



REUNION

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



Volume 19 No. 2 OF THE CHURCH OF MAN WITH GOD April, 2009 A.D.

~ CHRIST WON THE WAR, BUT IT IS UP TO EACH INDIVIDUAL TO WIN HIS OWN PARTICULAR BATTLE
And there may be some who do not want to go to heaven. ~



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

There is an erroneous concept that because Jesus Christ suffered,
(Continued PASCHA on page 9)

THE CLEANSING FIRE OF GOD'S LOVE - BEING CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST, DYING WITH CHRIST

If we continue contemplating the cleansing fire of Divine Love, we can better understand what St. Paul means when he says he dies with Christ daily. We can better understand what Christ means when He says we must take up our cross and follow Him.

When St. Paul said he dies with Christ daily, he is saying he throws himself into Christ's Divine Love for him daily. He knows that Divine Love for him is there, and he accepts it daily, lives in it daily, experiences it daily, and that experiencing of the Divine Love God has for him, and his desire to continue experiencing it, is what keeps him faithful to God, and causes a reciprocation of love from him to God.

When Christ God tells us to pick up our cross and follow Him, He is not saying suffer for the sake of suffering. He is telling us to throw ourselves into the unimaginable Divine Love He has for us. He is telling us to experience His Love for us, because when we experience that Love we will desire nothing else, unless we desire to love ourselves more than we desire to experience His love for us.

But since we can not comprehend someone desiring to love themselves more than desiring to experience God's Love for us, we are unable to comment on such a thing. Incomprehensible as it is, it is something which most of us have done, but we have done it because we did not really know, had never really experienced, God's Love for us and reciprocated that Love. Were we too selfish? Probably not. Probably, the cares
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TRUTHFUL TEACHING or TRUE TEACHING IS IMPERATIVE

because people desire to believe as truth that which allows the sins desired by the individual.

The General Situation

There are innumerable people who believe in the almighty, all powerful, all knowing, omnipotent God. There also are innumerable people who believe that Jesus Christ is God, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity God, which is composed of the the same Jesus Christ God the Son, God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost, being one God and three Persons. They believe this truth even though they do not and can not understand it and even less, comprehend it. Of this innumerable number of people there are very few who consistently and viably seek to learn, understand, comprehend, and follow God's instructions. Conversely, there are seemingly innumerable people who sometimes, usually glancingly and fleetingly, and only occasionally, acknowledge the existence of those instructions.

Not only does there seem to be no ratio-
(Continued TEACHING on page 17)

SAINT JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA And the Holy Grail

All that is known for certain concerning him is derived from the canonical Gospels. He was born at Arimathea -- hence his surname -- "a city of Judea" (Luke, xxiii, 51), which is very likely identical with Ramatha, the birthplace of the Prophet Samuel, although several scholars prefer to identify it with the town of Ramleh. He was a wealthy Israelite (Matt., xxvii, 57), "a good and
(Continued ARIMATHEA on page 8)

THE CLEANSING FIRE OF GOD'S LOVE

The fire of Purgatory probably, actually is the fire of God's Love, His Divine Love, which burns away the impurities from the soul so as to leave it clean and pristine. Probably.

If it is the fire of His Love, then this might be, not must be but might be, the most happy and pleasing experience next to actually being united with God in Heaven.

Each of has loved or loves someone or some thing with an all encompassing and all consuming love. We may only
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PUBLICATION NOTICE

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

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+ 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.)

WORLD WIDE WEB:

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

PRAYERS

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

(Continued WEB on page 3)

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

REUNION

Holy Innocents Orthodox Church
311 Hickory Avenue
Harahan, Louisiana 70123

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

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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.

Simply go to:
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Then, click on the link which reads **MAILING LISTS**. This will bring you to a page captioned:

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Half-way down the page is a link entitled:

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

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

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

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

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

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THE BASILIAN FATHERS

(The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil)

ARTICLE ON EXORCISM AND PUBLICATION OF RITE

In this issue of **REUNION** we begin publication of several of the Rites of Exorcism.

It is very strongly suggested these prayers, and the comments which appear as "sidebars" at the end of the first installment, be reviewed very carefully.

The prayers themselves, as well as the preparations and qualifications given at the beginning of the Rites, provide insights to the operations of the devil as well as insights to the invitations we sometimes make to the devil.

Use of these insights will assist in overcoming temptations, not just demonic possession but "regular" and "ordinary" temptations from without and from within.

Clergy who better understand these matters are better able to assist those who seek their counsel. Those who seek to resist temptation will better resist with this advanced comprehension and understanding (which are different).

Also, it is interesting!

When we complete this series of articles we will publish a booklet on the Rite of Exorcism, which will contain the various rites published in the articles. This will, of course, be sent to all of our Priests and Bishops, and will be available to be downloaded without charge on our web site.

While this will require several months of publication in **REUNION** the Rites are being presented through our Inter-Net **STUDIES** mailing list, Those who desire may subscribe to this mailing list by following the instructions on pages two and three of this issue of **RE-**

UNION. All of the postings (messages) for the studies entries on exorcism are on our BBS (message center) in Conference 11 (Studies). To access them one must first log on to the system (<http://www.reu.org>)

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AS WE CELEBRATE PASCHA

As we celebrate Pascha let us remember how few true followers of Christ there were at the instant of the Resurrection. If the sorrow and encroaching despair which were evident in the meetings and comments related and made in Acts, then we can be sure of only one who fully believed Christ is God - the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary. She obviously was in the throes of the most severe agony and horror at the passion and death of her Son, but she also knew Him to be God. But Apostles, Disciples, and other followers of Christ experienced the most severe doubts as to His divinity. And all of them, including the Blessed Ever Virgin, wondered what was to happen next.

After the Resurrection, and during the next forty days while Our Lord remained on Earth - prior to His ascension - Christ's followers began to obtain a more clear and firm concept of what Christ had accomplished and what remained to be done. After Pentecost, the Apostles, Disciples, and other followers of Christ received the tools which they required to spread the Gospel.

But the followers of Christ were very few in number. Even the greatest of the Evangelists, Saint Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles, preached for many years obtaining very few converts.

But when the Gospel took hold and people realized the foolishness of worshipping everything from nature to animals, to numerous gods replete with human frailties which made one wonder about the validity of their deity or godly powers and godliness, in comparison with The Gospel and The Way taught by

Christ, the truth swept the world. The devil fought back very hard, using every device he could muster. Especially effective were his inducing members of humankind doubt his very existence, while also inducing those same members to perceive themselves as gods and their own desires as being not just permissible but actually divine will - their own divine will.

We have not come full circle but we are in times where we can not be sure those who call themselves Christians actually are Christians. Nor can we be sure that those whom we should be able to believe are Priests actually are Priests or that they actually believe in the dogma of the Church.

It is therefore most important: that we continue steadfast in Faith, Hope, and Charity; that we exercise and practice our Priesthood without exception of diminution in effort; that we ignore seeking acceptance by or approval of those who do not have or do not follow valid dogma; that we attempt to always be available as Priests and that we always be known as Priests even though we may on occasion desire to simply relax and as it were "go fishing" or to a sports even for relaxation - in peace. We can do these things, but not incognito, since we are always on duty. We made that choice when we accepted ordination.

This also is one of the few means we have of always making a comment to society and to the world, which comment can not be ignored for our very presence makes the statement: here is a Priest of the true God who follows and believes the true and actual dogma established by the true God, and anything which is done, practiced, or thought which is contrary to that not only is false but is sin - and if you, the one observing that Priest, are one of those who holds contrary to that for which that Priest stands, then you are wrong and in sin.

Did you realize you were of such great

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importance?

Do not become all “puffed up” over it for it is not you yourself which makes you of such importance, but that with which God has empowered you and that with which He has entrusted you. Without these you have only the importance of being made in the image and likeness of God - which is very impressive and important all by itself. But it is nothing more or less than that with which God has imbued every other human being. That which He has imbued you in your Priesthood, however, is even more special, making you not just more special but also burdened with the obligation to utilize that with which God has entrusted you and to utilize it properly.

You therefore are a key part of the salvation of mankind. You are instrumental in the realization of eternal salvation by every human being. God has selected you to be one of the essential elements in the acquisition of eternal happiness by every person.

Do not loose your savor. Increase it. Have it permeate everywhere. If others do not “like” it, they have a problem. Do not allow their problem to interfere with your divinely appointed duty. Do not beat them over their heads with the Bible, but also do not sit on the Bible.

Just be yourself - a Priest, and never stop being what you are - a Priest.

It is one of the best means you have of inducing others to at least contemplate their lives and possibly changing their lives for the holier.

Always remember: if you do not do your Priestly job, someone may go to hell - probably you.

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PLEASANT SURPRISE FROM OUR WEB SITE

We have been pleasantly surprised at the activity we have received on our web site.

During the past month there have been one hundred twenty-six downloads of the Basilian Gregorian Rite Divine Liturgy and other specific liturgies of The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil, from our web site.

There also have been twenty-two downloads of The Rudder (The Pedalion) during that month, and one hundred seventy-six downloads since we first made it available in September, 2008 A. D.

We do not have the figures on the downloads from our files areas since we do not normally track those figures, but there are indications of numerous downloads.

During Great Lent daily activity on our web site has increased a minimum of one-third and more often has doubled.

These are indications our web site serves a useful purpose, especially in providing liturgies in ready-to-print format which anyone can bring to any copy business and print as many copies of the liturgies as they require.

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EQUIVOCATION IS SOMETHING WHICH MUST ALWAYS BE AVOIDED

To admit one does not know the answer to a question, when one does not know the answer, is always the best course. It is truthful; therefore to say otherwise is a sin. To invent an answer easily leads to disinformation and the real potential that the one making the inquiry, as well as the one answering, will be mislead. But to give a less than truthful answer when one knows the truth for any reason, especially because the answerer desires to be accepted or to be acceptable or to not distress the questioner, is damnable.

When one does know the answer to an inquiry, or one is fully cognizant of the implications of an event or situation, or one knows a situation is in compliance with dogma or is not in compliance with

dogma, then one is mandated to clearly state the morality of the situation. Where possible this were best done in the most acceptable and polite manner possible. But the manner of delivery should never impinge on the weight of the dogmatic statement and application of God’s expressed will.

There is no situation in human realm which does not have a Divine mandate which applies, nor is there such a situation where the Divine mandate can not be readily ascertained.

The desire to not embarrass is understandable. The desire to be accepted is understandable. But no such desire is of more importance than personal compliance with God’s dictates and the publication of those requirements by every possible means. Nor is it permissible to cloud or make “fuzzy” those standards and requirements which God has enumerated and which, as has been stated, not only cover every human situation but also are easily ascertainable.

Equivocation, therefore, is never permitted.

Equivocation can lead to the eternal damnation not just of the Priest but also of those for whom he is the spiritual advisor.

By way of example:

A person is a drug user and steal to obtain money to purchase drugs for his/her addiction. But the user despises the habit and the stealing because they are sins and because of the damage these sins cause himself/herself and the victims of his/her thefts. The user constantly attempts to break the addiction and constantly fails.

This person may receive Divine Mercy within Divine Justice because of his/her constant attempts to remove this sin from his./her life. Contemplating such Divine Mercy in a general sense is not the beginnings of making judgment of a person but rather contemplating the workings of God. But simply contemplating such Divine Mercy as applied to a specific individual is

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the beginnings of judgment of that individual and such is reserved to God and to God alone. One may and actually must assess the drug use and thefts of that individual as being sins so-as-to properly advise and assist that individual. One may also strengthen that individual's resolve to remove sin from his/her life by reminding them that God in His Divine Mercy will continue to assist them provided the individual continues to resist the sins. But as soon as one presents the concept that God will forgive that sinner because they are addicted to the drugs and can not control the addiction, then one has equivocated and said that which is a sin is not necessarily a sin, that therefore the addict need not fight the sin and addiction. If this concept is adopted by the sinner addict, he/she may well go to hell at least because they failed to fight the sin and addiction.

Now, change the sin from drug addiction and theft, to homosexual acts, sexual acts reserved to the marriage bed, petty thefts from work, thefts through government contracts, thefts through regular business contracts, bribery, not keeping the Lord's day holy, using the Name of God in vain, coveting the property of another, envy of another's success, failing to do what one should do through laziness, gossiping and spreading of rumors and lies in general. Any one of these may easily condemn one to hell. Even driving one's vehicle above the speed limit or in a reckless manner, even is an accident is not caused, is a sin under most circumstances and under some circumstances, again even though there is no accident or harm caused to anyone, may be of sufficient severity to damn one to hell for all eternity.

A Priest therefore must not, must never equivocate.

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ANOTHER LOOK AT THE "ROMAN SITUATION"

Bishop Joseph Martino, of Scranton, PA, threatened to close Saint Peter's Cathedral for the annual Saint Patrick's Day parade and Mass if pro-abortion officials were

honored at that festivities. Bishop Martino issued his decision because family members of pro-abortion Vice President Joseph Biden were slated to be so honored.

Bishop Martino has also ordered priests of his diocese to deny Holy Communion to public officials who support abortion rights, and has publicly stated opposition to abortion is the most important issue to consider when voting.

When the Diversity Institute at Misericordia University, founded by the Sisters of Mercy, sponsored lectures by a gay-rights advocate, Bishop Martino chastised the Institute, the University, and the religious order. Calling the speaker's beliefs, "disturbingly opposed to Catholic teaching," Bishop Martino demanded the University disband the Institute and also disclose the names and the content of classes that purport to teach Catholic sexual morality.

In a written statement Bishop Martino exercised his duty, stating, "It is not only my right, but my obligation to ensure that authentic Catholic teaching is being provided in all Catholic institutions in this Diocese, and that viewpoints in opposition to this teaching are not being presented as acceptable alternatives."

Comment: Finally, a Roman Catholic Bishop who realizes God's law is more important than some fuzzy warm feeling of inclusiveness. Finally, a Roman Catholic Bishop who knows and acts on the knowledge, that enforcing God's law does not mean that those who willingly sin mortally are not fit to be in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist nor are they fit to receive the Sacred Eucharist in Holy Communion nor are they to be honored and their publicly proclaimed immorality to be accepted as having a place in the Church. Finally, a Roman Catholic Bishop who in effect proclaims the truth, that mortal sinners must repent and public officials who grievously sin and proclaim their sin to be morally acceptable are severed from the Body of Christ and must publicly repent and receive absolution before they are allowed to participate in the spiritual

life of the True Church. If it were not immoral, we would suggest Rome clone this Bishop.

Archbishop Rino Fisichella, head of the Vatican's Pontifical Academy for Life, however, is not of the same moral metal as Bishop Martino. Archbishop Fisichella, totally ignoring the premises of his specific office and those of his position as a Roman Catholic, as a Priest, and as an Archbishop, said Brazillian physicians, who aborted twin babies in the womb of a nine year child who was allegedly raped by her stepfather, should not have been excommunicated because they were saving the life of the young mother. Apparently Archbishop Fisichella believes God approves of the killing of people so-as-to save the life of another when the ones being killed have done nothing wrong. It is permissible to take action which kills the bad guy who is holding a gun to the head of someone else in order to save the life of the one being threatened because the one doing the threatening is threatening harm. But what Archbishop Fisichella proposes would also approve your taking the heart from your neighbor thus killing your neighbor, for the purpose of receiving your neighbor's heart in an heart transplant.

Roman Catholic funeral on Good Friday??????? While it may seem insignificant, it is liturgically impossible within the liturgical concept of the Western Rite, be it Orthodox or Roman, to have or pray Divine Liturgy or Mass on Good Friday, because that is the day on which Christ is crucified. It is likewise impossible to pray Divine Liturgy or Mass on Holy Saturday, because Christ is not yet risen. So when the Pope of Rome allowed a funeral mass for earthquake victims on Good Friday, it was totally improper and also a liturgical impassibility. The fact that an imam was allowed to also officiate at the "Mass" is not surprising - after all, was it truly a Divine Liturgy (Mass)?

Now, if the Pope had as much moral and dogmatic strength as Bishop Martino . . .

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ST. MARY MAGDALENE NEWS
St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church
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Waveland, Mississippi 39576

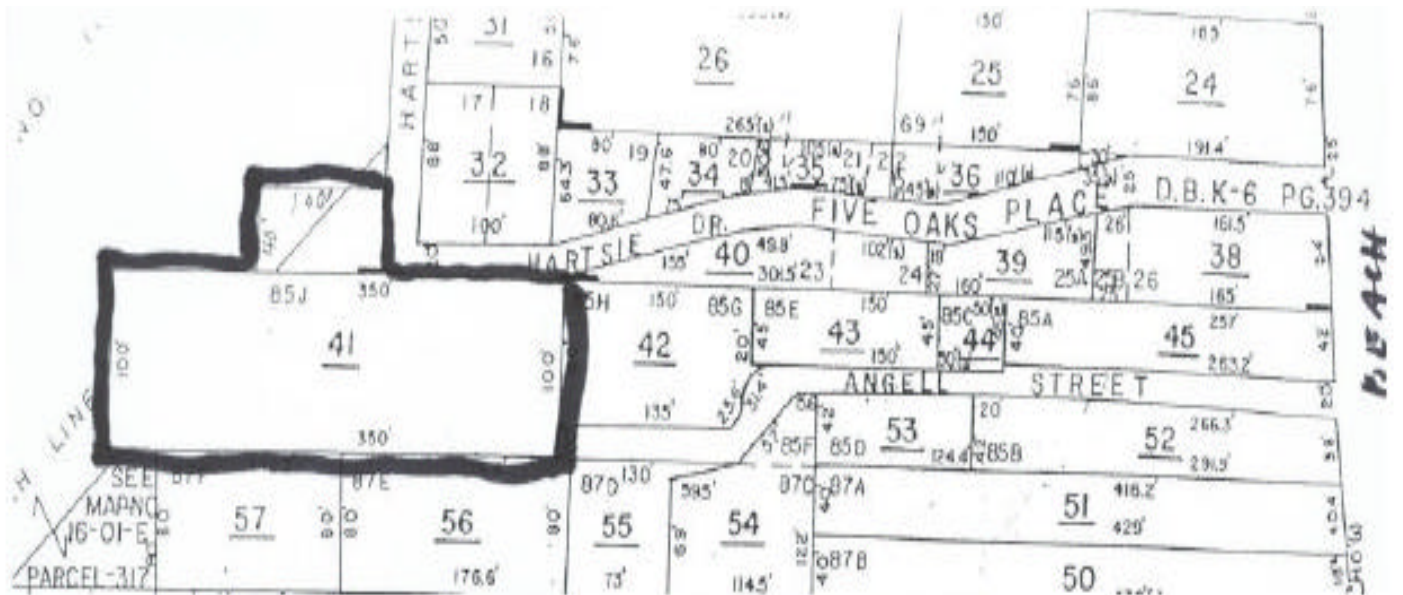
St. Mary Magdalene was destroyed by hurricane Katrina. There are no buildings or trees remaining on the property. A good natural setting is very important for maximum benefit to be derived from a spiritual retreat facility - the prime use of Saint Mary Magdalene was as a retreat house and our Mother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

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(Continued ARIMATHEA from page 1)

a just man" (Luke, xxiii, 50), "who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God" (Mark, xv, 43). He is also called by St. Mark and by St. Luke a bouleutes, literally, "a senator", whereby is meant a member of the Sanhedrin or supreme council of the Jews. He was a disciple of Jesus, probably ever since Christ's first preaching in Judea (John, ii, 23), but he did not declare himself as such "for fear of the Jews" (John, xix, 38). On account of this secret allegiance to Jesus, he did not consent to His condemnation by the Sanhedrin (Luke, xxiii, 51), and was most likely absent from the meeting which sentenced Jesus to death (cf. Mark, xiv, 64).

The Crucifixion of the Master quickened Joseph's faith and love, and suggested to him that he should provide for Christ's burial before the Sabbath began. Unmindful therefore of all personal danger, a danger which was indeed considerable under the circumstances, he boldly requested from Pilate the Body of Jesus, and was successful in his request (Mark, xv, 43-45). Once in possession of this sacred treasure, he -- together with Nicodemus, whom his courage had likewise emboldened, and who brought abundant spices -- wrapped up Christ's Body in fine linen which he had purchased for that purpose, and grave bands, laid it in his own tomb, new and yet unused, and hewn out of a rock in a neighboring garden, and withdrew after rolling a great stone to the opening of the sepulcher (Matt., xxvii, 59, 60; Mark, xv, 46; Luke, xxiii, 53; John, xix, 38-42). Thus was fulfilled Isaiah's prediction that the grave of the Messiah would be with a rich man (Is., liii, 9).

After Christ's death, Joseph was apparently imprisoned in a rock tomb similar to the one he had given for the body of his grand-nephew. Left to starve, he was sustained for several years by the power of the Holy Grail (the cup used by Christ at the Last Supper) which provided him with fresh food and drink every morning.

The additional details which are found concerning him in the apocryphal "Acta Pilati", are probably unworthy of credence. The legend which tells of his coming to Gaul in approximately A.D. 63, and thence to Great Britain, where he is supposed to have founded the earliest Christian oratory at Glastonbury, may have a factual basis. The story of the translation of the body of Joseph of Arimathea from Jerusalem to Moyonmonstre (Diocese of Toul) is traced to sources many years after his death and may be unreliable.

Saint Joseph of Arimathea was wealthy. He is mentioned in a few times in parallel passages in Mark, Luke and John, but nothing further is Scripturally written heard about his later activities.

Apocryphal legend, however, supplies us with the rest of his story by claiming that Joseph accompanied the Apostle Philip, Lazarus, Mary Magdalene and others on a preaching mission to Gaul. Saint Lazarus and Saint Mary Magdalene stayed in Marseilles, while St. Joseph of Arimathea and his daughter Saint Anne (or St. Anna) of Arimathea and the others traveled north. At the English Channel, St. Philip sent St. Joseph, with twelve disciples, to establish Christianity in the most far-flung corner of the Roman Empire: the Island of Britain. The year AD 63 is commonly given for this "event", with AD 37 sometimes being put forth as an alternative. It was said that St. Joseph achieved his wealth in the metals trade, and in the course of conducting his business, he probably became acquainted with Britain, at least the south-western parts of it. Cornwall was a chief mining district and well-known in the Roman empire for its tin. It is believed St. Joseph owned tin mines in Cornwall, England. (There are also legends that he was involved in the olive oil trade, and possibly owned ships, warehouses, and other enterprises associated with that trade, including "plantations", but there is nothing to support these legends.) Somerset was renowned for its high quality lead.

Some have even said that Joseph was the uncle of the Virgin Mary and therefore of Jesus, and that he may have brought Jesus when He was a young boy along on one of his business trips to the island. Hence the words of Blake's famous hymn, Jerusalem:

And did those feet, in ancient time,
Walk upon England's mountains green?

It was only natural, then, that St. Joseph should have been chosen for the first mission to Britain, and appropriate that he should come first to Glastonbury, that gravitational center for legendary activity in the West Country. Local legend has it that St. Joseph sailed around Land's End and headed for his old lead mining haunts. Here his boat ran ashore in the Glastonbury Marshes and, together with his followers, he climbed a nearby hill to survey the surrounding land. Having brought with him a staff grown from Christ's Holy Crown of Thorns, he thrust it into the ground and announced that he and his twelve companions were "Weary All". The thorn staff immediately took miraculous root, and it can be seen there still on Wearyall Hill. St. Joseph met with the local ruler, Arviragus, and soon secured himself twelve hides of land (approximately 2000 acres) at Glastonbury on which to build the first monastery in Britain. From here he became the country's evangelist.

Much more was added to St. Joseph's legend during the Middle Ages. He was gradually inflated into a major saint and cult hero, as well as the supposed ancestor of many British monarchs. He is said to have brought with him to Britain a cup, said to have been used at the Last Supper and also used to catch the blood dripping from Christ as he hung on the Cross. A variation of this story is that Joseph brought with him two cruets, one containing the blood and the other, the sweat of Christ. Either of these items are known as The Holy Grail, and were the object(s) of the quests of the Knights of King Arthur's Round Table.

(Continued ARIMATHEA on page 9)

(Continued ARIMATHEA from page 8)

For Joseph hath with him
In his sarcophagus
Two cruets, white and silver,
Filled with blood and sweat
Of the prophet Jesus

One legend goes on to suggest that Joseph hid the "Grail" in Chalice Well at Glastonbury for safe-keeping. Another suggests he settled at Ynys Witrin (Glastonbury), but the Grail was taken to Corbenic where it was housed in a spectacular castle, guarded always by the Grail Kings, descendants of Joseph's daughter, St. Anna (Enygeus) and her husband, Brons.

There is a wide variance of scholarly opinion on this subject, however, and a good deal of doubt exists as to whether Joseph ever came to Britain at all, for any purpose. However, the history of the Holy Grail seems to indicate he did.

The Tradition of The Holy Grail:

During the Dissolution of the Monasteries, a group of monks left Glastonbury for Strata Florida Abbey, in South Wales, where they hoped to escape from the ravages of Henry VIII's commissioners. However, the Royal officials soon reached Strata Florida too and the monks were forced to flee over the hills to nearby Nanteos House. Here, the old Prior of Glastonbury became chaplain to the local lord, Mr. Powell, and the other monks became servants around the estate. So things carried on until the monks eventually started to die off. On his death-bed, the last monk revealed to Mr. Powell that his little group had brought with them, from Glastonbury, the Holy Grail which had been brought to Britain by their Abbey's founder, St. Joseph of Arimathea. This was subsequently entrusted to the Powell family "until the church shall claim her own".

Subsequent History: The "Nanteos Cup" as the supposed Grail became known remained at the Manor, attracting many pilgrims and performing many apparent miracles until 1952. All this is well documented. At this date, the last of the

Powells died. The house (and the cup) were then sold to a Major Merrilees, who later moved to Herefordshire, taking the Nanteos Cup with him. It is understood that it currently resides in a bank vault somewhere. It is a small wooden vessel (5" diameter, 3" deep) in a very poor state today, due to pilgrims' biting large chunks out of it, over the years, in order to aid recovery from their ills.

There is one additional comment which must be made regarding the Holy Grail: It may well be in the home of a private individual in Wales.

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(Continued PASCHA from page 1)

died, and rose again from the dead, that everyone will go to heaven when they die, or at least those who believe He is God will go to heaven, or at least those who call themselves Christians will go to heaven, because the battle is won. The battle to which reference is made is the battle against going to hell, against the devil, against evil, against that which prevented salvation, the battle for salvation.

Jesus Christ God won the battle for mankind but Saint Paul very plainly tells us we must complete the work begun in us by Christ. The battle, the war, for each individual soul, is not yet won for that battle must be won by each individual by each individual's completing the work begun in each individual by Christ.

There is another erroneous concept, that everyone wants to go to heaven, that everyone wants to go to someone's concept of a better place than the here and now.

There are many people who desire that any life after death be very similar to their life as it now is. Some of those for whom sex is the most important aspect of life do not desire a hereafter where sex is not prevalent. Some of those who manipulate others to their own ends do not desire a hereafter where this is no longer possible. For many sinners, a hereafter which does not include their favorite sins is a hereafter of which they desire no part, a hereafter in which they do not desire to partake. They do not desire the hereafter, the life after death, without sin, with Christ in heaven united with God in God's holiness for all eternity.

These individuals can be assured that their desire to not be united without sin with God in God's holiness for all eternity will be granted. Hell awaits them.

But those of us who do desire to be united without sin with God in God's

(Continued PASCHA on page 16)

CHILDREN'S PAGE

The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism

Q. 1012. Were, then, all marriages before the coming of Christ unlawful and invalid?

A. All marriages before the coming of Christ were not unlawful and invalid. They were both lawful and valid when the persons contracting them followed the dictates of their conscience and the laws of God as they knew them; but such marriages were only contracts. Through their evil inclinations many forgot or neglected the true character of marriage till Our Lord restored it to its former unity and purity.

Q. 1013. What do we mean by impediments to marriage?

A. By impediments to marriage we mean certain restrictions, imposed by the law of God or of the Church, that render the marriage invalid or unlawful when they are violated in entering into it. These restrictions regard age, health, relationship, intention, religion and other matters affecting the good of the Sacrament.

Q. 1014. Can the Church dispense from or remove these impediments to marriage?

A. The Church can dispense from or remove the impediments to marriage that arise from its own laws; but it cannot dispense from impediments that arise from the laws of God and nature. Every lawmaker can change or excuse from the laws made by himself or his equals, but he cannot, of his own authority, change or excuse from laws made by a higher power.

Q. 1015. What is required that the Church may grant, when it is able, dispensations from the impediments to marriage or from other laws?

A. That the Church may grant dispensations from the impediments to marriage or from other laws, there must be a good and urgent reason for granting such dispensations. The Church does not grant

dispensations without cause and merely to satisfy the wishes of those who ask for them.

Q. 1016. Why does the Church sometimes require the persons to whom dispensations are granted to pay a tax or fee for the privilege?

A. The Church sometimes requires the persons to whom dispensations are granted to pay a tax or fee for the privilege:

1. That persons on account of this tax be restrained from asking for dispensations and may comply with the general laws;
2. That the Church may not have to bear the expense of supporting an office for granting privileges to a few.

Q. 1017. What should persons who are about to get married do?

A. Persons who are about to get married should give their pastor timely notice of their intention, make known to him privately whatever they suspect might be an impediment to the marriage, and make sure of all arrangements before inviting their friends.

Q. 1018. What timely notice of marriage should be given to the priest, and why?

A. At least three weeks notice of marriage should be given to the priest, because, according to the laws of the Church, the names of the persons about to get married must be announced and their intended marriage published at the principal Divine Liturgy (Mass) in their parish for three successive Sundays.

Q. 1019. Why are the bans of matrimony published in the Church?

A. The bans of matrimony are published in the Church that any person who might know of any impediment to the marriage may have an opportunity to declare it privately to the priest before the marriage takes place and thus prevent an invalid or unlawful marriage. Persons who know of such impediments and fail to declare them in due time are guilty of sin

Q. 1020. What things in particular should persons arranging for their marriage make known to the priest?

A. Persons arranging for their marriage should make known to the priest whether both are Christians and Orthodox Catholics; whether either has been solemnly engaged or betrothed to another person; whether they have ever made any vow to God with regard to chastity or the like; whether they are related and in what degree; whether either was ever married to any member of the other's family and whether either was ever godparent in baptism for the other.

Q. 1021. What else must they make known?

A. They must also make known whether either was married before and what proof can be given of the death of the former husband or wife or the circumstances under which any prior marriage began and ended; whether they really intend to get married, and do so of their own will; whether they are of lawful age; whether they are sound in body or suffering from any deformity that might prevent their marriage, and lastly, whether they live in the parish in which they ask to be married, and if so, how long they have lived in it.

Q. 1022. What is particularly necessary that persons may do their duty in the marriage state?

A. That persons may do their duty in the marriage state, it is particularly necessary that they should be well instructed, before entering it, in the truths and duties of their religion for how will they teach their children these things if they are ignorant of them themselves?

Q. 1023. Can the bond of Christian marriage be dissolved by any human power?

A. The bond of Christian marriage cannot be dissolved by any human power.

Q. 1024. Does not a divorce granted

(Continued on page 11)

CHILDREN'S PAGE

(Continued from page 10)

by courts of justice break the bond of marriage?

A. Divorce granted by courts of justice or by any human power does not break the bond of marriage, and one who makes use of such a divorce to marry again while the former husband or wife lives commits a sacrilege and lives in the sin of adultery unless a special dispensation has been granted or there was an impediment to the prior marriage or the prior marriage was received blasphemously. A civil divorce may give a sufficient reason for the persons to live apart and it may determine their rights with regard to support, the control of the children and other temporal things, but it has no effect whatever upon the bond and spiritual nature of the Sacrament.

Q. 1025. Does not the Church sometimes allow husband and wife to separate and live apart?

A. The Church sometimes, for very good reasons, does allow husband and wife to separate and live apart; but that is not dissolving the bond of marriage, or divorce as it is called, for though separated they are still husband and wife, and neither can marry again till the other dies or unless a special dispensation is made or it is determined the marriage was received invalidly or blasphemously.

Q. 1026. Has not the Church sometimes allowed persons once married to separate and marry again?

A. Yes, but this is rarely done, and in receiving a subsequent marriage the husband and wife are given penance which may include restrictions on receiving Holy Communion. The Church has also sometimes declared persons apparently married free to marry again, because their first marriage was null; that is, no marriage existed on account of some impediment not discovered till after the ceremony.

Q. 1027. What evils follow divorce so

commonly claimed by those outside the true Church and granted by civil authority?

A. The evils that follow divorce so commonly claimed by those outside the true Church and granted by civil authority are very many; but chiefly:

1. A disregard for the sacred character of the Sacrament and for the spiritual welfare of the children; 2. The loss of the true idea of home and family followed by bad morals and sinful living.

Q. 1028. Which are the effects of the Sacrament of Matrimony?

A. The effects of the Sacrament of Matrimony are:

1st. To sanctify the love of husband and wife; 2nd. To give them grace to bear with each other's weaknesses; 3rd. To enable them to bring up their children in the fear and love of God.

Q. 1029. What do we mean by bearing with each other's weaknesses?

A. By bearing with each other's weaknesses we mean that the husband and wife must be patient with each other's faults, bad habits or dispositions, pardon them easily, and aid each other in overcoming them.

Q. 1030. How are parents specially fitted to bring up their children in the fear and love of God?

A. Parents are specially fitted to bring up their children in the fear and love of God:

1. By the special grace they receive to advise and direct their children and to warn them against evil; 2. By the experience they have acquired in passing through life from childhood to the position of parents.

Children should, therefore, conscientiously seek and accept the direction of good parents.

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WHY DO WE COLOR EGGS AT PASCHA (EASTER)?

In solving certain questions for the Tzar (Emperor) of Russia, a learned man named Gwes Paisius. said, that when the Jews exclaimed "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matt. 27:25). everything they had in their houses at once turned red, and consequently even the eggs. Hence, in remembrance of this miracle we too dye our eggs red at Eastertide, the occasion of the Resurrection then being celebrated. This miracle, he said, has come down to us through a tradition of old. *(From: The Pedalion (Rudder), the One Hundred and Two Canons of the Holy and Ecumenical Sixth Council, Canon LXXXIX, Concord)*

The green colored eggs represent the Resurrection.

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**THE BEST KIND OF
WOMAN TO MARRY**
**A great love story, with a
question.**

What is the best kind of woman to marry? A Frenchy McCormick, but with a little more "religion".

Frenchy McCormick was born about 1852, near Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Probably born Elizabeth McGraw, her family was wealthy, she was well educated, and of Irish descent.

"Restless" in nature - as it was referred to in those times - she left home while in her teens to perform in burlesque. At the time burlesque, though not of the "upper echelon" theater, was much more classy than the striptease theater, and actually much more classy and decent than the average movie of today. Frenchy performed on the stage in St. Louis, and the dance halls and saloons of Dodge City, where a cowboy gave her the nickname "Frenchy" because she was from Louisiana and could speak French.

Around 1880, she met Mickey McCormick, at the gaming tables in Mobeetie. Mickey, an Irishman, was a gambler who also owned and operated a livery-stable in Tascosa, Texas - in the Panhandle just North and West of Amarillo.

Frenchy married Mickey in 1881, and they remained in Tascosa where she dealt monte in the gambling rooms Mickey operated behind his saloon. Mickey said he always won when Frenchy was beside him. They entertained every Western celebrity of their time, Tascosa being the first true city in the Panhandle. During its some forty years of existence Tascosa was the cowboy capitol of the Panhandle, thriving on cattle drives until barbed wire strangled the town. When the railroad bypassed the town in 1887, the town virtually disappeared and Frenchy and Mickey lost their business.

But they continued to live in a small adobe house on Atascisa Creek, and their devotion to each other rivaled the greatest romances of all times. Frenchy had promised never to leave Mickey, and when he died in 1912, she continued to live in their cabin, about one-half mile West of Casimero Romero Cemetery where Mickey was buried. By 1915, Tascosa was deserted when Vega became the county seat, deserted but for Frenchy who kept her promise to Mickey. She refused to leave her husband's grave site, refused to break her promise to him. She live alone in the ghost town of Tascosa for twenty-seven years, without electricity, running water, or any of what are now considered necessities.

Finally, in 1939, her health failing, her house crumbling about her, she allowed herself to be resettled in Channing, on the condition she be brought back upon her death and buried next to Mickey in Tascosa. She died on 12 January 1941, and was buried next to Mickey. She was the last of the girls of the Golden West.

If you have to ask why a Frenchy, with a little more religion of course, is the best kind of gal to marry - well you do not deserve the best kind of gal. And if you are a woman and do not know why a Frenchy, with a little more religion of course, is the best kind of gal for a man to marry, then you do not deserve the best kind of man, the kind who knows why.

When you love someone, you simply love them. You do not concern yourself with what you are able to "get" out of them. Both ways - they are not your possession. Both ways - they are your heart. Bound with God, that kind of love never ends, not even in a ghost town cemetery.

Older people often lose sight of this truth. But younger people have the chance, and the choice, of remembering it. Be the kind of woman a man never wants to lose. Be the kind of man a woman never wants to lose. Be a man for one specific woman. Be a woman for

one specific man. Become husband and wife under God and never let anyone ever make you less.

And don't gamble.

Now, for the important question. Did Frenchy and Mickey go to heaven? Hope so.

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**THE MONEY GRUBBING
“PREACHERS” AND
“PASTORS” SHOULD READ
THIS VERY CAREFULLY**

Ezekiel Chapter 13

God declares against false prophets and prophetesses, that deceive the people with lies.

13:1. And the word of the Lord came to me, saying:

13:2. Son of man, prophesy thou against the prophets of Israel that prophesy: and thou shalt say to them that prophesy out of their own heart: Hear ye the word of the Lord:

13:3. Thus saith the Lord God: Woe to the foolish prophets that follow their own spirit, and see nothing.

13:4. Thy prophets, O Israel, were like foxes in the deserts.

13:5. You have not gone up to face the enemy, nor have you set up a wall for the house of Israel, to stand in battle in the day of the Lord.

13:6. They see vain things, and they foretell lies, saying: The Lord saith: whereas the Lord hath not sent them: and they have persisted to confirm what they have said.

13:7. Have you not seen a vain vision and spoken a lying divination: and you say: The Lord saith: whereas I have not spoken.

13:8. Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Because you have spoken vain things, and have seen lies: therefore behold I come against you, saith the Lord God.

13:9. And my hand shall be upon the prophets that see vain things, and that divine lies: they shall not be in the council of my people, nor shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel, neither shall they enter into the

land of Israel, and you shall know that I am the Lord God.

13:10. Because they have deceived my people, saying: Peace, and there is no peace: and the people built up a wall, and they daubed it with dirt without straw.

13:11. Say to them that daub without tempering, that it shall fall: for there shall be an overflowing shower, and I will cause great hailstones to fall violently from above, and a stormy wind to throw it down.

13:12. Behold, when the wall is fallen: shall it not be said to you: Where is the daubing wherewith you have daubed it?

13:13. Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Lo, I will cause a stormy wind to break forth in my indignation, and there shall be an overflowing shower in my anger: and great hailstones in my wrath to consume.

13:14. And I will break down the wall that you have daubed with untempered mortar: and I will make it even with the ground, and the foundation thereof shall be laid bare: and it shall fall, and shall be consumed in the midst thereof: and you shall know that I am the Lord.

13:15. And I will accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that daub it without tempering the mortar, and I will say to you: The wall is no more, and they that daub it are no more.

13:16. Even the prophets of Israel that prophesy to Jerusalem, and that see visions of peace for her: and there is no peace, saith the Lord God.

13:17. And thou, son of man, set thy face against the daughters of thy people that prophesy out of their own heart: and do thou prophesy against them,

13:18. And say: Thus saith the Lord God: Woe to them that sew cushions under every elbow: and make pillows for the heads of persons of every age to catch souls: and when they caught the

souls of my people, they gave life to their souls.

Sew cushions, etc... Viz., by making people easy in their sins, and promising them impunity.-Ibid. They gave life to their souls... That is, they flattered them with promises of life, peace, and security.

13:19. And they violated me among my people, for a handful of barley, and a piece of bread, to kill souls which should not die, and to save souls alive which should not live, telling lies to my people that believe lies.

Violated me... That is, dishonoured and discredited me. Ibid. To kill souls, etc... That is, to sentence souls to death, which are not to die; and to promise life to them who are not to live.

13:20. Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Behold I declare against your cushions, wherewith you catch flying souls: and I will tear them off from your arms: and I will let go the soul that you catch, the souls that should fly.

13:21. And I will tear your pillows, and will deliver my people out of your hand, neither shall they be any more in your hands to be a prey: and you shall know that I am the Lord.

13:22. Because with lies you have made the heart of the just to mourn, whom I have not made sorrowful: and have strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his evil way, and live.

13:23. Therefore you shall not see vain things, nor divine divinations any more, and I will deliver my people out of your hand: and you shall know that I am the Lord.

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ATTACKS ON CHRIST, THE TRUE CHURCH, AND TRUE CHRISTIANITY

JIM BELUSHI, THE BLUES BROTHERS, AND THE SACRED HEARTS

In the Western part of the True Church there is a strong devotion to Christ praising and seeking His Divine Mercy under the title The Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Jim Belushi mocks this devotion and mocks not just devotion to Jesus Christ God, but also Jesus Christ, through and in his association with a band known as The Sacred Hearts.

Belushi, The Blues Brothers, and The Sacred Hearts (band) play and perform traditional blues, rock n' roll, burlesque, striptease, and many sex and drugs orientated songs.

Some of their music is not immoral, but most of it is, and in performing music which promoted immorality they attack true Christian values.

But in using the name *The Sacred Hearts* for a band, they attack Christ.

Should you desire to confirm the existence of their evil, music samples and pictures of the band (a scruffy lot) are on The Jim Belushi Website:

<http://www.jimbelushi.ws/index.html>
<http://www.jimbelushi.ws/jim-sacredhearts.htm>

When you watch the TV show, *According to Jim*, or Jim Belushi's movies, or listen to music by The Blues Brothers, or The Sacred Hearts, you support this immorality and you support the attacks on Christ.

ISRAELI TELEVISION

Israeli Television Station Channel 10 late-night talk show host Lior Shlein dedicated one of his shows in early

February, 2009 A.D., to ridicule of Jesus Christ God, the Blessed Ever-Virgin Mary, miracles worked by Christ, and all of Christianity especially and particularly Orthodox and Roman Catholicism.

The show depicted the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary as a fifteen year old girl of loose morals who became pregnant by a schoolmate. One scene in the show showed the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary an extremely pregnant woman in pink underwear patting her exposed belly.

It said Jesus could never have walked on water because "he was so fat he was ashamed to leave the house, let alone go to the Sea of Galilee with a bathing suit". The sketch also said Jesus died at a young age because He was fat, extremely obese.

COMMENT

A proper response to Mr. Belushi, his associates, and the "band" is to never again watch any show, movie, or program, or attend any activity at which they perform. If Mr. Belushi, The Blues Brothers, or The Sacred Hearts (band) appear as entertainers or guests at a festival, your boycotting the festival and making known your reasons for boycotting it will have a good effect. It may force Mr. Belushi and his associates to re-think their overt attack against God and the True Faith.

Any response to Israel must include consideration of the truth that six million Israelites (and many more millions who were not Jews) were murdered by the Nazi in WWII. But that truth does not give Israel the right to attack the majority faith of the citizens of The United States of America, which is the only nation which has given Israel money which runs its government and provides education and health care to all Israelites as well military equipment, supplies, and training. But, of course, no response is expected from the pro-abortion government of the USA - evil does have a certain harmony to maintain.

(Continued PASCHA from page 9)

holiness for all eternity must do more than just desire it. We must work on it. We must complete that which Christ began in us. We must access the eternal salvation which Christ made available to us. And that may only be accomplished by consistently and continually attempting to follow and following The Way taught by Christ.

Do not allow all the effort, teaching, and work, the suffering, passion, death, and resurrection, of Christ, and the wonderful Sacraments He established, be without effect and without application in your life. Be very active in your own salvation so that you will enhance your ability to attain that eternal salvation. Unless, of course, you do not desire it.

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+ *Paul, S.S.B.*

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**THE SNEAKY LIARS WILL
TELL YOU THEY WILL DO
YOU NO HARM BECAUSE
OF YOUR CHRISTIAN
FAITH, AND THEN "GET
YOU" LIKE THEY "GOT"
SAINT MARINUS**

In the first three centuries after the Resurrection, there was an almost constant persecution of Christians. It did happen, however, that some emperors, more benevolent than others, revoked the severe decrees against Christians, but this did not prevent local governors from bringing them to trial - if not directly for their faith, then for insubordination. For example, when a soldier entered the army or received a promotion, he had to take an oath, invoking the names of pagan gods, and sometimes he had to take part in pagan rituals. Christians could not agree to this, and they were given over to punishment for disobedience. There were many such cases under Emperor Gallienus (ruled 260-268), who forbade persecuting Christians for their faith.

St. Marinus belonged to a noble family of Caesarea, in Palestine and had been an excellent soldier in the army. He was about to be honoured with the new title and position of "Centurion. Suddenly another soldier who was eager for the same position, rushed forward, crying out, "Marinus is a Christian, and he would not sacrifice to the Emperor!"

Marinus lost his new position and was immediately questioned by Achaeus, the Governor. Marinus spoke up "Yes, I am a Christian and it is true, I did not sacrifice to the Emperor."

Achaeus was very bold, "Then I give you three hours in which to change your mind and give up your beliefs."

As Marinus left the judgment hall, he met Bishop Theotecnus of Caesarea. The Bishop lead him to the Church and made him stand close to the altar saying, "Choose between the sword that you carry by your side, and the book of

the Gospels." Marinus immediately stretched out his hand and took the book of the Gospels, holding it firmly. "Hold fast then to God, commanded the Bishop, that strengthened by Him you may obtain what you have chosen! Go in peace."

Marinus returned to the judge stating firmly, "I am a Christian and I wish to remain so!" He was immediately led away, to be killed.

St. Astyrius (Asterius), a Roman Senator, was present at the martyrdom. Taking off his cloak, he wrapped up the body of Marinus. Astyrius carried the body away on his shoulders and buried it with great honour. Later, in the year 260 A. D., Astyrius also became a martyr.

Evil people are just that - evil. They may seem to honor your desire to be holy, but eventually they will harm you *because* you pursue holiness, *they* pursue evil, and the two, holiness and evil, are mutually exclusive.

A politician who supports government policies or laws which are or support evil, especially intrinsic evil, will, by that very support of evil, support government policies or laws which attack and harm both those who oppose evil and those who pursue holiness.

The same is true of business people.

The same is true of all people, in every station in life - even clergy and, yes, even your mother.

This is just one more reason to always, always, always, only support that which is holy, and always, always, always, block evil and its supporters in every moral manner possible.

And if you experience the result of practising Faith that St. Marinus experienced, count it as a blessing.

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nal expiation for this laxity, but there also seems to be no viable, consistent, universal means of imparting the importance of God and of following His instructions.

Failing to follow God's instructions because one falls to temptation and commits sin is understandable and can be comprehended. But failure to accept and acknowledge that one has so fallen is neither understandable nor comprehensible if the sinner also expressed belief that Jesus is God, or even that there is a God.

How is it that a married women can have several lovers, a man can seek different women every evening with whom to have sexual relations, perverts can seek out each other and others for despicable sexual acts whether with individuals of the same or different gender or multiple participants or animals, individuals can rob others, deal narcotics and other drugs, defraud the government, businesses, and other individuals or groups, and yet profess not only a belief in God, in Jesus Christ God, but also state with assuredness that when they die or a friend or family member who also engages in such activities dies - often in a hail storm of bullets while engaging in multiple acts of immorality - how can there be an expression of assuredness that the deceased is now, "in a better place," that they are in heaven with God, with Jesus?

One of the main answers to this question is that a significant number of those who express the erroneous belief that there really is no such thing as sin or that there are no consequences to the commission of sin, or that everyone goes to heaven, have been taught to believe these errors. They have not been taught the truth.

God the Father kept His teachings simple. So did God the Son Jesus Christ. Since the Resurrection there have been many explorations into the energies of God, the nature of God, the interrela-

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relationships of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity which is God, the Sacraments, and numerous similar disciplines. Where determinations have been made regarding these explorations they were made in true Ecumenical Councils of the entire Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, the last such Council having been held before the year 1000 A.D. But there has never been need to determine the basic truths and commandments given by God for these have been stated by God in plain language.

When individuals attempted to justify their sinful desires they found little or no acceptance within the society which followed their religion. But when those with similar sinful desires joined together to justify their sinful desires they established a subculture within their society, and that subculture had the ability to influence others with similar sinful desires, encouraging the new recruits by teaching that which the main society knew to be sin, was not sin.

They were even taught to ignore the natural law by ignoring their natural instincts as to what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is evil, what is holy and what is sin. This was an easy task because many sins are fun and pleasurable to commit, even though their natural consequences may be severe or at least difficult to bear. And one of the main consequences of the most popular sin could be aborted if abortion were no longer a sin.

There was no inducement to check on the truthfulness or veracity of anything which the person leading a congregation said if what was being taught conflicted with traditional teachings or with natural law or natural instincts, because what was being taught actually sanctioned or approved access to the sinful desires in which much of the congregation desired to participate. And the teachings removed any permanent adverse consequences for such activities. But the teachings were false, not true, not the truth.

Each individual therefore has the responsibility to ascertain whether or not the dogma, sinfulness, and permissibility being taught by their religious leaders conform with that which is plainly stated in Sacred Scripture. This once was a simple task to accomplish - but now there are more invalid interpretive renditions of the Old and the New Testament, than there are valid ones. One must therefore carefully chose an uncorrupted publication in the earliest original languages possible and learn those languages, or chose a valid translation into the language which one reads - which usually means choosing the earliest translation possible before there was rebellion against the True Church by people who speak that language. In the English language this is the Douay - Rheims translation.

It is very important to remember: You can go to hell any way you want but you can only go to heaven God's way.

Historical Applications With A Somewhat Economic Perspective

By the time of Christ the Jewish religion was so corrupted by a hierarchy wherein most members of that hierarchy sought only to acquire and maintain individual and collective wealth and power, that the ordinary member of that religion perceived nothing immoral with gaining wealth by what ever means were available, and without regard to the injury inflicted upon others. There remained some memory of the original commandments from God, especially amongst a minority of the general population, but those who truly comprehended and followed the law of God were very few.

As Christianity became prevalent and even predominant the effects of the Black Plague included a reduction in the number of clergy and functional religious institutions of learning for clergy. A not very well educated religious or clerical population resulted made it easy for error to be accepted, especially in the face of strong secular self interests of kings, rulers, and reli-

gious reformers who became drunk with power and corrupt. Thus the French Huguenots and Scottish Presbyterians were able to deny dogma which interfered with their desires to sin, Henry VIII was able to give the appearance of moral legality to his pursuit of sexual adventures and murder, Luther was able to establish a life of sexual adventure and monetary gain under the guise of condemning the very same activities by the True Church, and thus were established churches which named themselves Christian but which were not Christian because they denied Dogma - which is truth stated by God - and denied the intrinsic sinfulness of that which God had declared to be sin. Thus English, Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish, American, merchants, and merchants of other nationalities, could engage in the slave trade and because they accumulated wealth; and the accumulation of wealth - by any means - was considered a virtue under these so called religions. The slave traders were actually considered virtuous because they accumulated wealth.

Killing of children and the yet to be born was considered as barbaric even amongst those who practiced the activity. Under Christianity such deeds were universally acknowledged as damnable sin. Yet in their desire to get rid of undesired people, the Anglican Church, the Church of England, declared abortion to be acceptable and therefore not a sin. Those who were similarly inclined to get rid of undesired people, even though they were not of the Anglican Communion, accepted this false teaching and false dogma. Those who deemed accumulation of wealth to be a paramount virtue perceived the abortion business as a means of accumulating their desired virtue. And those who were spiritually and mentally warped and perverted in that they enjoyed torturing and murdering found acceptance of their perversions in their performance of abortions.

Other nations, such as the French, simply officially discarded any notion of sin

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and any concept of religion. One of the main foundations of the French Revolution was discarding any semblance of religion and any concept of sin, resulting in anti-Christian laws and regulations many of which continue to be practiced by the government to this very day.

Much of this was tied to the lack ability of the masses to receive any form of material reward for individual efforts, such rewards being limited to those who had already some measure of wealth. If one could not realistically hope for material reward even for persistent, successful, and productive effort, then in the subconscious there existed little hope for spiritual reward no matter how well one followed religious requirements. In those times it seemed that only the rich could go to heaven and the poor - especially the serfs and peasants - went to hell. Therefore, religions which guaranteed heaven even for unrepentant sinners, or which proclaimed there was no such thing as sin, or that what had once been declared to be sin really was not sin, became very popular.

Czarist Russia, though its poor were amongst the poorest of the world's poor, did not perceive the experience of the dichotomy between the wealthy and the poor to the extent of other nations. Due to its vast size and large population, the percentage of the population which belonged to privileged classes was smaller than in other countries. There also is a traditional love for their country which all Russians share, a love deeper than that experienced by many other nationalities. Wealthy or poor, all suffer the same from winter cold when exposed to the elements. All also experience the same beauty of nature in one of the most beautiful of countries. There also is a form of pessimism common to the Russian people, perhaps related to or similar to the pessimism and depression prevalent in the indigenous Alaskan population. These and other factors fractured the potential for the perception of a relationship between material industriousness and spiritual industri-

ousness. It is as though there was a consensus thought or concept which stated: winter will be cold no matter what one does, but that has no correlation to spiritual life for if one is virtuous one will receive eternal reward. This is one of the factors which encouraged the Russian people, and indeed many of those within the Soviet Block, to maintain spiritual values separate from material reality.

It was much more difficult to induce into American culture those concepts which approved sin. Because of its vast lands, the need for its citizens to be self reliant and their ability to be self reliant because their government not only did not interfere with self reliance but actively encouraged it, and the resulting conditions which allowed one to receive, keep, and enjoy the fruits of their own labor, and which imposed hardship on those who did not attempt to provide for themselves, Americans knew they could obtain material reward for being industrious. It was a simple step to go from material reward for being industrious in the material world, to receiving spiritual reward for being spiritually industrious.

Therefore, in America, slave traders, mercantile robber barons, railroad barons, and those who used position and insider governmental relationships, were perceived as being of the same nature as the scum on a latrine.

For as long as American government restricted itself to providing for its citizens that which they could not provide for themselves, and to providing for those who were unable to provide for themselves and for whom various Churches and charities could not provide, and only interfering with an individual's pursuit of Constitutional rights when pursuit of those rights interfered with others pursuing those same rights, Americans were able to perceive the viable potential material reward for being materially industrious, and to apply that concept to the viable potential for receipt of spiritual rewards for being spiritually industrious. Likewise, the con-

verse was also true. One who was less industrious in the material realm received less of a material reward. One who was less spiritually industrious received less of a spiritual reward. One who was transgressed against the material rights of others, whether it was against an individual, a business, or the government, received loss of protection of the law and often a punishment. One who transgressed spiritually received loss of spiritual benefits and lack of spiritual benefits was always a punishment - sometimes temporary, sometimes permanent. One who transgressed a material law could make recompense and re-establish one's self in the world of material benefits. One who transgressed a spiritual law could access spiritual procedures which likewise restored access to spiritual benefits.

But as the government increased its intervention beyond the necessary and beyond the minimum, and began providing the necessities of life to those who did not make any effort to provide those necessities for themselves, the government acted as a religion which approved not just the sin of sloth, but rewarded it, and further rewarded numerous other sins such as sexual promiscuity. The government then began to provide not just the necessities of life, but also to provide that which was beyond the necessities of life. The government attempted to raise the living standards of those it designated as poor, to the living standard of the middle class. In the process the government abandoned the concepts of need, merit, ability, and individual effort, as means of ascertaining whether or not government assistance would be rendered, and replaced them with the concept of being entitled to government assistance if certain income standards were met. In so doing the government officials found they could maintain their positions in government through influencing elections by their distribution of government largesse.

Thus not only were large groups of people taught that they did not have to be materially industrious to receive mate-

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rial reward, but they were also actually encouraged to abandon spiritual industriousness as being contrary to that which was required to receive material benefit. The abandonment of spiritual standards was encourage through empirically teaching that adherence to spiritual standards caused material hardship through receipt of less government assistance than would be received if spiritual standards were abandoned.

Since financing of government rewards for practicing spiritual depravation, was received from those who practiced material industriousness and therefore often also practiced spiritual industriousness, from the producers in society, the producers in society experienced a lowering of their material rewards for being industrious. As their expectations for receipt of material reward for being productive fell, so too did their expectations for receipt of spiritual rewards for being spiritually industrious.

Large segments of America now perceive sin as being rewarded - all-be-it materially - and virtue as being punished - again, all-be-it materially. And this perception is accurate. Unfortunately, this reality has dulled the perception of and realization that there will be loss of spiritual reward by being sinful, and that there will be receipt of spiritual reward only by being virtuous. In truth, the inherent vitality which arises from spiritual morality has been sapped.

It is not just America which suffers from this spiritual malady, but much if not most of the world whether civilized, industrialized, or otherwise. and it is not just the governments which have induced this spiritual and material malady. It also is those religious leaders who have taught that everyone goes to heaven.

Everyone does not go to heaven!

Ref: Heb 9:11-15, John 8:46-59

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barely remember that experience, and not really be able to recall or experience that passion, and it may have been something which an adult would find inconsequential, such as the love for a pet or a favorite stuffed animal toy. But we all have given that passionate love to someone or something which we perceived as having human-like qualities.

God's love for us is the perfect, total, all encompassing, all consuming, Love. It is perfect Love for each individual.

The soul that responds to that Love, accepts it, and wishes to give love to God in that soul's fullest ability: that soul focuses only on God. Though it knows of itself and knows of others, and in a sense is aware of itself and of others, that Loving focus on God is so all consuming that the soul really is not aware of itself because its Loving focus on God is so strong and complete that it allows nothing else to be experienced by that soul. Its awareness of itself and of other creatures is more a knowledge of their existence than it is an awareness of their existence. Your recognition of yourself and of others and other things is similar to your having knowledge of the existence of the leader of your country in the far recesses of the back of your mind, but you really are not aware of him - he is not in your mind or in your active perception.

This Love that God has for us is the strongest Love possible for it comes from God and is therefore perfect. Those who accept that Love immerse themselves in it, and that Divine Love burns away anything which interferes with the soul receiving and immersing itself in that love. It burns away anything which prevents or hinders the soul being thoroughly saturated with that Love. It burns away the stains left by sin. And the soul wants those things to be taken away so it can fully immerse itself in that Divine Love. It wants anything which interferes with experiencing that Divine love, to be removed, so that those other things are

in the far recesses of the back of your mind, so that you are not aware them - so that they are not in your active perception.

When we receive absolution our sins are forgiven. When our sins are forgiven the eternal punishment which the sins earned is also forgiven. But the sins leave something on or in the soul. It is as if sin is a sticky tar substance which attaches to a brilliantly white cloth. Absolution removes the sticky tar substance, and Holy Communion takes the stain out of the cloth. But something is needed to return the cloth to its brilliant white original state. It is dingy without that "something".

For those who do not go to Hell, but whose souls are dingy from the effects of sin, God's Love for that person is the bleach which burns away any tar which remains on the cloth of the soul, and which enters in between the fibers of the soul so that it cleanses the hidden stains which make the soul dingy white instead of brilliant white.

Truly, the comparison with gold or silver being refined in the furnace, are real comparisons. It is not like iron which has rusted, or brass which has tarnished, for the rust or tarnish are actual chemical changes in the iron or brass. The metals have oxidized - have experienced a "slow" burn - though the ancients did not know this was what was happening, and therefor they used the concepts of rust and tarnish.

But the thoughts and concepts are the same, for fire burns out the rust leaving pure iron; it cleans off the tarnish. More accurately, it refines the impurities from the gold and the silver, leaving only the pure metal. And it removes the impurities from our souls leaving only the pure heavenly substance originally created by God, removing all of the impurities we have added.

This is a painful process, for God's Love must enter into the soul and remove the imperfections. It is like a

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physician surgeon cutting open a person's body and repairing the damaged interior. The procedure is painful, but well worth the pain for it removes an even greater pain - the loss of God.

The soul wants to be made clean because it can not stand the thought of entering into God's presence in its tarnished state. It knows it can only fully experience God and God's Love and only reciprocate that Love if it is pristine, and it desires that pristine status so that it can be with God.

And it does, it must, experience God and God's Love even in Purgatory - otherwise it could not survive the cleansing process.

If these thoughts are accurate, then, in actuality, while the soul does experience the horrible pain of being cleansed, the experience of God and of God's Love is so powerful that God's Love overwhelms the horrible pain of the cleansing process. It is not like anesthesia which is applied during surgery, for the pain of cleansing is experienced. It is more like something happening during surgery and that thing which happens makes experiencing the pain so less of an experience that it is experienced and noticed but not noticed because the other thing is so overpoweringly good. The pain of the cleansing of Purgatory is relegated to the far recesses of our perception.

A soul which is in the presence of God can only recognize the experience of God even though it is in the process of undergoing and experiencing the painful process of cleansing. The experiencing of God and of God's Love makes awareness of anything else impossible even though the knowledge of the pain of cleansing and the experiencing of the pain of cleansing is there.

When a person dies he sees God and God's Love. If at the instant of death he

has rejected God, he flees God and God's Love and casts himself into Hell so-as-to avoid God and His Love. But if at the instant of death the person is in even the slightest state of Grace, then the soul cast itself into God and God's Love. Those few souls, the souls of infants which have never been sullied, and those of martyrs which have been cleansed in their martyrdom, and some few others, when they cast themselves into God's Love, find themselves united with God in Heaven for all eternity.

The rest of those souls which cast themselves into God's Love do so knowing intuitively that they are also casting themselves into the process of being cleansed. But the attraction they have for God and for His Love is so strong that they gladly cast themselves into that process of cleansing because that process of cleansing is also casting themselves into God's Love and the attraction of God's Love is so strong they desire nothing else - they desire nothing other than God.

Some people will look on this as a license to sin. They will tell themselves they can keep sinning their favorite sins because they will always desire God and God's Love and therefore will at least get to Purgatory. But in telling themselves this, they are admitting they love their favorite sins more than they love God.

Even a person who loves God and wishes to do His will, could, at the instant of death, be engaged in a sin which kills the soul. When a soul which is without Grace, without Divine Life, is separated from the body in death, it instantly is face to face with God in God's judgment, and it flees away from God because its last desire and thought was to engage in the sin and to reject God. It flees from God's Love.

But the soul which leaves the body at death, and has even the smallest spark of Grace, of God's Divine Life, is attracted to the fullness of the Divine Life in the Divine Love it perceives, and throws itself into that Divine Love.

We therefore must do our best to always have God as our heart's desire.

Some think they should love their spouse more than they love God. But if they love their spouse more than they love God, they will be attracted to their spouse at the instant of their own death, and they will not seek to throw themselves into God's Love when they die. This is why Our Saviour said those who love Him will leave everyone for Him. It means if there is a choice of God or someone else, if the choice is not God, then God will not be the future of the one making the choice unless they change their choice to God.

If you love God more than you love your spouse, but your spouse loves someone other than God first, then your spouse will be jealous because you love God more than them. They will actually love themselves more than they love God. It is impossible that this could allow a happy marriage.

But if a person loves God more than they love their spouse, and if they have married a person who loves God more than them, then both spouses are of like mind, and their love for each other will grow in their love of God and will strengthen their love of God.

This is how strong our love of God must be. That we love God more than anyone else, especially more than we love ourselves.

This will insure we cast ourselves into God's Love at the instant of our death.

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

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(Continued **EXPERIENCE** from page 1)

and stresses of our lives blocked or lessened our capacity or ability to experience God's Love for us.

That is why experiencing the love which another person, another human, has for us, is so important. For we can readily see that love, and can accept and reciprocate that love more easily than we can see, experience, and reciprocate the Divine Love God has for us.

Thus the love between spouses can lead to a real appreciation of the Divine Love we receive from God, and a loving response from us to God.

When we pick up our cross and follow Christ, if all we pick up is a cross and pain and suffering, then we are not picking up our cross, or we are not following Christ. We are just picking up pain and suffering. When we pick up our true cross, and when we follow Christ God, we pick up the Divine Love God has for us.

Yes, we experience the pain and suffering, but we also experience the wonderfulness of God's Divine Love for us. And the experience of that wonderfulness of Divine Love is much stronger than the pain and suffering. We then gladly experience the pain and suffering and offer it to God for it cleanses us and enables us to experience the wonderfulness of Divine Love even more. The pain and suffering clean the blemishes on our soul, and the cleaner our soul becomes, the more we are able to and do experience the wonderfulness of God's Divine Love for us.

So you can understand how picking up your cross and following Christ God is a joyful thing. And you can also understand how just picking up any old cross and carrying it can not be a joyful thing.

In the Divine Liturgy and the reception of the true Body and Blood of Christ God, we receive the essence of God, God's very self, the most thorough reception of God possible for most of us in this world.

There is a link between Sacramental Holy Communion in the Divine Liturgy and Sacramental Confession and Absolution. That link is that we receive the same essence, the same uncreated energies, of God. The Divine Love and Life which can only be received in Sacramental Holy Communion, by eating Christ's Flesh and drinking His Blood, are true Divine Life. It is unique to Sacramental Holy Communion. But the Divine Love received in Holy Communion is the same Divine Love received in Sacramental Confession and Absolution.

The Divine Love received in Holy Communion, and the Divine Love received in Sacramental Confession and Absolution, effect us in similar ways, and in different ways.

In both there is a strengthening of our love for God and the Divine Life in us. But in Sacramental Confession and Absolution there is an additional cleansing of the soul so it receives and experiences Divine Love more than it did before it received the Sacrament. The embarrassment of confessing one's sins is made negligible in comparison to the relief of having the tar of sin removed, and the Divine Love in Sacramental Confession and Absolution strengthens the desire to never sin again, to never reject God's Love even a little, for that Divine Love is so wonderful and desired so much that one wishes nothing to diminish it even just a little.

The same Divine Love received in Sacramental Communion, strengthens the soul so it can overcome temptations, just a good food strengthens the body so it can do its work, and thus the soul can and does experience Divine Love even more completely.

Ref: Gal. 4:22-31; John 6:1-15

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BELIEVING IN GOD AS HE REALLY IS, IS REAL IMPORTANT

In many ways your journey to your eternity is similar to traveling on a mountain. There are places where the journey is easy, others where it is difficult, sometimes there is little or no danger, and at other times there is great danger. If you know where you are going and how to get there you have a good probability of safely arriving at your destination. But if where you intend to go does not exist, you will wander all over the mountain and never find rest. Your bleached bones will be scattered by the elements and wild creatures.

Those who believe in a god of their own creation or the creation of the imagination of other men are like the person who stands at the top of a high mountain cliff, jumps off, and as they travel through the air, think they are flying.

All the different concepts of God have been around since the beginning of mankind, both the false ones and the accurate ones. The Devil, who early in his relationship with mankind discovered he could have the best effect if he persuaded humans that he, the Devil, does not exist, does everything he can to swell human pride in making people believe they can comprehend God. Thus people make their own god into their own image and likeness - they create the kind of god they desire, which is themselves, and they worship it. They are falling off the mountain and think they are flying.

The Apostles and Disciples of Christ did not really know what to expect in the Messiah, for God's plan was being revealed to them even after Our Saviour's resurrection. So they can be excused in their lack of comprehension. While mankind of today can be excused in its lack of proper execution of God's plan and desires, because of the various temptations and trials on each individual and the effects of the sins of others on us, hence repentance, confession and

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absolution as established by Christ, God; mankind of today can not be excused in its lack of comprehension, or belief in the true God *as He has revealed Himself to us*. After all, He has revealed Himself to us.

At least the the very basics about God are available. The common sense of Aristotle and Plato, of a single entity which is supreme and unchanging, is a requisite of logic. A homogenization of independent supreme beings which once were human but which now control some elemental common force is stupid, but plays to the Gnostic pride of those individuals who claim an intellectual superiority with which they manipulate this elemental force; which is another way of saying they believe they can manipulate God.

The lack of comprehension which Saint Thomas and the others exhibited is forgivable, for the full extent of reality had not yet been revealed to them in a comprehensible manner. But it was revealed to them to the extent necessary for their comprehension. They transmitted that revelation to us unchanged. We have it available, and it is proven, while the Gnostic day dreams of those who want to be gods have constantly been debunked and proven false.

Do not jump off the mountain and think your are flying. Know your destination, stay on the path, rely on God's helping hand in the difficult places, and use the tools, the Sacraments, which He has given to us to make the journey possible. If you do these things, then, when your journey is done, your soul will fly to God's Divine Love so quickly you will be there and not even know you have flown.

Ref: 1 John 5:4-10; John 20:19-31

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THE MOUNTAIN OF MORALITY

During the forty days after His resurrection, we know that Jesus was with His Apostles and Disciples some of the time. We know He clarified some matters for them, and explained salvation and the assistance Christians would receive from God the Holy Spirit.

His Apostles and Disciples, and His family and friends, prayed, discussed salvation and the teachings of Christ, began organizing themselves, and prepared to begin public proclamation of The Way taught by Christ God, of the Gospel.

But they also continued with their lives.

If one was a fisherman, he fished; a farmer, he farmed; a carpenter, he built; a tax collector, he assessed and collected taxes and transmitted the proper revenues; a merchant, he bought, sold, and transported; a government official, he governed.

But they engaged in their occupations in a manner different from the manner in which they were accustomed. If they were already honest and diligent, they were more honest and more diligent, if that were possible. But more than that, they were cognizant (aware) of the greater purpose of life, and they lived their lives with that greater purpose in mind.

No longer was life something just to be endured, or just to be enjoyed as much as possible. Life became the process to eternal joy and happiness, or eternal tortured misery and unhappiness.

Before He ascended Jesus told his followers that when He left He would prepare a place for them. Of exactly what He would prepare in Heaven we have no concept; but we know what He would prepare on Earth. On Earth He would prepare His followers to enter into His Heavenly kingdom. They were not then ready to enter, but as their lives progressed they would be ready to enter. So

too is it with us.

There is an expression: Life is what you make it.

It is true. Life actually is what you make it. Whether it be eternal union with God, or eternal damnation, your life will be what you make it.

The fact that Jesus has prepared a place for you in Heaven does not necessarily mean you will occupy that place in Heaven. Whether or not you occupy that place in Heaven is up to you - for there is also a place for you in Hell if you prepare that place for yourself.

The world in in a terrible condition. Why? Because Christ reigned in our world when people prayed to Him. He reigned throughout the world from around the three hundreds or four hundreds, generally from the time of the First Council of Nicea when the Church became unified in celebrating Pascha, thence for a thousand years, until around the fifteenth century, the mid fourteen hundreds, when efforts for reunification of the Church - which was split by Rome's schism - were lost by the betrayal of Constantinople by Rome. Without Christianity united, Christianity fragmented even more, so that the leader of fragmentation, Rome, fragmented continually, giving rise to thousands of false religions which call themselves Christian but which are not.

Without a unified Church there was no unified establishment supporting the morality established by God. Each individual under Rome and those who schismed from Rome had to, and still has to, struggle against the erosion of morals caused by the constant attacks of Satan. It is as though the Dragon of the Apocalypse were spewing forth water from his mouth and directing it against the mountain of morality, slowly eroding it, because there are fewer and fewer troops of the Roman Church on the Western side to defend it. In the East the troops of the Orthodox Church remain stronger than those of the West.

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But since great damage is being done on the Western slope of morality, eventually the erosion may undermine the Eastern side, unless we can spread the Orthodox Church troops to encompass the Roman Church side of the mountain of morality.

But every time this is attempted, the Roman troops attack the Orthodox troops.

You are the key to a holy world.

Have you prayed to make it better? Have you prayed for others who are living? for the dead? Do you pray regularly, and do you pray thinking about the person or people and what you perceive to be their needs and ask God to fill in the blanks, or do you just squeeze your eyes shut like the fakes on TV. Do you pray for yourself and accept and follow the direction given to you by God?

Do you attend Divine Liturgy at least every Sunday, and if you have a Western or Gregorian Rite available where Divine Liturgy is prayed daily, do you avail yourself of that? Or do you say: Sunday is all that is required, and that is enough?

If the world is to be saved, we must lead the way by our own consistent good moral example. Always remember that we and our families are part of the world; so in attempting to save the world we are also attempting to save ourselves and our families.

Ref: James 1:17-21; John 16:5-14

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EXORCISM

A series of articles regarding exorcism including the old Roman Catholic ritual and the Orthodox Catholic rituals.

(The Roman Ritual is taken from: THE ROMAN RITUAL In Latin and English With Rubrics and Plainchant Notation, Translated and Edited With Introduction and Notes by THE REVEREND PHILIP T. WELLER, Volume II)

Man, above all the Christian, must reckon with the realm of the prince of darkness and his legions, not presuming that Satan has no experience outside of the product of fable, superstition, or figment -- an error endemic in materialists of any age -- not minimizing his power over the human person or in human affairs, without on the other hand seeing him lurk in every nook and crevice, like some of the ancient desert fathers, or for that matter like certain exotic cults of the present day. There is a world of demons, as revealed religion teaches, and even if revelation were not so absolute, we could conjecture that the devil is a real person and that his sway is tremendous -- a legitimate inference from the magnitude of evil to which our times, no less than past history, bears witness.

Francois Mauriac, referred to in somewhat supercilious fashion as one of the contemporary novelists of despair, sees the problem of evil as a burden too heavy to be borne by the shoulders of man alone. "Evil is Someone, Someone who is multiple and whose name is legion. . . . It is one thing to be in the realm of the demons, as we all are when we have lost the state of grace, and quite another to be held and surrounded, literally possessed by him." (*Mauriac, St. Margaret of Cortona.*)

But God in Holy Writ long ago forestalled that the question be left to purely idle human speculation and experimentation, giving His inspired word on which the Church from the beginning

has based her positive teaching regarding the evil spirits. The Old Testament dealt with demonology to some extent, but the subject was amplified considerably in the New. (*Cf. M. Hagen, S.J., "Die Lehre der Heiligen Schrift uber den Teufel," Simmens aus Maria Laach, Vol. 55, p. 368 ff.*) "And there was a great battle in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels. . . . Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you that dwell therein. Woe to the earth, and to the sea, because the devil is come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that hath but a short time. . . . And I saw from the mouth of the dragon, and from the mouth of the beast, and from the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs. For they are the spirits of devils working signs, and they go forth into the kings of the whole earth, to gather them to battle against the great day of the Almighty God." (*Apoc. 12:7, 12; 16:13-14*) And after hell is created for the angels fallen from heaven, the devil like a roaring lion roams about seeking whom he may devour (*1 Pet. 5:8-9*); so that through the sin of our first parents, who felt the sting of the ancient serpent, mankind is made subject to the domain of Satan, prince of this world.

Christ overcame Satan on the Cross, and the latter's kingdom is shaken. "For this purpose, the Son of God appeared, that He might destroy the works of the devil." (*1 John 3:18*) Man is delivered from the power of darkness and transferred into the kingdom of the Son. (*Cf. Col. 1:13*) Yet the devil is not completely vanquished nor trodden underfoot, and the warfare against him is carried on by Christ and His members until the end of time. "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places. Therefore, take unto you the armour of God, that you may be able to resist the evil day and to stand in all things perfect. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and

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having on the breastplate of justice, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: in all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one." (*Eph. 6:12-16*)

Against unclean spirits the Church uses prayers, blessings, holy water, and other sacramentals as weapons to combat the ordinary influence which the former wield over humankind. But apart from the general power over men that Providence allows to the tempter, there is also a special and terrible Satanic influence. It is called possession -- the domination by the demon over man's bodily organs and his lower spiritual faculties; or in latter times a distinction is made between possession and obsession, the latter connoting a lesser grade of demonic disturbance. (*Thalhofer and Eisenhofer, Handbuch der Katholischen Liturgik, p. 506 ff.*)

It is certain from the New Testament that Christ understood the same as the Church has understood them throughout her centuries. "And when it was evening, after sunset, they brought to Him all that were ill and that were possessed with devils, . . . And all the city was gathered together at the door. And He healed many that were troubled with divers diseases; and He cast out many devils, and He suffered them not to speak, because they knew Him." (*Mark 1:32-34*) The Jews likewise acknowledged possession by the evil one, along with the possibility of exorcizing him. "And when they were gone out, behold they brought Him a dumb man, possessed with a devil. And after the devil was cast out, the dumb man spoke, and the multitudes wondered, saying: Never was the like seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said: By the prince of devils He casteth out devils. . . . [And Jesus said:] And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?" (*Matt. 9:32-34; 12:27*)

To be possessed can mean that Satan has gained mastery over the will so devastatingly that sinfulness passes beyond

ordinary depravity of the world, and its cause must be sought in a power above the order of nature. Possibly this was true in the case of "Mary who is called Magdalen, out of whom seven devils were gone forth." (*Luke 8:2*) Or more certainly in Judas whom Jesus called a devil (*John 6:71*), into whose heart Satan put the thought to betray the Master. (*John 13:2*) Or as St. Paul testifies: "And they may recover themselves from the snares of the devil, by whom they are held captive at his will." (*2 Tim. 2:26*) To be possessed can mean, at least in a broad sense, that Satan has beclouded the intellect, so that the light of faith cannot illuminate: "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of unbelievers, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is the image of God, should not shine unto them." (*2 Cor. 4:4*) To be possessed can mean that Satan has befuddled a person's reason, in fact, simple and superstitious folk have wrongly made lunacy synonymous with diabolical infestation. We have the account in St. Mark of a man coming to Jesus one day and saying: "Master, I have brought my son to thee, having a dumb spirit, who, where-soever he taketh him, dasheth him, and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away. . . . [And Jesus said:] Bring him unto me. And they brought him. And when He has seen him, immediately the spirit troubled him; and being thrown down upon the ground, he rolled about foaming. And He asked his father: How long a time is it since this hath happened unto him? But he said: From his infancy: And oftentimes hath he cast him into the fire and into waters to destroy him. But if thou canst do anything, help us, having compassion on us. And Jesus saith to him: If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. . . . And Jesus threatened the unclean spirit, saying to him: Deaf and dumb spirit, I command thee, go out of him; and enter not any more into him. And crying out, and greatly tearing him, he went out of him." *Mark 9:13 ff*) There are many other instances of possession recounted in the New Testament to the effect that molestation by the enemy is manifest in

various disturbances of the human body itself, the devil having gained control over sight, hearing, speech, or the physical organism in general. "And they came over the straight of the sea into the country of the Gerasens. And as He went out of the ship, immediately there met Him out of the monuments a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling in the tombs; and no man now could bind him, not even with chains. For having been often bound with fetters and chains, he had burst the chains and broken the fetters in pieces, and no one could tame him. And he was always day and night in the monuments and in the mountains, crying and cutting himself with stones. And seeing Jesus afar off, he ran and adored Him. And crying with a loud voice, he said: What have I to do with thee, Jesus the Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God that thou torment me not. For He said unto him: Go out of the man, thou unclean spirit. And He asked him: What is thy name? And he saith to Him: My name is Legion, for we are many. And he besought Him much, that He would not drive him away out of the country. And there was there near the mountains a great herd of swine, feeding. And the spirits besought Him, saying: Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And Jesus immediately gave them leave. And the unclean spirits going out entered into the swine. And the heard with great violence was carried headlong into the sea, being about two thousand, and were stifled in the sea. . . . And they see him that was troubled with the devil, sitting, clothed, and well in his wits." (*Mark 5:1 ff*)

The power which Christ exercised over demons He passed on to the Church. "And having called His twelve disciples together, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of diseases, and all manner of infirmities." (*Mark 10:1*) The early Christians were deeply influenced by what they had learned of their Master's dealings with evil spirits, and there was on their part great activity in the use of charismatic gifts -- healing

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the sick and driving out devils. (Cf. Adolph Franz, *Die Kirchlichen Benediktionen im Mittelalter, Band II, De Besessenheit*) They had a lively realization that a follower of Christ must needs wage war against the powers of darkness. In fact, the Master had Himself given them the example and a scheme to imitate in His own sojourn in the wilderness, where He submitted to the threefold temptation of the evil opponent -- the presumptuous attempt to deter Him from following the will of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit, to play false to His vocation. (*Matt. 4:1 ff; Mark 1:12 ff; Luke 4:1 ff*) They saw the demon in the heathen gods and in heathen worship. They received most earnestly St. Paul's exhortation to put on the armor of God so as to be able to stand against the deceits of the devil (*Eph. 6:12*) And in their ready use of the power to drive out evil spirits, direct evidence for which is found in the ritual for baptism, dating from the earliest times and containing manifold exorcisms and renunciations, they exhibited their credentials of being sent from God to bear witness of His Anointed. (Cf. *Heinrich Bacht, S.J., in Liturgie und Monchtum, 2 Folge, Heft VIII, Abtei Maria Laach*)

The prayers and forms used for exorcism in the first centuries have not come down to us, outside of the ones in baptism. But exorcism became part of the baptismal rite somewhere around A.D. 200. Thus the ancient liturgical books which date from the third century, those which deal with baptism, give us the prevailing Christian doctrine about Satan and his intervention in the affairs of man. In the devil's hatred for God he turned on man, who is made in God's image. Following upon original sin, men are no longer temples of the Holy Spirit; rather they are now habitations for the demon. Not too much distinction is made between the possessed and the unbaptized. Isidore of Seville places both classes on the same level, when he tells us that exorcism is the ceremony of banishing the most wicked influence of the devil from catechumens and pos-

sessed alike. (*Dictionnaire D'Archeologie Chretienne et de Liturgie, Vol. V, Pt. 1, 963 ff.*)

It is difficult to fix precisely the time of origin of a special rite for exorcism. The evidence would indicate that in the early Church it consisted mainly of the sign of the Cross, invoking the name of Jesus, references to the Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, and the second coming of Christ, along with renunciations of and adjurations and threats made against the demons. In the Greek Church the forms, given in the liturgy of St. Basil and that of St. John Chrysostom, are very brief. (*Ibid.*) In the Latin Church, on the contrary, we find a profusion of texts and rites, many of which derive from the highly imaginative Middle Ages. To this period we must attribute beliefs and practices which in some cases are superstitious to an extreme. Devils are believed to exist in the guise of certain material bodies. Demonic possession is confounded with epilepsy and other mental or physical disorders. Rituals of this time prescribe that the subject remain in the presence of the exorcist throughout the period of exorcism, that he observe a strict fast and limit the diet to blessed water, salt, and vegetables, that he wear new clothes, that he abstain from the marital act. No less complicated are the injunctions for the exorcist. And by the time we come to the fourteenth century, magical practices have been introduced into the ceremonies. (Cf. *Adolph Franz, op. Cit.*)

A great sobriety characterizes the Western rite of exorcism today. Some minds might discern traces therein of a certain naivete, yet at any rate it has been purged of the unfortunate accretions which crept into the texts during a period ruled much more by human credulity than by the unadulterated doctrine of the Church. No longer, for example, does the official text afford any grounds for the erroneous notion that diabolical possession is necessarily a divine retribution visited upon a grievous sinner. God allows this terrible evil in His wisdom and power, without the af-

fected one being at fault. A better acquaintance with the Gospel should have intimated that sometimes demonic molestation afflicts an innocent person, as in the case of the boy troubled by an evil spirit since his infancy. (*Mark 9:20*) It is one thing to have fallen into the slavery of sin or to be afflicted with an bodily infirmity, and quite another story when a devil has literally entered into a demoniac and taken possession. Therefore, in the third rubric given below, the exorcist is enjoined "not to believe too readily that a person is possessed by an evil spirit, but to ascertain the signs by which a person possessed can be distinguished from one who is suffering from melancholy or some other illness."

The present rite also wisely provides that exorcism is not to be attempted by anyone indiscriminately. Although there is a special order of exorcists -- one of the minor orders -- it is allowed at present only to priests, who ordinarily are obliged to seek the authorization of the bishop before resorting to exorcism. Moreover, the priest appointed for this undertaking "must be properly distinguished for his piety, prudence, and integrity of life; he ought to be of mature years, and revered not alone for his office but for his moral qualities." (*See rubrics below.*) He should prepare himself by imploring the divine assistance, above all through prayer and fasting, and induce others to do the same. In order to avoid a spectacle for idle curiosity, the possessed person should be led to church or some other sacred and worthy place, where the exorcism will be held, away from the crowd. The subject, if in good mental and physical health, should be exhorted to implore God's help, to fast, and to fortify himself by frequent reception of penance and Holy Communion. During the exorcism the exorcists shall preferably employ words from Holy Writ, rather than forms of his own or of someone else. These recommendations in the present rite, along with many other instructions given in the text which follows, indicate that the Church has carefully guarded the extraordinary power over Satan commit-

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ted to her by Christ, and that Orthodox (and Catholic) exorcism is poles removed from any form of dabbling in the spirit world which springs from human chicanery or malice, or even from the promoter of malice himself. (*-- Slightly modified and edited comments by the Translator*)

To be continued in the next issue of REUNION.

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EXORCISM ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Normally comments or information related to a main article are carried in a sidebar. But these comments are too extensive for a sidebar and therefore are presented in "stand alone" format.

OBSESSION

Concurrent with perceiving obsession as connoting a lesser grade of demonic disturbance, should be openness to the potential for or the reality of obsession being a truly lower spiritual realm form of possession.

Remember, the short or quick definition and reality of possession is that it is the domination by the demon over man's bodily organs and his lower spiritual faculties. This, then, could in part explain the forms of obsession which seem to dominate many who struggle against a multitude of sins: homosexuality and homosexual attraction, pornography, masturbation, readily come to mind. Those who resist the attraction and struggle against it may be under some form of possession of the lower spiritual faculties. At present, they are "treated" with Confession and Absolution, the Holy Eucharist, and the Confessor's admonition the penitent pray. These actually do quite well.

But there should remain an openness to the potential need for exorcism. There

should also remain the very viable probability that these and other, similar, sins, are the result of man's fallen nature, and his propensity and inclination to engage in natural self indulgence which often is simply the commission of sin.

One should never attempt to shirk responsibility for one's sins by blaming them on some form of possession. Nor should one reject the potential for the inducement to sin being laid at the feet of some form of possession.

As we proceeds through the Rites of Exorcism (Western and Eastern), and the preliminary comments on them, a better insight to obsession will be gained. With it will come an appreciation for the Orthodox custom of anointing after Divine Liturgy, both for its ability to strengthen the individual spiritually and physically, and its significant application as a minor - and possibly unintended - form of exorcism.

"VOLUNTARY" POSSESSION OR POSSESSION BY INVITATION

"To be possessed can mean that Satan has gained mastery over the will so devastatingly that sinfulness passes beyond ordinary depravity of the world, and its cause must be sought in a power above the order of nature."

Think very carefully about this. What is described is entirely different from "normal" possession, if demonic possession can ever be termed "normal". Perhaps we should term it "ordinary" possession, but, then, what is "ordinary" about demonic possession. So too, for the term, "simple". There is nothing simple about it, nor is there anything simple or ordinary in getting rid of it. But the prayers, surprisingly, are mostly normal. So, we will use the term "normal" here.

In "normal" possession the possessed usually is not aware of what they do while possessed. They have no control over what they do while possessed.

But when possession is of the type where Satan has mastery over the will of the one possessed, it is possible the possessed is aware of what they do while possessed. It could be that the one possessed invited Satan into them, perhaps through a seemingly innocent use of Tarot cards or Ouija board, or through a pact or bargain with the devil. It also is possible that the possessed engaged in or fairly consistently flirted with sin to the extent sin - likely a particular sin or type of sin - became an obsession, and that the one possessed progressed from obsession to obsessive possession to possession to Satanic mastery of their will.

When the one possessed struggles against this type of possession it is indicative of a change of heart in acceptance of the Divine inspiration to reject Satan and evil and to accept God. But the battle against such possession is extreme.

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THE CONFESSIONS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

BOOK EIGHT (Cont'd)

CHAPTER XI

25. Thus I was sick and tormented, reproaching myself more bitterly than ever, rolling and writhing in my chain till it should be utterly broken. By now I was held but slightly, but still was held. And thou, O Lord, didst press upon me in my inmost heart with a severe mercy, redoubling the lashes of fear and shame; lest I should again give way and that same slender remaining tie not be broken off, but recover strength and enchain me yet more securely.

I kept saying to myself, "See, let it be done now; let it be done now." And as I said this I all but came to a firm decision. I all but did it -- yet I did not quite. Still I did not fall back to my old condition, but stood aside for a moment and drew breath. And I tried again, and lacked only a very little of reaching the resolve -- and then somewhat less, and then all but touched and grasped it. Yet I still did not quite reach or touch or grasp the goal, because I hesitated to die to death and to live to life. And the worse way, to which I was habituated, was stronger in me than the better, which I had not tried. And up to the very moment in which I was to become another man, the nearer the moment approached, the greater horror did it strike in me. But it did not strike me back, nor turn me aside, but held me in suspense.

26. It was, in fact, my old mistresses, trifles of trifles and vanities of vanities, who still enthralled me. They tugged at my fleshly garments and softly whispered: "Are you going to part with us? And from that moment will we never be with you any more? And from that moment will not this and that be forbidden you forever?" What were they suggesting to me in those words "this or that"? What is it they suggested, O my God? Let thy mercy guard the soul of thy servant from the vileness and the shame they did suggest! And now I scarcely heard them, for they

were not openly showing themselves and opposing me face to face; but muttering, as it were, behind my back; and furtively plucking at me as I was leaving, trying to make me look back at them. Still they delayed me, so that I hesitated to break loose and shake myself free of them and leap over to the place to which I was being called -- for unruly habit kept saying to me, "Do you think you can live without them?"

27. But now it said this very faintly; for in the direction I had set my face, and yet toward which I still trembled to go, the chaste dignity of continence appeared to me -- cheerful but not wanton, modestly alluring me to come and doubt nothing, extending her holy hands, full of a multitude of good examples -- to receive and embrace me. There were there so many young men and maidens, a multitude of youth and every age, grave widows and ancient virgins; and continence herself in their midst: not barren, but a fruitful mother of children -- her joys -- by thee, O Lord, her husband. And she smiled on me with a challenging smile as if to say: "Can you not do what these young men and maidens can? Or can any of them do it of themselves, and not rather in the Lord their God? The Lord their God gave me to them. Why do you stand in your own strength, and so stand not? Cast yourself on him; fear not. He will not flinch and you will not fall. Cast yourself on him without fear, for he will receive and heal you." And I blushed violently, for I still heard the muttering of those "trifles" and hung suspended. Again she seemed to speak: "Stop your ears against those unclean members of yours, that they may be mortified. They tell you of delights, but not according to the law of the Lord thy God." This struggle raging in my heart was nothing but the contest of self against self. And Alypius kept close beside me, and awaited in silence the outcome of my extraordinary agitation.

CHAPTER XII

28. Now when deep reflection had drawn up out of the secret depths of my soul all my misery and had heaped it up

before the sight of my heart, there arose a mighty storm, accompanied by a mighty rain of tears. That I might give way fully to my tears and lamentations, I stole away from Alypius, for it seemed to me that solitude was more appropriate for the business of weeping. I went far enough away that I could feel that even his presence was no restraint upon me. This was the way I felt at the time, and he realized it. I suppose I had said something before I started up and he noticed that the sound of my voice was choked with weeping. And so he stayed alone, where we had been sitting together, greatly astonished. I flung myself down under a fig tree -- how I know not -- and gave free course to my tears. The streams of my eyes gushed out an acceptable sacrifice to thee. And, not indeed in these words, but to this effect, I cried to thee: "And thou, O Lord, how long? How long, O Lord? Wilt thou be angry forever? Oh, remember not against us our former iniquities." [259] For I felt that I was still enthralled by them. I sent up these sorrowful cries: "How long, how long? Tomorrow and tomorrow? Why not now? Why not this very hour make an end to my uncleanness?"

29. I was saying these things and weeping in the most bitter contrition of my heart, when suddenly I heard the voice of a boy or a girl I know not which -- coming from the neighboring house, chanting over and over again, "Pick it up, read it; pick it up, read it." [260] Immediately I ceased weeping and began most earnestly to think whether it was usual for children in some kind of game to sing such a song, but I could not remember ever having heard the like. So, damming the torrent of my tears, I got to my feet, for I could not but think that this was a divine command to open the Bible and read the first passage I should light upon. For I had heard [261] how Anthony, accidentally coming into church while the gospel was being read, received the admonition as if what was read had been addressed to him: "Go and sell what you have and give it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me." [262]

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By such an oracle he was forthwith converted to thee.

So I quickly returned to the bench where Alypius was sitting, for there I had put down the apostle's book when I had left there. I snatched it up, opened it, and in silence read the paragraph on which my eyes first fell: "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof." [263] I wanted to read no further, nor did I need to. For instantly, as the sentence ended, there was infused in my heart something like the light of full certainty and all the gloom of doubt vanished away. [264]

30. Closing the book, then, and putting my finger or something else for a mark I began -- now with a tranquil countenance -- to tell it all to Alypius. And he in turn disclosed to me what had been going on in himself, of which I knew nothing. He asked to see what I had read. I showed him, and he looked on even further than I had read. I had not known what followed. But indeed it was this, "Him that is weak in the faith, receive." [265] This he applied to himself, and told me so. By these words of warning he was strengthened, and by exercising his good resolution and purpose -- all very much in keeping with his character, in which, in these respects, he was always far different from and better than I -- he joined me in full commitment without any restless hesitation.

Then we went in to my mother, and told her what happened, to her great joy. We explained to her how it had occurred -- and she leaped for joy triumphant; and she blessed thee, who art "able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think." [266] For she saw that thou hadst granted her far more than she had ever asked for in all her pitiful and doleful lamentations. For thou didst so convert me to thee that I sought neither a wife nor any other of this world's hopes, but set my feet on that rule of faith which so many years before thou hadst showed her in her dream about me. And so thou didst turn

her grief into gladness more plentiful than she had ventured to desire, and dearer and purer than the desire she used to cherish of having grandchildren of my flesh.

BOOK NINE

The end of the autobiography. Augustine tells of his resigning from his professorship and of the days at Cassiciacum in preparation for baptism. He is baptized together with Adeodatus and Alypius. Shortly thereafter, they start back for Africa. Augustine recalls the ecstasy he and his mother shared in Ostia and then reports her death and burial and his grief. The book closes with a moving prayer for the souls of Monica, Patricius, and all his fellow citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem.

CHAPTER I

1. "O Lord, I am thy servant; I am thy servant and the son of thy handmaid. Thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving." [267] Let my heart and my tongue praise thee, and let all my bones say, "Lord, who is like unto thee?" Let them say so, and answer thou me and say unto my soul, "I am your salvation."

Who am I, and what is my nature? What evil is there not in me and my deeds; or if not in my deeds, my words; or if not in my words, my will? But thou, O Lord, art good and merciful, and thy right hand didst reach into the depth of my death and didst empty out the abyss of corruption from the bottom of my heart. And this was the result: now I did not will to do what I willed, and began to will to do what thou didst will.

But where was my free will during all those years and from what deep and secret retreat was it called forth in a single moment, whereby I gave my neck to thy "easy yoke" and my shoulders to thy "light burden," O Christ Jesus, "my Strength and my Redeemer"? How sweet did it suddenly become to me to be without the sweetness of trifles! And it was now a joy to put away what I for-

merly feared to lose. For thou didst cast them away from me, O true and highest Sweetness. Thou didst cast them away, and in their place thou didst enter in thyself -- sweeter than all pleasure, though not to flesh and blood; brighter than all light, but more veiled than all mystery; more exalted than all honor, though not to them that are exalted in their own eyes. Now was my soul free from the gnawing cares of seeking and getting, of wallowing in the mire and scratching the itch of lust. And I prattled like a child to thee, O Lord my God -- my light, my riches, and my salvation.

CHAPTER II

2. And it seemed right to me, in thy sight, not to snatch my tongue's service abruptly out of the speech market, but to withdraw quietly, so that the young men who were not concerned about thy law or thy peace, but with mendacious follies and forensic strifes, might no longer purchase from my mouth weapons for their frenzy. Fortunately, there were only a few days before the "vintage vacation" [268]; and I determined to endure them, so that I might resign in due form and, now bought by thee, return for sale no more.

My plan was known to thee, but, save for my own friends, it was not known to other men. For we had agreed that it should not be made public; although, in our ascent from the "valley of tears" and our singing of "the song of degrees," thou hadst given us sharp arrows and hot burning coals to stop that deceitful tongue which opposes under the guise of good counsel, and devours what it loves as though it were food.

3. Thou hadst pierced our heart with thy love, and we carried thy words, as it were, thrust through our vitals. The examples of thy servants whom thou hadst changed from black to shining white, and from death to life, crowded into the bosom of our thoughts and burned and consumed our sluggish temper, that we might not topple back into the abyss. And they fired us exceedingly, so that every breath of the deceitful tongue of

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our detractors might fan the flame and not blow it out.

Though this vow and purpose of ours should find those who would loudly praise it -- for the sake of thy name, which thou hast sanctified throughout the earth -- it nevertheless looked like a self-vaunting not to wait until the vacation time now so near. For if I had left such a public office ahead of time, and had made the break in the eye of the general public, all who took notice of this act of mine and observed how near was the vintage time that I wished to anticipate would have talked about me a great deal, as if I were trying to appear a great person. And what purpose would it serve that people should consider and dispute about my conversion so that my good should be evil spoken of?

4. Furthermore, this same summer my lungs had begun to be weak from too much literary labor. Breathing was difficult; the pains in my chest showed that the lungs were affected and were soon fatigued by too loud or prolonged speaking. This had at first been a trial to me, for it would have compelled me almost of necessity to lay down that burden of teaching; or, if I was to be cured and become strong again, at least to take a leave for a while. But as soon as the full desire to be still that I might know that thou art the Lord[269] arose and was confirmed in me, thou knowest, my God, that I began to rejoice that I had this excuse ready -- and not a feigned one, either -- which might somewhat temper the displeasure of those who for their sons' freedom wished me never to have any freedom of my own.

Full of joy, then, I bore it until my time ran out -- it was perhaps some twenty days -- yet it was some strain to go through with it, for the greediness which helped to support the drudgery had gone, and I would have been overwhelmed had not its place been taken by patience. Some of thy servants, my brethren, may say that I sinned in this, since having once fully and from my heart enlisted in thy service, I permitted myself to sit a single hour in the chair

of falsehood. I will not dispute it. But hast thou not, O most merciful Lord, pardoned and forgiven this sin in the holy water[270] also, along with all the others, horrible and deadly as they were?

CHAPTER III

5. Verecundus was severely disturbed by this new happiness of mine, since he was still firmly held by his bonds and saw that he would lose my companionship. For he was not yet a Christian, though his wife was; and, indeed, he was more firmly enchained by her than by anything else, and held back from that journey on which we had set out. Furthermore, he declared he did not wish to be a Christian on any terms except those that were impossible. However, he invited us most courteously to make use of his country house so long as we would stay there. O Lord, thou wilt recompense him for this "in the resurrection of the just,"[271] seeing that thou hast already given him "the lot of the righteous." [272] For while we were absent at Rome, he was overtaken with bodily sickness, and during it he was made a Christian and departed this life as one of the faithful. Thus thou hadst mercy on him, and not on him only, but on us as well; lest, remembering the exceeding kindness of our friend to us and not able to count him in thy flock, we should be tortured with intolerable grief. Thanks be unto thee, our God; we are thine. Thy exhortations, consolations, and faithful promises assure us that thou wilt repay Verecundus for that country house at Cassiacum -- where we found rest in thee from the fever of the world -- with the perpetual freshness of thy paradise in which thou hast forgiven him his earthly sins, in that mountain flowing with milk, that fruitful mountain -- thy own.

6. Thus Verecundus was full of grief; but Nebridius was joyous. For he was not yet a Christian, and had fallen into the pit of deadly error, believing that the flesh of thy Son, the Truth, was a phantom.[273] Yet he had come up out of that pit and now held the same belief that we did. And though he was not as yet initiated in any of the sacra-

ments of thy Church, he was a most earnest inquirer after truth. Not long after our conversion and regeneration by thy baptism, he also became a faithful member of the Catholic Church, serving thee in perfect chastity and continence among his own people in Africa, and bringing his whole household with him to Christianity. Then thou didst release him from the flesh, and now he lives in Abraham's bosom. Whatever is signified by that term "bosom," there lives my Nebridius, my sweet friend, thy son by adoption, O Lord, and not a freedman any longer. There he lives; for what other place could there be for such a soul? There he lives in that abode about which he used to ask me so many questions -- poor ignorant one that I was. Now he does not put his ear up to my mouth, but his spiritual mouth to thy fountain, and drinks wisdom as he desires and as he is able happy without end. But I do not believe that he is so inebriated by that draught as to forget me; since thou, O Lord, who art the draught, art mindful of us.

Thus, then, we were comforting the unhappy Verecundus -- our friendship untouched -- reconciling him to our conversion and exhorting him to a faith fit for his condition (that is, to his being married). We tarried for Nebridius to follow us, since he was so close, and this he was just about to do when at last the interim ended. The days had seemed long and many because of my eagerness for leisure and liberty in which I might sing to thee from my inmost part, "My heart has said to thee, I have sought thy face; thy face, O Lord, will I seek." [274]

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THE MONEY GRUBBING “PREACHERS” AND “PASTORS” SHOULD READ THIS VERY CAREFULLY Ezechiel Chapter 13 God declares against false prophets and prophetesses, that deceive the people with lies. page 15

ATTACKS ON CHRIST, THE TRUE CHURCH, AND TRUE CHRISTIANITY JIM BELUSHI, THE BLUES BROTHERS, AND THE SACRED HEARTS In the Western part of the True Church there is a strong devotion to Christ praising and seeking His Divine Mercy under the title The Sacred Heart of Jesus. Jim Belushi mocks this devotion and mocks not just devotion to Jesus Christ God, but also Jesus Christ, through and in his association with a band known as The Sacred Hearts. **ISRAELI TELEVISION** Israeli Television Station Channel 10 late-night talk show host Lior Shlein dedicated one of his shows in early February, 2009 A.D., to ridicule of

Jesus Christ God, the Blessed Ever-Virgin Mary, miracles worked by Christ, and all of Christianity especially and particularly Orthodox and Roman Catholicism. page 16

THE SNEAKY LIARS WILL TELL YOU THEY WILL DO YOU NO HARM BECAUSE OF YOUR CHRISTIAN FAITH, AND THEN “GET YOU” LIKE THEY “GOT” SAINT MARINUS

In the first three centuries after the Resurrection, there was an almost constant persecution of Christians. It did happen, however, that some emperors, more benevolent than others, revoked the severe decrees against Christians, but this did not prevent local governors from bringing them to trial - if not directly for their faith, then for insubordination. page 17

BELIEVING IN GOD AS HE REALLY IS, IS REAL IMPORTANT In many ways your journey to your eternity is similar to traveling on a mountain. There are places where the journey is easy, others where it is difficult, sometimes there is little or no danger, and at other times there is great danger. If you know where you are going and how to get there you have a good probability of safely arriving at your destination. But if where you intend to go does not exist, you will wander all over the mountain and never find rest. Your bleached bones will be scattered by the elements and wild creatures. page 22

THE MOUNTAIN OF MORALITY During the forty days after His resurrection, we know that Jesus was with His Apostles and Disciples some of the time. We know He clarified some matters for them, and explained salvation and the assistance Christians would receive from God the Holy Spirit. His Apostles and Disciples, and His family and friends, prayed, discussed salvation and the teachings of Christ, began organizing themselves, and prepared to begin public proclamation of The Way taught by Christ God, of the Gospel. But they also continued with their lives. page 23

EXORCISM A series of articles regarding exorcism including the old Roman Catholic ritual and the Orthodox Catholic rituals. page 24

EXORCISM ADDITIONAL COMMENTS Normally comments or information related to a main article are carried in a sidebar. But these comments are too extensive for a sidebar and therefore are presented in “stand alone” format.

OBSESSION Concurrent with perceiving obsession as connoting a lesser grade of demonic disturbance, should be openness to the potential for or the reality of obsession being a truly lower spiritual realm form of possession.

“VOLUNTARY” POSSESSION OR POSSESSION BY INVITATION "To be possessed can mean that Satan has gained mastery over the will so devastatingly that sinfulness passes beyond ordinary depravity of the world, and its cause must be sought in a power above the order of nature." Think very carefully about this. What is described is entirely different from "normal" possession page 27

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TRUTHFUL TEACHING or TRUE TEACHING IS IMPERATIVE because people desire to believe as truth that which allows the sins desired by the individual. The General Situation There are innumerable people who believe in the almighty, all powerful, all page 1

SAINT JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA And the Holy Grail All that is known for certain concerning him is derived from the canonical Gospels. He was born at Arimathea -- page 1

THE CLEANSING FIRE OF GOD'S LOVE The fire of Purgatory probably,

actually is the fire of God's Love, His Divine Love, which burns away the impurities from the soul so as to leave it clean and pristine. Probably. page 1

THE CLEANSING FIRE OF GOD'S LOVE - BEING CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST, DYING WITH CHRIST If we continue contemplating the cleansing fire of Divine Love, we can better understand what St. Paul means when he says he dies with Christ daily. page 1

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ARTICLE ON EXORCISM AND PUBLICATION OF RITE In this issue of **REUNION** we begin publication of several of the Rites of Exorcism. page

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AS WE CELEBRATE PASCHA As we celebrate Pascha let us remember how few true followers of Christ there were at the instant of the Resurrection. page 4

PLEASANT SURPRISE FROM OUR WEB SITE We have been pleasantly surprised at the activity we have received on our web site. page 5

EQUIVOCATION IS SOMETHING WHICH MUST ALWAYS BE AVOIDED To admit one does not know the answer to a question, when one does not know the answer, is always the best course. It is truthful; therefore to say otherwise is a sin. page 5

ANOTHER LOOK AT THE "ROMAN SITUATION"

Bishop Joseph Martino, of Scranton, PA, threatened to close Saint Peter's Cathedral for the annual Saint Patrick's Day parade and Mass if pro-abortion officials were honored at that festivities. page 6

Archbishop Rino Fisichella, head of the Vatican's Pontifical Academy for
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Man made law, whether passed by a legislature, imposed by a king, created by a judicial system, evolved by a culture or a society, or made from any source, should have the following as its basis and foundation: 1) It should be a restriction only against evil; 2) It should free people; 3) It should not bind people; 4) It should inform a person of what they may do without transgressing on or impinging on the equal liberty of any other person and enforce those limitations but only those limitations.

Love makes 1 + 1 = 1

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