injuries, why do Christians establish courts and prisons to punish wrongdoers?

A. Christians establish courts and prisons to punish wrongdoers, because the preservation of lawful authority, good order in society, the protection of others, and sometimes even the good of the guilty one himself, require that crimes be justly punished. As God Himself punishes crime and as lawful authority comes from Him, such authority has the right to punish, though individuals should forgive the injuries done to themselves personally. Prison also protects society from the wrongdoer, and provides the wrongdoer with the opportunity to mend his ways.

It must also be remembered that the primary purpose of the legal system should not be to punish, but, rather, to protect society from evil doers; and that temporal punishment is an inducement to not sin, while Divine punishment is punishment for the sins one commits.

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(Continued COMPASSION from page 1)

Some people do not know the armor of God because they want the deceits of the devil to be their reality. They do not pass on the forgiveness, goodness, and blessings which have been showered on them. Instead, they bleed the last drop of blood from out of whomever they can drain it.

They are the ones who hire illegal immigrants and pay them slave wages. They are the illegal immigrants who make decent wages and pay no taxes while reaping the benefits provided by the government - by the people who are rightful citizens.

They are the petroleum industry corporate officials who profiteer by charging obscene and immoral prices for petroleum products, causing the cost of electricity used for refrigeration of food and air conditioning in climates where temperatures reach 99 degrees and humidity is at 100 per cent, and fuel for heating in places where the temperatures reach freezing - causing the cost of necessary energy to rise above what can be afforded - not just by the poor but by the so called middle class, which today is really the upper-financial-end poor.

Going back to the parable: there if the greedy servant needed the money owed him by his fellow servant, putting the debtor servant in prison until the debt was paid would only be beneficial if someone in the debtor servant's family, or a friend, had means to pay the debt. Since this was not likely, all the greedy servant did was to make it impossible for the debtor servant to pay the debt. Ultimately, the greedy servant's actions were not to his own benefit, either in obtaining what was owed to him, or in having what he himself owed remain forgiven.

The same is true of those who take advantage of others. No matter what the situation it always is true.

The petroleum industry profiteers are

not only causing people to cut back on use of petroleum products and energy, but they are killing people. They make more money per unit, but the number of units they sell will drop drastically due to reduced usage, and to death of users. The passage of time will see to this.

Those who employ slave labor may receive benefit for a short time, as may those who avoid their responsibilities to society.

But ultimately the greedy lose what they have gained, and then lose more.

There is another side to this parable. A side which is often forgotten.

The king who forgave the debt.

If the world were populated only by people like the greedy servant, total anarchy would reign and only those with the greatest physical strength would survive. Since this is not the case, the world must be populated by at least a few who are like the merciful and just king. They treat others mercifully, and when that mercy is betrayed, they withdraw their mercy from the one who betrayed it, but still grant mercy to others who show their appreciation.

The merciful may be in positions of authority, and may be in ordinary situations. It makes no difference for their practice of mercy and justice is based in some level of holiness, which is doing what God does, and it keeps anarchy at bay.

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

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WHAT IS HOPE

Or: Presumption and other things which are not Hope.

Many people confuse a combination of wanting, wishing, and desire, with Hope. Others commit the sin of presumption and discard the gift of God given Hope.

A student wants to pass his final exams; wishes he will pass his final exams; and desires to pass his final exams. He may even say he hopes he passes his final exams, but if he has not studied then he really does not hope to pass, he wishes to pass - he wants to magically pass but we know magic is not real.

To have Hope, one must have a foundation, a basis, upon which Hope rests. When a person thinks or believes they will go to Heaven if they just believe Jesus Christ is our Savior, then that person commits the sin of presumption for they have no Faith upon which to rest that belief. Remember, Satan believes Jesus Christ is the Savior, Son of God, but Satan has no Hope for he has no Faith; he just has belief.

Others commit the sin of presumption when they presume they will go to Heaven for a multitude of reasons: some think they will go to Heaven because they can not imagine not going to Heaven; others think they are sinless and therefore must go to Heaven; others can not imagine God will really send them or anyone to Hell for all eternity and that they must therefore go to Heaven. They are all wrong and might go to Hell because of this sin of presumption.

The sin against Hope is the sin against the Holy Spirit - the sin of despair. If you keep falling into the same sins, or if you keep sinning even though you do not repeat the same ones over and over, or if you do not do good things and you are conscious of it as a failing, you may lose Hope and may fall into the sin of despair.

(Continued HOPE on page 15)

THAT FOR WHICH TO BE THANKFUL

(Ps. 129:1-2) From the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my prayer. (Ps. 43:8-9) Thou hast delivered us, O Lord, from them that afflict us: and hast put them to shame that hate us. In God we shall glory all the day: and in Thy name we will give praise for ever.

Everything for which we could possibly ask from God, who is able to grant every request we could possibly make, has already been provided to us. We need but receive it, we need but accept it.

Protection from every adversity has been granted to us in Christ; fulfillment of every need has been accomplished for us in Christ; and the embrace of every desire has been placed in our arms in Christ.

Even the time of terribleness which will come just before the second coming of Our Lord, and the time which precedes that time, has been shortened, so that we can survive that terribleness: the terribleness of sin and the terribleness of the effects of sin.

If we have good health or ill, if we dine on the best of foods or live in hunger, if we are without friends or have a multitude of real friends, if we are poor or rich, we have the same thing for which to be thankful and that thing is the same for each person whether poor or rich, naked or warmly dressed. That thing which we have for which we should give thanks is eternal union with God, which God has placed in our grasp.

As we prepare for Advent, which is a time of fasting and preparation for celebrating the incarnation of the Word made flesh, let us not think of this time as a time of stress or self denial. Let us think of it as a time for removing all extraneous matters from our lives, and focusing on our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the joy which He has brought to the world and offered to men of good will.

Let us experience that total calm and peace which comes from union with God; that gently all encompassing and all pervading immersion in the joyful calm and yet exciting peace and happiness which is still seen in the children who believe in Jesus Christ, who have not yet been corrupted by what passes for realism in the so-called real world. Let us watch the Christmas season movies and realize that the presentation of happiness provided by a non-existent Christmas Elf is really a presentation of part of the joy and happiness which really is given to us by God through the birth in the flesh of His Son Jesus Christ.

Ref: Col. 1:9-14; Mat. 24:15-35; Ps. 129

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OUR WEAK FAITH

For most of us our Faith is so weak it really is a shame. Faith can be thought of as having two aspects.

One aspect is the part that is associated with belief, wherein we have faith that all Our Saviour taught is true and that if we make His teachings and the way of life He taught the integral aspect of our lives, we will share eternal happiness with Him in Heaven. Compared with the second aspect, this first aspect is easy to acquire.

The second aspect is the aspect that can move mountains, cure the ill, and generally work overt and extraordinary events called miracles - things which are contrary to science and physics, the laws of nature. This second aspect not only seems to be very difficult to acquire, but once acquired, seems to be rarely used by those who have acquired it. It is a childlike quality, and our lingering disbelief makes it difficult to be exercised by those who are past the mentality of a child.

A child who acts in faith knows he or she is following what Christ taught, and is incapable of asking for something which is not in accordance with that teaching. They know that for which they ask or that which they do will occur because their faith saturates their entire being leaving no room for doubt.

If a child acting in faith were to determine that moving a mountain was proper in accordance with faith, and were to will it to move, the mountain would move.

Most adults do not have that same saturation level of faith. Most adults would have a lingering doubt as to whether or not the mountain would move, and the mountain would not move because of that lingering doubt, and because of their lack of saturation in faith.

A child acting in faith would have no sense of self aggrandizement, and so the

(Continued WEAK FAITH on page 22)

(Continued COMMENTS from page 19)
of marriage. Society's acceptance of sexual intercourse without the benefit of marriage continues the destruction of the basic building block of society, that of the family. It induces continued immoral conduct which is soul damming. The lack of chastisement by Oprah Winfrey is indicative of her lack of moral values. The open admission of immoral sexual conduct by Halle Berry is indicative of her lack of moral values. These open declarations of their own immoral values should be an inducement for every person who claims any moral standards, to avoid shows, movies, and anything in any manner associated with Halle Berry or Oprah Winfrey, so that the moral individual does nothing which will assist these two people to continue to engage in their immoral activities, and their promotion of such immoral activities.

A new test indicates whether or not "test tube babies" have defects so those with defects can be killed before being implanted in the womb. Because current technology only screens a few chromosomes, "thousands of women and babies are at risk every year," said Pamela Madsen, executive director of the American Fertility Association. Madsen and her coven must be delighted at having a new reason for killing thousands if not millions of babies every year through a process which rejects what they will term defective babies. Is it possible these people will attempt to allow the defective babies to grow so their body parts can be collected?

Global Warming is causing the climate in Greenland to return to that state which existed before the Little Ice Age of the sixteenth century (after 1500 A.D.). Logic demands one therefore acknowledge the planet was much warmer five hundred years ago, than it is today, and that global warming is at least in part returning the planet to a more traditional temperature. Historical documents and examination of deep soil samples both indicate Greenland was much warmer for many thousands of

years prior to the Little Ice Age which began in the sixteenth century. With the increase in temperature Greenland's forests are regenerating and soon will provide a source of logs and lumber, more varieties of crops are being commercially grown enabling Greenlanders to provide their own sustenance, fisheries are increasing in productivity with the same positive effect on self-sustenance. Since the past few hundred years of cooler world wide temperatures obviously are an abnormality, does not the warming of the planet indicate a return to more traditional world wide temperatures? Is not there also therefore a doubt cast upon the reasons for the current global warming, considering the fact that no viable and valid reason for the earlier global cooling of the Little Ice Age has been presented, nor has there been presented any viable and valid reason presented for the warm temperatures which preceded the Little Ice Age nor for the extensive period of time during which these warmer temperatures were the norm, nor for what ever was the cause thousands of years before that warm period for the change from cooler temperatures to warmer temperatures. Yes, there must be concern for those land areas which may or will be inundated by seas rising because of melting ice caps and glaciers. But there are positive effects of global warming. And logic must be used in the process of ascertaining the causes of global warming and cooling, and not a consensus opinion process. Facts related to cause and effect must be established and not just surmised. An example of the error which comes from presumption is the often stated opinion that ships at sea in the era before the sextant stayed close to shore so-as-to be sure of navigation. This simply is not true. Any sailor knows the closer a ship is to the shore, the greater the danger of foundering, of ship wreck. Ships therefore stayed far

An example of the error which comes from presumption is the often stated opinion that ships at sea in the era before the sextant stayed close to shore so-as-to be sure of navigation.

away from the shore, keeping the shore out of sight. Keeping the shore line in sight also increases the distance the ship must travel, thus increasing travel time and costs. Ships traversed the oceans in as straight a line as possible, using the stars and general sun position to navigate, just as did travelers in the desert and other places where there are no or few distinguishing earthbound markers.

A United States Senate resolution calls for partition of Iraq into regions according to religious and ethnic divisions. This resolution ignores the fact that Iraq is a separate, independent country; that it is not a part of The United States of America

(for which Americans should be most thankful); and numerous other facts including the fact that most Iraqis do not desire their country to be partitioned. Arrogance obviously was a factor in the invasion of Iraq by the United States and the United Nations approved "Coalition". That arrogance should not be continued, especially not in the manner proposed by the United States Senate.

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THE WICKED ARE TO BE PITIED AND RECEIVE OUR PRAYERS

The wicked are to be pitied and receive our prayers if for nothing other than our own sakes. In pitying and praying for the wicked we pity and pray for ourselves; for the only persons who are not wicked in some measure are the most innocent of babies and children, and the most mentally deficient of those older than children.

When we express happiness at the downfall of those who do great evil, let it be joy that they can no longer do evil. But let there be no joy associated with their receiving punishment as their just deserts. Punishment as the just deserts for sins is the lot of us all, mitigated by the sacrifice of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, and subject to purification so that those who accept salvation may be acceptable in the house of God.

Our Saviour did not express joy at the terrors which will precede and accompany His coming in judgment. He gave warning so that those who are alive at that time will have one last chance to prepare their souls for His judgment. But we may already be dead at that time. If we are already dead at that time, we will not have the opportunity to prepare for Christ's judgment one last time. We should therefore prepare every day, and every part of every day, for His judgment.

Think of those who do not think of themselves as wicked; who perceive nothing improper in engaging in their lusts for torture, sensual delights, power, the acclaim of mankind, and some or all of the things of this temporary world. Think also of those who desire to be wicked and become wicked. God does not delight in sending either type of person to Hell. God made them and He loves them. He made them be-

cause He loves them and He wants them to join with Him and be happy forever. But if they chose something other than God, then they will not receive God for God will not force Himself upon anyone. They will receive Hell.

Every day we are informed of horrible evil done by people we reasonably believe are

very wicked. We are constantly told of terrorist who

maim, torture, and kill, and government agencies, officials, and employees who do the same; serial rapists and killers; businessmen who commit fraud and steal the savings of those who trusted them; profiteers who charge unreasonable prices for the necessities of life; parents who torture their children; spouses who torture their spouse; and children who kill. When these people are stopped, it is good. But we should not rejoice when evil befalls them, *even when it is evil in the form of just retribution*, for then we are rejoicing in the very thing in which they rejoice. If we rejoice when evil befalls the wicked, then we are wicked for we are rejoicing in evil just like the wicked upon whom the evil has befallen.

Think of the joy Our Saviour will have if the families of those who have been tortured and beheaded in the name of evil, if their families pray for the salvation of the terrorist. What more clearly demonstrates the difference between true Christianity and the religions of heretics and pagans, than when the survivors and families of the victims of serial rapists and killers pray for the criminal and ask that the criminal receive life without parole rather than death, so that the criminal can repent and attain eternal salvation?

There is nothing which better demon-

strates our own desire to abandon our own wickedness, than our emulating Christ and seeking the salvation of those who have ignored or abandoned Christ. In seeking the salvation of the wicked, we seek our own salvation, for we may not be as wicked as a terrorist or a serial killer, but we all have matters in which we at least desire something other than that which God has directed, and that desire is wicked.

Remember that for which you pray when we pray: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Ref: Col. 1:9-14; Mat. 24:15-35

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(Continued HOPE from page 12)

(As an ancillary thought: may not also the sin of presumption also be sin against the Holy Spirit though obtuse? Perhaps it is just moronic sin. But then, is not all sin moronic?)

Despair is loss of Hope; a belief that not even God can or will forgive you. While the opposite of Hope is presumption; the lack of Hope is despair.

Despair is an amazing thing. If you really look, you will see it everywhere, but especially amongst the most wealthy. Those who focused on monetary wealth to the exclusion of religious practices, have substituted material things for spiritual reality. They thus have no Faith, and fervently wish there is no hereafter - that death is final. They have no Hope; and they live their lives clinging to the material things and desire to be remembered in history - to leave something behind when they die so people will remember them. A person who has Hope might like to be remembered because it is something nice to have happen, but of much more importance to them is being remembered in prayers.

Hope is the confidence inspired by Faith, that if one lives in accordance with God's instructions, he will go to Heaven, combined with the God given inspiration which enables one to live in accordance with God's instructions, combined with actually living in accordance with God's instructions. Hope, like Faith, is entirely other worldly, with no nexus to this world.

Ref: Ephes. 4_23-28; Mat. 22:1-14; Ps. 77 & 118

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WHAT IS CHARITY

The ruler from Capharnaum had Belief-Faith that Jesus is God, and Hope that God would heal his son. His Faith was tentative at first, and his Hope was not the Hope of Faith which binds us into eternity with God, but rather the simple Hope of a Father for the cure of his son. But that Faith had the seeds of true Faith wherein one behaves in accordance with Faith, and the Hope had the seeds of true Hope for a life in God and an eternity united with God. When his son was cured, that seedling Faith and that seedling Hope were turned into true Faith and true Hope by the greatest of the virtues, Charity, for the ruler and his household rejoiced as Saint Paul has written, *"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual canticles, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord: Giving thanks always for all things, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to God and the Father:"*

What is this powerful thing called Charity? We know that without it Faith, even Faith which moves mountains, is worthless; and Hope, even Hope based in Faith, is in vain.

This virtue of Charity is often called Love, or Divine Love, or Love inspired by God. These are useful concepts, but they fail to convey the unique nature of Charity.

We know that Charity has no relation with lust, and no connection with infatuation or obsession.

Some attempt to compare Charity with marital love, that special love which binds a husband and wife into the married person; that extraordinary love which overcomes physical, emotional, and intellectual delights which exist within a marriage and raises marriage to a union of husband and wife and God into the married person. This comparison has some validity, but if marital love and Charity were compared by

Charity manifests itself

measuring their comparable heights, marital love would be as tall as a person, and Charity would be taller than the highest mountain.

Charity is agape, or agape-love. It manifests itself. This is very important, so we repeat, **Charity manifests itself.** Christ endured all He endured because of Charity. Nothing can ever remove Charity; it can never be destroyed or displaced, it endures forever. Envy and arrogance are impossible for one who

has Charity for Charity completely satisfies he who has Charity. One really does not possess Charity, for Charity possesses he who has it. Charity so fills he who is blessed with it that he can not be hateful or malicious. This does not mean one possessed of Charity is immobilized against evil, for remember Our Lord, in Whom Charity is perfect, is the just judge who will condemn evil to eternal Hell, and even in His life on Earth He drove the merchants and money changers out of the Temple; but He does not do these things with joy for Charity finds no happiness in the sufferings or evil of others.

Faith, in a sense, will lose its purpose and will cease to exist when we behold the Beatific Vision, for the purpose of Faith is to lead us to believe and behave in accordance with God's Will. When we are united with God for all eternity, we will be deified, and Faith, in a sense, will then be superfluous.

Hope flows from Faith. In Hope we pray to behave in accordance with God's Will, with the righteous prayer that we will be united with God for all eternity - but not with the presumption that we will be so united just because we believe Jesus Christ is Lord. Hope therefore will be fulfilled when we are united with God for all eternity. Hope, in a sense, will therefore cease to exist, for it will have been accomplished and realized.

But Charity; Charity exists forever.
(Continued CHARITY on page 16)

(Continued CHARITY from page 15)

Agape-Love, an aspect of God's eternal life force in those who attain salvation, is forever. Charity can exist only within the state of ecstatic being or existence in the Holy Ghost. It is what Saint Seraphim of Savrov called, acquiring the Holy Spirit. Charity not only exists exclusively from this state of being moved by God through God's essence which we sometimes call Grace, it also, when it emanates from creatures, exclusively emanates from Humans and Angels from their being in this state of Grace.

It is because of this exclusive relationship of Charity in Divine emanations or energies manifested within us, that the example of marital love is so inadequate in attempting to comprehend, practice, possess, and give, Charity.

While Charity exists forever, one can lose it, can be dispossessed of Charity, if he falls into serious sin we sometimes call Mortal Sin. This is because Mortal Sin by definition removes us from God, and expels God from us. Without God living in our soul, spirit, and body, we are incapable of Charity.

Love finds its inception in us when we obey God, follow His will, and keep His Commandments - in the Spirit of the law to the fullest extent and reach of the Ten and the Two Great Commandments, and in the Corporal Works of Mercy, and in the Beatitudes. If we do not do these things, we do not have even Love. If we do follow these things, then Love can grow into Charity, into agape-love.

But remember, we must follow God as revealed to us by God Himself, within the repository of the True Church; not some god imagined by someone's desires as expressed in the multitude of false Christianity wherein there are no Sacraments.

Ref: Ephes 5:15-21; John 4:46-53

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CRUCIFIED IN DEATH TO THIS WORLD

If we possess the death of Jesus in ourselves, then we will also possess the Life of Jesus in ourselves. We possess Crucifixion in bending our free will to the will of God the Father, in uniting ourselves to God. This is done by rejecting the things of this world, and instead of seeking the things of this world, seeking to use the things of this world as a means to assist us in obtaining the Eternal World.

Death must be active in us for us to attain life, for just as natural death precedes life in the hereafter, so too must death to this world precede eternal happiness. If we do not die to this world, then we will carry this world with us into the next life. If we carry this world into the next world, then we burden our spirits with the heavy burden of that which was transformed by the first sin into a heavy burden; a burden not designed to persist and be maintained in the presence of God. Indeed, it will not be maintained in Heaven, for Heaven is not a place of burden, and cares of this world are a heavy burden indeed.

With these thoughts as our guide, it is simple to perceive how giving to the world of Evil that which belongs to the world of Evil, and giving to God that which is of God, is part of the path to Eternal Life.

There are only two permanent worlds, that eternal world of God, and the immortal world of Evil. The world of God is eternal for it has no beginning, middle, or end. The world of Evil is immortal for it was created, it has a beginning, as it was created for Satan and those who oppose God, and it will last for all eternity.

When we use the things of this world as a means of assisting us in attaining eternal life, we do not seek this world, but seek to use aspects of this world. Thus, we do not seek to eat food for the sake of eating and good taste, but rather seek nourishment, and palatable nourish-

ment can be good if being palatable is only an aspect of the food which assists us in consuming the food. So too is it with intimate relationships between a husband and wife, for if these are an expression of love which flows from the natural law and is an expression of Charity from God which possesses us, then we can be brought closer to God and receive Divine assistance in rejecting lustful temptations which are of this world. But if such spousal intimacies are based in self-gratification, then not only is Charity not present, but even love under the natural law is not present.

These two are simple, and easily comprehended, examples of how we can utilize the things of this world to assist us in dying to this world and living in God's Eternity.

However, if we can totally die to this world, and only use that which exists in this world as is necessary for God's work, then we will have a much easier progression into the Eternal Life of God. This is because every contact with this world not only presents us with the opportunity for following the path to God, but also presents us with the path to Evil. Thus in intimate relations with one's spouse one always runs the risk of personal pleasure for its own sake, rather than or coupled with expressing joy, love, and Charity.

Physical death is partially a punishment for the first sin, and since the first parents could only leave to us that which they possessed, they could not leave a deathless life for us to inherit, for they no longer possessed a deathless life after the first sin. But death also serves as a means of ending sin, and resurrection enables us to continue forever.

Imagine the what the world would be like today if the old, historical Kings of Europe had looked at the Americas as an opportunity to treat all mankind in the manner which Christ would treat all mankind. There would have been respect for the native American cultures

(Continued WHAT IF on page 17)

(Continued WHAT IF from page 16)

and their right to exercise their free will and be wrong in their religious beliefs. Human sacrifice would have, of course, been stopped by the Kings as both necessary in their being Christians, and as a matter of encouraging commerce and economic development - both of which are material necessities best achieved by living people. There would have been a rather rapid change in those native cultures and religions to Christianity for Christianity naturally expands and envelops those who are in need. And slavery, as encouraged by the British and practiced in the Americas under the tutorage of the British custom, would never have existed.

This, of course, is an indictment of what passes for Christianity today. Examine those who call themselves Christians, but are without Apostolic Succession, or who are in the process of abandoning their Apostolic Succession, and who have abandoned the Sacraments established by Christ, or are in the process of that abandonment. These focus on happiness in this life, on obtaining that which is material. Such an attitude is totally incompatible with the teachings of Christ, and therefore totally alien to Christianity. True Christianity focuses on the hereafter, utilizing the here-and-now as a means by-which compatibility with God is attained.

If those who administer the business, government, and social organizations of today were dead to this world, they would use their positions of authority for the betterment of those whom they are supposed to serve. Their own temporal enrichment, honor, and glory would be seen by them as temporary and inconsequential by products of their service rather than the reward of their service. Thus they would be dead to this world, and would render to Caesar that which belongs to Caesar, and to God that which is of God.

Ref: Phil 1:6-11; Mat 22:15-21; St. Augustine of Hippo

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GOD'S GIFTS TO US

God did not create us so that He could punish us. He created us so that we could be eternally happy with Him in heaven; united with Him in a manner which makes us able to share with Him all that He is; limited only by our being creatures and by the capacity we establish by our individual lives.

Everything God the Father has ever done relative to mankind, shows His love for us. Everything God the Son has done relative to mankind, shows His love for us. Everything God the Holy Ghost has done relative to mankind, shows His love for us.

When you were a child, if someone gave you your favorite food treat, such as ice cream, if you thanked them and showed your appreciation, you pleased the one who gave you the gift. Your expression of appreciation induced the one who gave you the gift to give more gifts to you in the future.

But if you showed greed, and approached the giver in expectation of getting more from the giver, the one who gave the gift saw that you had no appreciation for them, but only thought of them as a source of something which you desired. Then the giver became inclined to not give any additional gifts because of your lack of appreciation for the giver. And if you refused to share your treat with other children, the giver became inclined to give treats to those children whom you neglected, and might even give to other children and not to you.

When a parent returns home after a trip, it is common for the children to crowd around the parent and give hugs of love, and also to ask if they were brought anything.

The child who is happy with an inexpensive thing is the child who loves their parent and looks on the gift as an expression of the parent's love for that child. But the child who is not satisfied with anything unless it is expensive and impressive is a child who loves the gift but not necessarily the giver.

The child who is happy with an inexpensive thing is the child who loves their parent and looks on the gift as an expression of the parent's love for that child. But the child who is not satisfied with anything unless it is expensive and impressive is a child who loves the gift but not necessarily the giver.

All the gifts we receive from God are of great significance, even if we do not appreciate their significance. But when we realize our very existence and all we are, are all gifts from God, then we begin to realize the significance of the gifts God gives to us.

Let us be wise children by being children of God; children who appreciate God the Giver as well as the Gifts from God; and especially appreciate the Gift of God the Son who gives us life in the Sacrament of the Sacred Eucharist.

Ref: Phil. 3:17-24;4:1-3; Mat. 9:18-26

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