



REUNION

The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil
(The Basilians - The Basilian Fathers)
THE ORTHODOX CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE AMERICAS



Volume 22 No. 3 OF THE CHURCH OF MAN WITH GOD April, 2012 A.D.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS TO FORCE RELIGIONS TO SACRIFICE VIRGINS

~ GOD, HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY THAT I LOVE YOU ~

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



A very popular song contains the phrase, "Have I told you lately that I love You."

With a few modifications that song could easily be a song of

worship to the true God.

Have you ever entered a Church where the Eucharist is present and simply felt love for God? If so, you were responding to the love God has for you, emanating from His physical presence in the Eucharist. Those who have not had this experience have not had it, not because God does not love them, but for some other reason. Perhaps their perception of their own harmony with God's will is not quite as accurate as they believe it to be.

When you feel that love *for* God, do you tell God? Do you tell Him, "I love You"? Are you prompted to actually say, "Have I told you lately that I love You," not as a question but as an expression of that which wells up within you, flowing with the joyful calm and peace of spiritual well-being? Or, perhaps it wells from a desire to be in harmony with God and the realization you need to be re-tuned.

(Continued HAVE I TOLD YOU on page 5)

THE VIRGIN MARY'S MEASURE OF LOVE FOR GOD IS A TRIUMPH OVER SIN WHICH WE ARE ABLE TO ATTAIN

The special position of The Blessed Ever Virgin Mary has been the topic of extensive theological discussions and her status has been referred to as a special privilege granted to her by God.

While many of those weighty and knowledgeably done theological works make reference to an extremely important factor very few dwell on that factor in its simplicity.

But we are simple and will contemplate this factor in a simple manner. The factor is love and we will not cloud the mind distinguishing simple love as it exists as a simple facet of being human and Divine Love

(Continued LOVE on page 5)

The first ten amendments to the Constitution of The United States of America are known as The Bill of Rights. They were ratified effective December 15, 1791.

The very First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America, states, "*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*"

The United States Constitution actually imposes even more stringent restrictions on the power of the President - the executive branch - and on the Supreme Court - and all of the court systems and structures - than it places on Congress.

Constitutional reality is not that there is a separation of Church and state. Rather, it is that state, the government, any government or governmentally authorized agency or activity, is unable to effect any religion nor is the government, any government, able to establish a religion.

But there is nothing to prohibit a religion, any religion, from effecting the government of the United States of America, or any government, at any level.

(Continued CONSTITUTION on page 6)

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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; or, in plain language, to get as many of our sorry selves to heaven as is possible.

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*Most Rev. Lee S. Mc Colloster,
Publisher*

LETTERS

(The Editors reserve the right to reject any submissions, and to edit as necessary. Letters must be typed, single space, signed, and include the sender's name address, and day and evening telephone numbers - If your typed letter is accompanied by an ASCII DOS Text copy on a floppy, we will thank you with extra prayers - Ed.)

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**Current Active Mailing Lists
Originating From BasilNet ReuNet
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The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil - The Basilian Fathers

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

PRAYERS

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

(Continued WEB on page 3)

(Continued WEB from page 2)

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

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

BIBLE-DAY

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

SERMONS

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

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

STUDIES

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

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

ONE-BODY

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

REU_PUB

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

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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.

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**THE BASILIAN
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The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil exists for the purpose of glorifying God. It and its members, and hopefully their families, attempt to operate divinely, which is a technical, theological term which means to think, act, and live in accordance with the Divine Virtue of Faith. It is by operating divinely that one attains eternal salvation.

In the course of operating divinely and seeking to attain eternal salvation we pursue happiness with Christ here on Earth and for all eternity in Heaven. Happiness with Christ here in this life may or may not include elements which those who do not seek such will perceive as possessing any element of happiness. Stated from a different perspective, worldly people may not comprehend how one who experiences none or just a few of the worldly delights, or in some instances rarely accesses even the necessities of life, can possibly be happy in this life. They neither understand nor comprehend how one is able to attain happiness in this life with Christ alone.

In concert with pursuing glorification of God, operating divinely, attaining eternal salvation, happiness with Christ here on earth and for all eternity in heaven, we also seek to love God with all of our heart - with complete totality of self, and to love others in like manner, *and* to assist others to do the same.

Those who do not comprehend, well that is just one of their problems which we endeavor to correct.

We pursue this - not these things or these, but this - individually and collectively.

The "tools" which we use include everything and anything provided it is not evil or sinful, *with the understanding the "tools" will be used in a proper manner and in proper circumstances.*

When it occurs that a priest or bishop - actually anyone - has a lapse in focus on the spiritual, or allows their own goals to cast God's goals in the shadows, *or as frequently occurs*, utilizes procedures or alliances which are not time proven in their holiness, then that individual or those individuals have broken Faith with God and are unable to operate divinely. In so doing they give scandal. In so doing, while they may not perceive it, they attempt to usurp God's prerogative(s).

Not only do they attempt to usurp God's prerogatives, they actually attempt to replace the incumbent Divinity by replacing His standard and procedures with their standards and procedures. Such people will deny that is what they are doing, but their denial is insufficient for "their actions speak for themselves". It is doubly foolish because the incumbent Divinity is a permanent position held by the entity uniquely qualified for that position. The incumbent Divinity also has given no indication of seeking to retire - which, anyway, would be counter to His nature.

It is difficult if not impossible for a regular person - or even an exceptionally holy person - to live even one day without engaging in some sort of sin. Substituting one's own standards and proce-

dures for those established by God simply makes a difficult situation approach becoming impossible.

Succinctly: our goal in life should be to get our sorry butts into heaven because if our butts, which are the most dense portion of our bodies, get into heaven they will drag the rest of us in as well.

As priests it also is our purpose, our duty, to try to get as many other sorry butts into heaven, hoping for the same result. In fact, it is easier for a priest to get his sorry butt into heaven if he has pushed a few others in ahead of himself - hoping to hold on to those others as they get dragged in thus being dragged in himself. Just don't hold on to

their butts - try an arm.

Loose sight of this and Father has a problem.

Oh, those who object to use of the word butt or butts may replace the word with derrieres or derriere as appropriate.

It is much better for both the priest and those entrusted to his care, if those entrusted to his care enter into eternal salvation united with Christ as a result of the priest's work, with the a fullness of stomach and proper treatment by others being of secondary importance, than it is for them to enter into eternity with a full stomach and receiving the accolades of their companions, to spend eternity in hell standing on the head of their priest.

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(Continued HAVE I TOLD YOU from page 1)

Do you sometimes have that feeling during the middle of the day, or near bedtime, or occasionally just randomly during the day?

If this rarely or never happens to you, then seek a better relationship with God, especially with Jesus Christ; for it is simpler for imperfect humans to relate to a fellow human being even though He also is a Divine Being - simpler than relating to the purely Divine Being in the Person of either the Father or of the Holy Ghost. It is rather difficult to envision or imagine receiving a hug from an entity we are only able to classify as a spirit, and then we are inaccurate because Angels are spirits but God is not like Angels. God is the Divinity - an unclassifiable entity, not so much spirit as not being restrained as that which is corporeal is restrained, nor restrained as that which is spirit is restrained.

Which brings us to the, if you want to know God remove everything you have ever seen, then everything you can imagine, then remove the great be empty which results, and look in the nothingness which remains and remove that also, at which time you are at the beginning of that particular journey. But we really do not wish to go there at this time for we are having a sufficiently difficult time trying to hug God in response to His loving hugging of us. That is why it is easier to imaging and envision hugging Jesus. Yes, He is God, but He also is one of us as well.

If a person were able to keep and maintain love of and for God, not necessarily foremost in their mind and awareness, but simply resident in their awareness, that person would be virtually incapable of sinning. The effect upon you would be similar to the effect upon you of having your child who is in first grade with you. Even a minimal level of love will prevent one from harming their first grader. It would require a person be totally bereft of love for their child for them to punch the child or even to eat an ice cream in front of the child and not offer the child some. So too is it impossible for a person to sin when they maintain love for God resident within

themselves.

When we do sin, even those sins which we consider spontaneous - such as the "little white lie" - there is of necessity at the very least a suspension of love for God. If commission of the sin evokes in the sinner a deep regret and some level of self loathing which are founded in love for God, then hope is viable. But if the sinner does not experience some level of regret and self loathing then the sinner simply does not love God.

Strange as it may seem it is possible to establish at least a minimal foundation of love for God through simply making yourself aware of God when you awake in the morning and immediately before you go to sleep at night. It will be of assistance to you in this endeavor if you have a crucifix in your bedroom and kiss the feet of the image of Our Lord, saying out loud, "Good morning Lord," or, "Good night Lord, I love you," as appropriate. It may seem strange to wish God to have a good morning, but for God the goodness of a day as regards you yourself is dependent on the level of harmony you have with God in that day. If this is your consistent practice in the morning it will attune you to seek harmony with God. And who can kiss the feet of the image of The Crucified at night, and tell Him "Good night Lord, I love you," and not experience regret for your moral failures during the day, and not resolve to do better, to seek holiness, to seek to be able to regularly experience telling God, "Have I told you lately that I love you."



++ *Lee, S.S.B.*

God, please help me love You

(Continued LOVE from page 1)
called Agape Love or Charity.

The Virgin Mary loved and loves God. Her love for God was always strong. She made the decision and the choice to love God and to live in that love. She never sinned because her love for God never diminished.

We know what sin is because Saint Basil the Great has defined it for us in an extremely clear manner. Sin, according to Saint Basil, is the misuse of powers given us by God for doing good, a use contrary to God's commandments.

For a person who does not love God, or loves a false god, sin is a natural state. For a person who loves God sin may be a sometimes state.

The measure of love a person has for God may change in accordance with the person's conscious and subconscious or "back of the mind" awareness of God, awareness of their love for God, and simple general and specific circumstances. For a person who loves God to sin the measure of love the sinner has for God must be sufficiently low so that the sinner loves the sin, or what ever is anticipated in the sin or as a result of the sin, more than the sinner loves God.

When a person who loves God and is aware of their love for God is faced with temptation if their love for God is of sufficient measure the person is able to overcome the temptation. Very often the temptation is "shrugged off" with little apparent effort simply because the temptation can not compete with the love the person has for God.

When a person's measure of love for God is not overabundant the person may struggle with the temptation. If the person consciously contemplates their love for God in the midst of a temptation their ability to overcome the temptation will be enhanced. But it may be an ongoing battle which is part of a life long war.

(Continued LOVE on page 6)

(Continued LOVE from page 5)

Very often in such circumstances the sinner must diminish what ever love the sinner has for God if the person is to sin. When this happens and the person sins the sinner usually experiences self loathing based in their having diminished their love for God, or even abandoned their love for God, for something - a sin - which they actually did not and do not desire or want. The sinner's knowledge and realization they want to love God, and that they have diminished or abandoned their love for God disgusts the sinner. This disgust and self loathing for having diminished or abandoned their love for God is a good situation and a path to holiness if it is joined with a resolution to never again abandon or diminish their love for God. It may be that from time to time the person fails in this resolution, but with the resolution as part of an active, shall we say, love life for God, the person will be assisted by God in winning the war for eternal life.

There are, of course, sins which we have gotten into the habit of committing, or which are based in some form of habit. Such sins may **generally** be broken down into three segments: first is the trigger, second is the response which is a sin, third is an anticipation of gratification of some sort. The gratification may no longer exist or may have become of very short duration or diminished greatly in effect or even have been replaced with disgust or loathing but the gratification existed at some time in the past and was the reinforcement for the sin response to the trigger.

To overcome this type of sin one should work on replacing the response to the trigger with something which is acceptable to God and anticipate gratification of a type acceptable to God. This may require some thought and planning but with love for God as both inspiration and goal success is attainable.

The Virgin Mary was never faced with any of these quandaries to the extent many of us experience, not necessarily because of any special privilege granted to her by God, but because through conscious and intentional exercise of her human will she

made love for God the major aspect of her very essence.

Of course she was assisted in attaining this by her parents, Saints Joachim, whose name means Yahweh prepares, and Anne, whose name means Grace, and her apparently having virtually lived in the temple at Jerusalem until shortly before her marriage to Saint Joseph.

But that great love for God which the Virgin Mary had and has is not beyond the reach of anyone, even us old sinners. Therefore a sinless and holy remainder of life is also within our reach.

Ref: Is. 8:10-15; Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

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(Continued CONSTITUTION from page 1)

Not only is there no prohibition against the Church - a religion - effecting the government, the Church actually has the right to effect the government. That right is also guaranteed in the First Amendment, for people belong to the Church and the Constitution guarantees ***the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.***

The Church - religions - through their members - people - are also guaranteed the right to make their positions known because the government is able to do nothing which will result in ***abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.***

When Prohibition was the law of the land there was an attempt to make real wine unavailable to those religions which use real wine as part of their liturgical religious worship. That attempt failed because of the religion provisions of the First Amendment.

The ability of the government to effect religion is so restrained that even an attempt to effect a religion must be based in an explicitly stated constitutionally guaranteed right and an explicitly stated obligation of the government to protect such right, plus the right and the obligation must be of the ultimate magnitude.

There is but one such right and obligation which comes to mind and it is best stated in an example. The government is able to and must stop people from sacrificing virgins to the volcano god. The virgin's right to life is guaranteed by the Constitution. The government has the obligation within its geographic borders to protect this right which belongs to citizens and non-citizens alike. The people can sacrifice something which they own which is not human, and are guaranteed this right, and no one, no agency, no organization, not even the Environmental Protection Agency, PITA, SPCA, the Broccoli Protective League, or The Society for Preservation of the Last of a Species

(Continued CONSTITUTION on page 7)

(Continued CONSTITUTION from page 6)
 which will be Extinct When This Last One Dies, has the right or ability to prevent such a sacrifice. So strong is the Constitutional provision.

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*The Affordable Care Act*, otherwise known as *ObamaCare*,

since it requires religions, churches, and individuals, as well as those agencies through which they function or operate, and from which they obtain services and products, engage in or provide or fund or otherwise support abortion, artificial birth control, sterilization, and other activities,

even though the religions and entities are dogmatically opposed to such,

unconstitutionally establishes dogma, unconstitutionally imposes dogma, and unconstitutionally prohibits practice of religion, when applied to those religions and entities which and persons who on religious grounds oppose abortion, oppose use of artificial contraceptives, oppose sterilization, or oppose other provisions of that law. The provisions are unconstitutional because the provisions require religions, churches, their associated or affiliated entities, and individuals, engage in or support activities to which they have been dogmatically opposed, in some instances for thousands of years.

(Note: the above text separated from the rest of the text by the ~~~~ above and below, is intentionally offset and segmented as though containing four paragraphs, for the sake of clarity; since it is a "run-on" sentence. - Ed.)

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Quite simply, instead of prohibiting the sacrifice of virgins to the volcano god, *The Affordable Care Act*, otherwise known as *ObamaCare*, requires reli-

gions sacrifice virgins. And that is unconstitutional.

CHANGE OF FOCUS AND PERSPECTIVE

Obama, Harry Reid, Nancy Pelosi, and the other pagan members of Congress, the Executive Branch, and the Supreme Court, who masquerade as Christians, or as following some form of religion, apparently have forgotten or never knew or realized the great familiarity the Church and its members have with Satanic evil such as they are attempting to impose on the Church and its members through *The Affordable Care Act (ObamaCare)*.

When ordered by the Roman Empire - government - to sacrifice to Caesar and to the pagan Roman gods, Christians simply refused. For failure to sacrifice to these false gods Christians were stripped of their belongings and wealth and often tortured and killed in the most hideous of manners.

Do the current day legions of devotees to self imposed eternal damnation think or believe true Christians of today are any less fervent in belief, devoted to God, or love God any less than their ancestors in Faith? One who experiences hunger and starvation unto death, or who dies in prison, or suffers in any manner because of their Christian Faith based opposition to and refusal to participate in or cooperate with *The Affordable Care Act (ObamaCare)* will receive eternal reward. If they die as a result of their opposition there awaits them the Martyr's Crown. That sure beats the Hell out of what awaits those who wish to impose the abomination of ObamaCare. What awaits these others? Turn to page 27 of this issue and review what happened to Herod, how he died being eaten alive by worms, shortly after his participation in the Crucifixion of Christ and his acceptance of being proclaimed a god.

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**OBAMACARE
 APPEASEMENT AND
 COMPROMISE ARE PATHS
 CHOSEN BY PEOPLE OF
 FEEBLE SOULS AND
 MINDS WHO ARE
 MORALLY INCAPABLE OF
 CONFRONTING EVIL ***

(This is a reprint of an article which appeared in the March, 2012, issue of REUNION, Vol. 22, No. 2. It is being reprinted because the majority of that issue of REUNION was devoted to another matter and this article may therefore have been overlooked by some readers. This article also is a companion to the main article on page one of this issue of REUNION. - Ed.)

When the Supreme Court of the United States of America overstepped its Constitutional authority and made contraceptives and then abortion legal in the United States the immorality and illegality went unchallenged partially because the leaders of many of the largest and most influential Churches and religions were working with the President and the Executive Branch, as well as with Congress - both the House and the Senate - on a combination of several other matters.

One of those other matters was of great moral and legal importance: the recognition, upholding, and enforcement of civil rights and the right of every individual to full civil rights with no diminishment.

Concurrently, there was extensive exploration of and movement by Church and religious leaders towards involving the federal government in charitable and education arenas which had up to that time been mainly the provinces of Churches and religions.

The Church and religious leaders were very shortsighted because all they allowed themselves to perceive were the vast amounts of public money into which they wished to tap, into which

(Continued RIGHTS on page 8)

(Continued RIGHTS from page 7)

they wished to dip. They thought of all the good they could do if they could tap into that money. Perhaps they even thought there might even be enough so that they would not have to use as much of the assets of their own Church or religion to accomplish their goals. These leaders gave little or no thought to the realities: they were encouraging the government to engage in activities which were outside governmental purview; they were encouraging that tax money which had been collected for one purpose be spent on something other than that for which it had been collected, thus harming those other programs as well as actually stealing from both those who had paid the taxes as well as those who should have received the benefits from use of those taxes; they were opening their and all Churches and religions to government manipulation; and that they were destroying their influence and prestige with government and government officials because they were joining with those officials at the public trough where they could feed like pigs, and become pigs - and became pigs.

The government officials were very much aware of what they were doing, and of the influence they would eventually wield not only with Church and religious leaders and members, but also with those vast populations which received any beneficial effect of the newly expanded use of public tax money.

These and, of course, other factors retarded any effective efforts by Church and religious leaders against the unconstitutional acts of the Supreme Court in its legislating approval of the use of contraceptives and approval of the killing of yet-to-be-born babies - who are babies and humans non-the less.

The recent laws enacted by Congress - both the House and the Senate - sponsored by and signed into law by President Barack Hussein Obama, mandating what these evil politicians term "health insurance", include mandatory inclusion of providing contraceptives, sterilizations, abortifacients, and abor-

tions as benefits. Generally, all employers must provide such health insurance coverage and all employees must participate in such health insurance programs or face very severe financial penalties.

But the use of contraceptives is contrary to the dogma an theological professions of many Churches and religions, as is having or performing sterilization procedures. Use of abortifacients, having an abortion, performing an abortion, and performing abortions also is contrary to the dogma and theological professions of many Churches and religions.

Religious freedom does not encompass just the form of worship, as it were, inside the church building or the place wherein formal worship services are conducted. For religious freedom to have any meaning it must include the ability to practice, to live, the dogmatic and theological beliefs of one's religion. It must include the ability by the agencies and entities owned, controlled, or through which a Church or religion engages in the practice and living of its dogma and theology, to actually follow those dogmatic and theological beliefs. And it must include the same abilities for the Church or religion itself.

Thus a Church or religiously owned, operated, or affiliated school, hospital, food bank or meals service, shelter, or any other type of organization, operation, or function, not only is an avenue through and by which a Church or religion practices its faith, theology, and dogma, but actually is the practice and manifestation of an essence of that Church or religion. Restriction of this ability in any manner is in actuality restriction of the formal type of religious

services customarily found within a church worship building.

The Obama health care program, formally named the Affordable Care Act, in requiring Churches, religions, the entities through which they engage in the practice and living of their dogmatic

and theological beliefs and practices, which are dogmatically and theologically opposed to the use of contraceptives, abortifacients, sterilization, and abortion, to provide them or any of them, is arrogating and violating Constitutionally guaranteed freedom of religion for those Churches, religions, and their members.

A change in the requirement that contraceptives, abortifacients, sterilization, and abortion, be provided by the Churches, religions, or organizations which they operate or through which they function, so that the insurance carriers or companies involved pay for these services does not alter the fact that these services are being provided by the religious entities, or that religious freedom is being shredded and destroyed by the requirement. For not only is the money for the premiums for this being paid by the Church, religion, its members, or their affiliated entities, but each insurance program is a functioning of that Church, religion, its members, or their affiliated entities and therefore sin is being made a function of those opposed to sin.

Religious freedom is a full flow right from and to a Church, religion, its members, the organizations they operate, all the way to those who deal with any of them in any manner. Any impediment or forcing to do or not do regard-

(Continued RIGHTS on page 9)

The ability of the federal or any other government to legally interfere with the right to religious freedom is severely restricted. It must be a matter of great severity, such as a religious practice of sacrificing virgins, before a government has the right to interfere with freedom of religion.

What Obama and the House and Senate members who instituted this program have done is demand Churches and religions actually sacrifice virgins . . .

(Continued RIGHTS from page 8)

ing anything at all is a violating of religious freedom when it violates moral law or dogma.

Obama and the House and Senate members who imposed this law are dictating dogma and theology to the Churches and religions through the Obama health care program, through the Affordable Care Act.

ObamaCare in any form it totally immoral and unacceptable, because it requires that the Church either directly or through its affiliates provide the means for another to act against the moral law, thereby making the Church and its members morally culpable as well as those who obtain or provide the acts which are against the moral law - which comes from God.

The ability of the federal or any other government to legally interfere with the right to religious freedom is severely restricted. It must be a matter of great severity, such as a religious practice of sacrificing virgins, before a government has the right to interfere with freedom of religion.

What Obama and the House and Senate members who instituted this program have done is demand Churches and religions actually sacrifice virgins - unborn baby girls and boys are virgins, are they not? - through abortion. Whose altar are these children being sacrificed upon? The altar of Satan, Beelzebub (who is the Lord of the Flies - flies gather around dead bodies, and dead souls), which is also the altar of their minions Barack Hussein Obama and all those in the House and Senate who voted for this abominably evil legislation.

The next destruction of religious freedom may well be requiring Churches and religions recognize same sex relationships as being marriages. If anyone disagrees with this probability that person should ask themselves if they believed the federal government would ever require them or their Church or religion to sacrifice virgins!

Or will the next destruction of religious freedom be that hospitals operated by Churches or religions must provide contraceptives, sterilizations, abortifacients, and abortions even when such are contrary to their dogma or theology?

It is not just Churches and religions which are being forced to violate their God directed and required dogma, but every individual . . . for everyone is required to participate in this great evil by this Obama legislation, by Obama who is in effect saying, "You and your religious freedom and religious rights and right to worship the true God be damned."

There can be no compromise in opposition to Obama health care, for APPEASEMENT AND COMPROMISE ARE PATHS CHOSEN BY PEOPLE OF FEEBLE SOULS AND MINDS WHO ARE MORALLY INCAPABLE OF CONFRONTING EVIL *

Any accommodation of evil or compromise with evil enhances the probability of eternal damnation. Only in foursquarely opposing evil is one able to be sure one is foursquarely standing with God.

And Obama is not God!

* Paraphrase from Kill Shot, by Vince Flynn, ATRIA Books, Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2012, page 97

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HOW CAN WE LEARN ABOUT MOSLEMS?

(Edited reprint of an article which was first published in the December, 2001, issue of REUNION, Vol. 11, No. 10)

To learn about a people, learn about their religion. To know a religion one must examine its writings, its dogma. So, briefly, of course: What does Islam teach, what does the Koran teach?

There is a strong public relations blitz being made in an attempt to make Islam seem a peaceful, delightful, religion, friendly to Christians; a religion which teaches peaceful co-existence. There may be many who profess the Islamic faith who believe in peaceful co-existence with Christians, but, again, to know a religion one must examine its writings, its dogma. The Koran does teach to give alms (to Moslems), and to not kill female (Moslem) children, and to not beat women unless they give a man cause to beat them . . . According to the Koran, Islam, the Moslem religion, is not a peaceful religion which teaches peaceful co-existence. It is a religion which teaches hate, enslavement, and killing those who do not believe and follow the Koran. That is why these few quotes from the Koran are being presented. Of course, this telling the truth about Islam will cause us to be branded as Arab haters, Moslem haters, et ceterae, and stooges of the Jews, and to be attacked (again). We are not haters of anyone or any group. We support Arab rights - remember, many Arabs are Christians whose ancestors were enslaved by the Moslems or forced to pay tribute and taxes where Moslems did not have to pay tribute or taxes (Palestinian non Moslems even had to pay taxes for each tree on their property, while Moslems, of course, did not). Stooges of the Jews?? We are Christians, and stooges of no-one. We are just presenting the truth.

ISLAM - THE KORAN

The major dogmatic work of the

(Continued ISLAM on page 12)

CHILDREN'S PAGE

The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism

Q. 1341. What should one do who doubts whether or not he is obliged to fast?

A. In doubt concerning fast, a parish priest or confessor should be consulted.

Q. 1342. When do fast days chiefly occur in the year?

A. Fast days chiefly occur in the year during Great Lent and Advent, on the Ember days and on the vigils or eves and preceding days of some great feasts. A vigil falling on a Sunday is not observed.

Q. 1343. What do you mean by Great Lent, Advent, Ember days and the vigils of great feasts?

A. Great Lent is the seven weeks of penance preceding Pascha - Easter. Advent is the four weeks of preparation preceding Christmas. Ember days are three days set apart in each of the four seasons of the year as special days of prayer and thanksgiving. Vigils are the days immediately preceding great feasts and spent in spiritual preparation for them.

Q. 1344. What do you mean by days of abstinence?

A. By days of abstinence I mean days on which no meat at all may be taken (complete abstinence) or on which meat may be taken only once a day (partial abstinence). This is explained in the regulations for Great Lent. All the Fridays of the year are days of abstinence except when a Holyday of obligation or Great Feast falls on a Friday outside of Lent. All Wednesdays are optional days of abstinence.

Q. 1345. Are children and persons unable to fast bound to abstain on days of abstinence?

A. Children, from the age of seven years, and persons who are unable to fast are bound to abstain on days of abstinence, unless they are excused for

sufficient reason.

Q. 1346. Why does the Church command us to fast and abstain?

A. The Church commands us to fast and abstain, in order that we may mortify our passions and satisfy for our sins.

Q. 1347. What is meant by our passions and what by mortifying them?

A. By our passions are meant our sinful desires and inclinations. Mortifying them means restraining them and overcoming them so that they have less power to lead us into sin.

Q. 1348. Why does the Church command us to abstain from flesh-meat on Fridays?

A. The Church commands us to abstain from flesh-meat on Fridays in honor of the day on which our Saviour died.

LESSON THIRTY-SIXTH: On the Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Commandments of the Church

Q. 1349. What is meant by the command of confessing at least once a year?

A. By the command of confessing at least once a year is meant that we are obliged, under pain of mortal sin, to go to confession within the year.

Q. 1350. Should we confess only once a year?

A. We should confess frequently, if we wish to lead a good life.

Q. 1351. Should we go to confession at our usual time even if we think we have not committed sin since our last confession?

A. We should go to confession at our usual time even if we think we have not committed sin since our last confession, because the Sacrament of Penance has for its object not only to forgive sins, but also to bestow grace and strengthen the soul against temptation.

Q. 1352. Should children go to confes-

sion?

A. Children should go to confession when they are old enough to commit sin, which is commonly about the age of seven years.

Q. 1353. What sin does he commit who neglects to receive Communion during the Pascha (Easter) time?

A. He who neglects to receive Communion during the Pascha (Easter) time commits a mortal sin.

Q. 1354. What is the Pascha (Easter) Time?

A. The Pascha (Easter) Time is, in this country, the United States of America, the time between the first Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday.

Q. 1355. When is Trinity Sunday?

A. Trinity Sunday is the Sunday after Pentecost, or eight weeks after Pascha - Easter Sunday; so that there are fourteen weeks in which one may comply with the command of the Church to receive Holy Communion between the first Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday.

Q. 1356. Are we obliged to contribute to the support of our pastors?

A. We are obliged to contribute to the support of our pastors, and to bear our share in the expense of the Church and school.

Q. 1357. Where did the duty of contributing to the support of the Church and clergy originate?

A. The duty of contributing to the support of the Church and clergy originated in the Old Law, when God commanded all the people to contribute to the support of the temple and of its priests.

Q. 1358. What does the obligation of supporting the Church and school imply?

A. The obligation of supporting the Church and school implies the duty of making use of the Church and school by

(Continued CHILDREN PAGE on page 11)

CHILDREN'S PAGE

(Continued CHILDREN PAGE from page 10)

attending religious worship in the one and by giving Orthodox Catholic education in the other; because if the Church and school were not necessary for our spiritual welfare we would not be commanded to support them.

Q. 1359. Does the fifth commandment of the Church include the support only of our pastors and the Church and school?

A. The fifth commandment of the Church includes the support also of our Patriarch or Primate, bishops, priests, missions, religious institutions and religion in general.

Q. 1360. What is the meaning of the commandment not to marry within the third degree of kindred?

A. The meaning of the commandment not to marry within the third degree of kindred is that no one is allowed to marry another within the third degree of blood relationship.

Q. 1361. Who are in the third degree of blood relationship?

A. Second cousins are in the third degree of blood relationship, and persons whose relationship is nearer than second cousins are in closer degrees of kindred. It is unlawful for persons thus related to marry without a dispensation or special permission of the Church.

Q. 1362. Are there other relationships besides blood relationship that render marriage unlawful without a dispensation?

A. There are other relationships besides blood relationship that render marriage unlawful without a dispensation, namely, the relationships contracted by marriage, which are called degrees of affinity, and the relationship contracted by being sponsors at Baptism, which is called spiritual affinity.

Q. 1363. What should persons about to marry do, if they suspect they are related to each other?

A. Persons about to marry, if they suspect they are related to each other, should make known the facts to the priest, that he may examine the degree of relationship and procure a dispensation if necessary.

Q. 1364. What is the meaning of the command not to marry privately?

A. The command not to marry privately means that none should marry without the blessing of God's priests or without witnesses.

Q. 1365. What sin is it for Orthjodox Catholics to be married before the minister of another religion?

A. It is a mortal sin for Orthodox Catholics to be married before the minister of another religion, and they who attempt to do so incur excommunication, and absolution from their sin is reserved to the bishop or the priests to whom he delegates this faculty.

Q. 1366. What is the meaning of the precept not to solemnize marriage at forbidden times?

A. The meaning of the precept not to solemnize marriage at forbidden times is that during Lent and Advent the marriage ceremony should not be performed with pomp or a nuptial Divine Liturgy (Mass).

Q. 1367. What is the nuptial Divine Liturgy (Mass)?

A. The nuptial Divine Liturgy (Mass) is a Divine Liturgy (Mass) appointed by the Church to invoke a special blessing upon the married couple.

Q. 1368. Should Orthodox Catholics be married at a nuptial Divine Liturgy (Mass)?

A. Orthodox Catholics should be married at a nuptial Divine Liturgy (Mass), because they thereby show greater reverence for the holy Sacrament and bring richer blessings upon their wedded life through the special prayers of that special Divine Liturgy.

Q. 1369. What restrictions does the Church place on the ceremonies of marriage when one of the persons is not an Orthodox Catholic or is not recognized by the Orthodox Church as a member of The Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church?

A. The Church places several restrictions on the ceremonies of marriage when one of the persons is not an Orthodox Catholic or is not recognized by the Orthodox Church as a member of The Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. The marriage cannot take place in the church; the priest cannot wear his sacred vestments nor use holy water nor bless the ring nor the marriage itself. The Church places these restrictions to show her dislike for such marriages, commonly called mixed marriages.

Q. 1370. Why does the Church dislike mixed marriages?

A. The Church dislikes mixed marriages because such marriages are frequently unhappy, give rise to many disputes, endanger the faith of the Orthodox Catholic member of the family, and prevent the religious education of the children.

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(Continued ISLAM from page 9)

Moslem religion is the Koran. As Jesus Christ is believed to be true and complete God and true man by Christians, so is the Koran believed by Moslems to be the spoken word of God. Moslems believe the Koran was handed to them complete, without revisions, and that it means exactly what it says.

KORAN'S INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING NON-MOSLEMS - KILL NON-MOSLEMS:

Koran XLVII (47) [47.4]

"When ye encounter the infidels, strike off their heads till ye have made a great slaughter among them, and of the rest make fast the fetters."

The modern English translations interpret this to say, "When you meet unbelievers in battle . . .," but that is not what the Koran states. It straightforwardly states, "When ye encounter the infidels, strike off their heads" - it says to kill unbelievers when you meet them, and turn any survivors into slaves. But even if it DID say kill unbelievers in battle, it still says enslave those who survive. This is just one of the many examples of where the Koran requires killing non-Moslems.

KORAN'S SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING CHRISTIANS - KILL CHRISTIANS UNLESS THEY CONVERT TO ISLAM:

Koran SURA IX (9.5)

"And when the sacred months are passed, kill those who join other gods with God wherever ye shall find them; and seize them, besiege them, and lay wait for them with every kind of ambush: but if they shall convert, and observe prayer, and pay the obligatory alms, then let them go their way, for God is Gracious, Merciful."

Mohammed calls Christians, "those who join other gods with God". He calls them this, because Christians believe in

The Blessed Trinity. Here, Mohammed clearly says, kill Christians, unless they convert and become Moslems.

KORAN'S INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING KILLING, IN GENERAL

SURA LXXVII.

"Woe on that day to those who charged with imposture! Have we not destroyed them of old?"

We will next cause those of later times to follow them. Thus deal we with the evil doers."

I.E.: unlike Biblically, where those who die estranged from God are condemned to hell, the Koran makes those who disagree with the Koran to be evil and just as the enemies of Israel were killed so too are the enemies of the faith of Mohammed to be killed.

KORAN'S TEACHINGS REGARDING HEAVEN AND THE ROLE WOMEN PLAY IN HEAVEN - THEY ARE SEX OBJECTS

SURA LXXVIII. (78.31)

"But, for the God-fearing is a blissful abode, Enclosed gardens and vineyards; And damsels with swelling breasts, their peers in age,"

Note: "Interpretative" translations into English change the words to make the concepts appear acceptable to Americans and Westerners in general. Thus, the above passage is "interpretatively" translated as: "Surely for those who guard (against evil) is achievement, Gardens and vineyards, And those showing freshness of youth, equals in age,"

Why do the interpretative translations mislead the reader, the student, Americans, Westerners, as to what Mohammed actually wrote? Because Americans and Westerners in general will not tolerate women being demeaned to being less than human, to be-

ing just sex objects - and the only use the Koran has for women is as objects for the pleasure of men and to bear children.

Moslem dogma therefore states that only young women, who have swelling breasts, have any use in heaven. Which brings forth the question, "What about women who go to heaven?"

Obviously, those women who are young, and who have swelling breasts (and we may add, dark eyes) will be the pleasure objects of those men who go to heaven. They will also be self-perpetuating virgins - have sex with them and wala, they are a virgin again. And if any other women go to heaven, then they will be given young women with swelling breasts for their pleasure as well. So it makes sense that young women who go to heaven will be sex slaves, and other women who may get to heaven will be or become lesbians so they can partake of the delights of the, "damsels with swelling breasts."

This obviously is a religion whose rewards are based on earthly pleasures, NOT on unification with God.

SURA LXXXVIII.

"Therein shall be a gushing fountain, Therein shall be raised couches, And goblets ready placed, And cushions laid in order, And carpets spread forth."

Wonder who is going to put all those things in place and keep the goblets filled? Probably the damsels with swelling breasts.

SURA LXXXIX.

"And ye love riches with exceeding love.

Aye. But when the earth shall be crushed with crushing, crushing, And thy Lord shall come and the angels rank on rank, And Hell on that day shall be moved up, Man shall on that day remember himself. But how shall remembrance help him?"

(Continued ISLAM on page 13)

(Continued ISLAM from page 12)

He shall say, Oh! would that I had prepared for this my life! On that day none shall punish as God punisheth,"

So, those who desire these things in this life will be damned to hell, but those who follow the Koran will receive these things as their reward in heaven????? That is illogical, for one is being punished for desiring the benefits of heaven.

THE KORAN ON LYING, ON TRUTHFULNESS

Koran SURA XIV

"but God misleadeth whom He will, and whom He will he guideth: and He is the Mighty, the Wise."

and

Koran SURA XXXIX

"This is God's guidance: by it will He guide whom He pleaseth; and, whom God shall mislead, no guide shall there be for him."

At least four times Mohammed makes similar statements in the Koran.

We can therefore reasonably believe that the god of Mohammed intentionally misleads people and then condemns them to hell for all eternity for not believing properly. He intentionally misleads people, then requires those mislead live according to truth anyway, and when they do not, he condemns them to hell where their stomachs are filled with boiling water and they suffer eternal, terrible pains. That is not a just god; that is not god. Justice requires that were god to mislead someone, the one mislead is not responsible for acting in accordance with the false information given him by god regarding that in which a man is supposed to believe. Therefore, the god of Mohammed is just as corrupt and evil as its creator - Mohammed.

This also means, Moslems are allowed to lie, possibly to each other, and defi-

nately to non-Moslems, since if the Moslem god can lie to people and that is just, then so too can Moslems lie to non-Moslems. Very simply, this means Moslems can not be trusted, for their holy book allows lying.

KORAN ATTACK AGAINST CHRISTIANS - AGAINST THE DIVINE NATURE OF JESUS CHRIST

Koran SURA XXXIX

"Had God desired to have had a son, he had surely chosen what he pleased out of his own creation. But praise be to Him! He is God, the One, the Almighty."

This is an overt attack against Christianity, against the belief that Jesus Christ is God, the Son of God, and against Faith in The Blessed Trinity. It also shows a total attack on Faith in the need for redemption of mankind. Many historians believe that in all probability, this attack, as well as the entire concept of Islam (Mohammedism), was fostered by Mohammed Jewish father-in-law as an attempt to destroy Christianity. Instead, it formed the foundation for continuing attacks on Judaism.

KORAN STATES WOMEN ARE INFERIOR TO MEN, AND HUSBANDS SHOULD WHIP DISOBE-DIENT WIVES

SURA IV.

"Men are superior to women on account of the qualities with which God hath gifted the one above the other, and on account of the outlay they make from their substance for them. Virtuous women are obedient, careful, during the husband's absence, because God hath of them been careful. But chide those for whose refractoriness ye have cause to fear; remove them into beds apart, and scourge them: but if they are obedient to you, then seek not occasion against them: verily, God is High, Great!"

Is any comment needed??

CLOSING COMMENTS

Mohamed's god is a mean, nasty, devious, deceptive, unjust, concept, someone who is just like Mohammed; as is the religion he founded. Those who attempt to make Islam more decent are not following the Koran, and thus are heretics to Islam, for the followers of Mohammed are supposed to believe the Koran is the written word of god, and therefore is supposed to have come directly from god without change, and no man can change god's word.

The instructions to give alms to the poor, and to not kill female children, do nothing to correct the innate injustice and meanness of this religion as stated in the Koran. The good instructions do nothing to change women from having the role of being sex objects, exclusively; their only purpose being to serve as pleasure objects for men.

As written, Islam is a nasty religion which fosters hate and has fostered hate from its inception.

But most modern day Moslems do not appear to follow the "hate" aspects of the Koran!?!.

Empirically, most Western (American), modern day Moslems, seem to continue aspects of the inferiority of woman concept, which seems to have been modified into a form of "men are better suited to run governments, etc." belief. But the "kill Non-Moslems" aspects of Islam seem to have been abraded by normal human contact, even in non Western countries.

Thus we have Moslems in places such as Syria, joining with Roman Catholics, and Orthodox Christians, in praying the Rosary and the Rule of the Mother of God. (What is more surprising for may Orthodox Christian residing in the U.S.A. is the common practice of Orthodox Christians joining with Roman Catholics in praying the Rosary.)

(Continued ISLAM on page 14)

(Continued ISLAM from page 13)

It is as though the Islamic faith has undergone a certain amount of practical revision of necessity, for if the Koran were followed in the fullness of exactitude, after certain religious months, Moslems everywhere would be obligated to start killing and enslaving non-Moslems, especially Christians - but they do not.

If Moslems felt that, in general, it is permissible to lie to non-Moslems, and then practiced that belief, there would be no possibility of business transactions or personal relations between Moslems and non-Moslems. But there are such business and personal relationships.

Why is this the reality?

Every human is made in God's Image and Likeness. Thus, every human, by human nature, interprets everything in a comparison with the Goodness with which God has endowed each person. That which is contrary to this Spark of the Holy Spirit innate in every human, is rejected and dismissed by every human, as not being viable, unless the individual has suppressed the endowed Goodness or has had it suppressed through malfunction of or injury to the mental processes.

But Note: A female, senior U.S. official was recently interviewed by the Arab cable TV company. When they greeted each other and shook hands, the cable TV interviewer used his left hand - which is an intentional insult. The left hand is used for removing freshly expelled feces from one's body.

Therefore, a caveat: perhaps many or most Moslems who do not openly and overtly attempt to kill us are simply biding their time; and a few of the others who do not try to kill us are "fallen away Moslems" or simply lazy. But their holy book is clear, they are supposed to kill (us) Christians.

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THE SACRIFICE WAS ACCEPTED BECAUSE OF THE CHARITY (Divine Love) WHICH INSPIRED IT

Of equal importance that we comprehend the reality that we must accept, work with, and think and act in accordance with the redemption and salvation made available to us by the teachings, passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ is that Jesus makes redemption and salvation available to us because His sacrifice is pleasing to God, *but that God accepts the sacrifice only by virtue of the Charity which inspires it.* (Ask yourself, the Charity which inspires it, is it the Charity of His Son, of Himself, of the Blessed Trinity . . . ?)

Jesus loves the Father so much that He became our sacrifice. He also loves us so much that He became our sacrifice. He also loves the Holy Ghost so much He became our sacrifice.

Sin is a simmering and boiling caldron of corrosive, disuniting, decompositive, destruction effecting everything not armored with God. It corrodes and destroys our bonds, union with, and access to God, setting each creature against each and all other creatures, entities, and God; person against person; angel against angel, angels, man, mankind, rocks, trees, solids, liquids, gases, energies, and God; human against human, mankind, rocks, trees, solids, liquids, gases, energies, angel, angels, and God; and even the rocks and trees one against the other and all else.

It was not so before sin.

Jesus recapitulates humankind within Himself redeeming and saving humanity, each individual thereby having the

opportunity to ratify the redemption and salvation by his and her personal acceptance; the main vehicle of this acceptance being thinking and acting - living - in accordance with the Virtue of Faith - with Christ's teachings.

Sin is resilient and through its practitioners sin attempts to corrode the teachings of and the very reality of Christ. It so does in a multitude of avenues including but not limited to attacks of the historical reality of Christ,

the accuracy of the New Testament, and the accuracy of the Old Testament. These attacks are constant, but especially are focused and increase during the weeks preceding and surrounding Christmas and especially Pascha (Easter). One of their main outlets currently is programs in the documentary format on public television - programs which purport to explore the archaeological and geological accuracy of selected portions of the Bible using purported scientific means. Very often corroborating historical documents of the period in question are totally ignored and often stated to not exist. The purpose is to corrode belief in Jesus Christ God and thereby promote and continue the corrosion, disunion, decomposition, and destruction which is the staple and the fruit of sin, of evil.

It is virtually impossible for those who have even a slight measure of a sense of moral values to comprehend a totality of commitment to evil, and it is therefore difficult for most people to accept there are innumerable individuals who have made a total commitment to evil, to total evil.

It is virtually impossible for those who have even a slight measure of a sense of moral values to comprehend a totality of commitment to evil, and it is therefore difficult for most people to accept there are innumerable individuals who have made a total commitment to evil, to total evil. One of the reasons for this difficulty is the inability to assess any even potential benefit. What benefit could such a commitment offer? Those who have difficulty comprehending or accepting the reality that there are those

(Continued THE SACRIFICE on page 15)

(Continued **THE SACRIFICE** from page 14)

who make such a commitment, and that such individuals are very numerous, should contemplate the reality of Hitler, NAZIsm, Fascism, Lennin, Marks, Stalin, Communism . . . Reality occasionally does not readily lend itself to having the reasons for something's existence being comprehended. Evil often is one such thing.

The impressiveness of what our Saviour has made available for our acceptance becomes even more impressive and startling when one realizes not only are we incapable of imagining or comprehending the benefits, incapable of imagining or comprehending of what is in store for those who operate divinely - who live in accordance with Faith, but that we also are incapable of imagining or comprehending the opposing forces, opposing individuals, and opposition which our Saviour had to overcome.

The Charity which God has for us - the Divine Love, Agape Love - truly is immeasurable and beyond comprehension for it is Divine. But God has made it possible for us to approach elements of Charity, to approach a form of comprehension of Charity, to have, express, and give Charity, and actually to be Charity.

What makes more sense: to accept and attempt to be Charity, or to be sin? For so long as you are alive you have the opportunity and the ability to be Charity. Prove to all of creation and to the Creator that you are wise beyond measure by grasping that opportunity and never releasing it.

Ref: Col. 3:1-4; Mat 28:1-7

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THE CHURCH IS ONE FLOCK, AND SHOULD ACT LIKE IT

It seems as though there are a multitude of flocks which claim Jesus as their shepherd. Jesus made it very clear there is but one fold, one flock. There therefore *is* but one flock, one fold, of which Jesus is the shepherd. Jesus also made it very clear there are other sheep which He desires to bring into the fold, His fold. He said there are other sheep He wishes to bring into His flock; but He did not say there were other flocks which He shepherded or which He wished to bring into His flock - just other sheep which did not yet belong to his fold and which He desired to bring into His fold.

One of the key indicators as to whether or not a Church or a Church Jurisdiction, or a religion, is part of Jesus' flock is whether or not that Church truly has all of the sacraments instituted by Christ: especially those of the Eucharist, Absolution - Confession, and Holy Orders. To have valid sacraments a Church must have a priesthood through its bishops in an unbroken chain of ordinations in sacramental Holy Orders going back to at least one of the Apostles. Without this a Church is not part of Jesus' flock, and its sheep should seek the true fold.

But there is implicit in this reality another reality. Even though they may have different and even conflicting administrations and human administrators who are at odds with each other, and even though different Church Jurisdictions may be in opposition to each other, every Church with valid sacraments and valid sacramental Holy Orders is part of Jesus' flock.

An individual who is a member of a Church which does not have Apostolic Succession is not a member of Jesus' flock and therefore has no right to receive the Eucharist in a Church which does have Apostolic Succession. Also, even though an individual may be a member of a Church with Apostolic

Succession, that does not mean that individual has a right to receive the Eucharist. There are many activities and many beliefs which sever an individual from the Body of Christ; which in actuality make that individual no longer part of Jesus' flock. Such individuals include, but are not limited to, those who ignore dogma, ignore the commandments, advocate anything which is in opposition to dogma including especially those who would allow abortion, approve or would allow homosexual and lesbian relations and acts, would allow those in homosexual or lesbian relationships to exercise those privileges and rights associated with heterosexual marriage, would redefine marriage to include those of the same gender or sex, those who advocate the government confiscating the fruits of an individual's labor for any purpose other than that of providing that which is necessary for the citizenry and which can only be provided by the government, those who advocate confiscation of the fruits of an individual's labor for the purpose of redistribution to others, and a multitude more.

Such individuals are excommunicated, severed from the flock of Jesus Christ. A priest who knowingly and intentionally administers the sacrament of the Eucharist to such an individual knowing full well at the time that the individual is excommunicated, or knowing full well that the individual holds any such immoral position, is himself guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ, and is himself excommunicated.

But those who *are* valid members of Jesus' flock, and in a state of grace, should not and must not be prohibited from reception of the sacraments, including and especially the Eucharist, even though they may seek them in a Church Jurisdiction other than "their own".

Every priest has the right and the duty to ascertain the viability of an individual's membership in Jesus' flock - especially regarding an individual with

(Continued **FLOCK** on page 16)

(Continued **FLOCK** from page 15)

whom he is not familiar. But the priest also has the obligation to make that determination in a timely and reasonable manner.

The clergy and especially the bishops, the administrators of the various jurisdictions of the True Church, must remember, practice, and live the reality that the Church is not theirs. The Church is Christ's flock. It belongs to Him. The administrators, what ever rank of clergy they be, are merely administrators of that portion of Christ's flock which has been entrusted to them.

All clergy will answer to God for their stewardship. They will be held accountable to God for their conduct as assistants to the Shepherd. They best not allow the wolf to enter the flock, nor to cause harm to the flock. They must guard against the wolf's entry into the flock, or even approaching its periphery. If the wolf gains entry to the flock, they must attack the wolf, remove it from the flock, do their best to heal the wounded sheep, and assist the flock in re-acquisition of peaceful worship of God.

Remember, the reason each person was created is the same, to glorify God. The goal for every person, whether clergy or laity, is to be eternally united with God. To fulfill the reason, and to attain the goal, each individual must do their best to operate divinely (to think and act in accordance with Faith), to attain eternal salvation, and to assist others in so doing. That is what those who belong to Christ's fold do. If these things a person does not do, that person does not belong to Christ's fold.

Ref: 1 Peter 2:21-25; John 10:11-16

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FAITH IS LOGICAL

Failure to believe in God, in one, supreme, not created, eternal, never changing, self-existing, good, entity, which created everything else, and which has other characteristics and attributes too numerous to readily enumerate, is illogical, as is failure to have Faith in God - Faith in its simplest being acting and living in accordance with the standards established by God.

These are very sweeping statements, but they are accurate and they are true.

The least intelligent individual knows there is something unknown which is greater. This is an imperfect acknowledgment of God expressing a very imperfect knowledge of God.. It often leads to belief in multiple gods, some of which are believed to have power restricted to specific locations or situations, which again is an imperfect acknowledgment of God expressing a very imperfect knowledge of God.

Without the application of logic it is a simple matter to believe in two opposing forces - often virtually equal in power - one of good and one of evil, with gods on each side and often with one leader god on each side. The devil promotes this concept for it makes him appear to be equal to the real God in the eyes of mankind. Since each member of mankind is made in the image and likeness of the real God, it gives the devil the sense he has defeated God in some manner.

The logic processes of Aristotle and Plato lead to a more perfect assessment of the necessity of their being a God; and of some of the necessary qualities of God: being basically one, supreme, not created, eternal, never changing, self-existing, good, entity, which created everything else; which therefore resulted in a more perfect knowledge of God.

This same tool, logic, requires the acknowledgment by each individual that the individual did not create his or her self, and that the accidental or random

creation of the universe, or of even just one human with the complexities of the human body and its chemistry, is a statistical impossibility.

Granted, belief in and Faith in God as God is, in The Blessed Trinity, requires direct revelation by God. Humankind has received that revelation from God.

But for an individual of any level of intelligence to claim to not believe in God, to be an atheist, or to claim to not know whether or not there is a God, to be an agnostic, is impossible. Many people claim to be an atheist or an agnostic but they are not. They may wish there were not a God, but they know God is.

Why do these individuals claim to be an atheist or an agnostic? There probably are a multitude of reasons. A speculation as to the most common reason is: these individuals do not desire there to be a God for if there is a God these individuals know there is a corresponding responsibility for every creature to act and live in accordance with the standards established by God. These individuals may find some of those standards to be admirable, and may very strongly desire others abide by those standards in matters concerning themselves - the ones claiming to be an atheist or an agnostic - but these individuals do not desire to be bound by those standards themselves. These individuals may also fear the consequences of their own failure to comply with those standards, or some of those standards.

It can not be truthfully said that each person claiming to be an atheist or an agnostic is ignorant, stupid, or foolish, for many of them are quite intelligent, and many are quite successful. It does appear that most of those claiming to be an atheist or an agnostic are depressed - suffer from some form of mental depression (though it must be remembered this is not the only cause of depression). That is understandable for one who lives and professes that which is contrary to what they know within their

(Continued **LOGICAL** on page 17)

(Continued LOGICAL from page 16)

spirit, their soul, to be true, engages in a form of self torment which does not encourage peace of mind, heart, spirit, or soul.

Therefore, a person who acknowledges God, and acts and lives in accordance with the standards established by God, is exercising that person's intelligence. That person becomes wise when he or she explores the nature of God as God has revealed it to mankind, using their intelligence and logic to discard that which claims to be divine revelation but which is not. This process can only lead to knowledge and acknowledgment of God The Blessed Trinity. If this already is your belief, constantly strive to make your belief into Faith by acting and living in accordance with the standards established by God.

Then you will have the ability to practice Faith, Hope, and Charity. And you will learn that reliance on Divine Mercy is both realistic and viable.

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

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ONLY IF WE FOLLOW CHRIST WILL WE ASCEND Those who do not do, don't.

When Our Lord ascended into heaven He not only physically and spiritually ascended, but also gave a real, realistic, tangible example of what instantaneously occurs to the faithful at the end of their time in this world.

Those who have not been faithful to God experience something similar only in that they instantaneously are judged, condemned, and begin the perpetual experience of their just reward. But it is a reward not one of the faithful desires for it is a reward of eternal damnation.

Our Lord made it explicitly clear that if we expect to receive the desirable eternal reward we must earn it. Those who espouse the belief that acts and deeds are not required are in error. They are in error because Jesus gave the faithful numerous instructions, commands, explained the requirements of salvation in explicit detail, and gave us the Sacraments to assist us in meeting these requirements and fulfilling His instructions. And most important, He did not make any of these optional. They are all required. The only options are when we justly and rightly choose between or amongst proper courses or methods of fulfilling Christ's instructions.

Amongst the last of the instructions Jesus gave us before His ascension was that we go forth into the whole world preaching the Gospel to every creature. He made it clear that those who believe and are baptized shall be saved. But re-

member that the proof of belief is Faith, which is living in accordance with Christ's instructions, which includes utilizing the Sacraments He established.

Our Lord continues His total involvement in the salvation of each individual and of everyone and will continue until the Last Judgment after which it will no longer be necessary. But until that day, everyone who is a follower of God, be

that person in this world or in the next world, has as one of their main purposes the salvation of each individual and of all.

We must not be just hearers of the word, but doers of the word. We must not only not forget what Christ taught us, but must also do what Christ taught us. If we fail to do, to be doers, then we are mistaken in our religion, mistaken in our perception of our own religiousness, have deceived our selves in our

own heart, and our religion is in vain for it will not lead to eternal salvation. (James 1:22-27).

Each of us in our own normal life and situation has the ability to do the will of God not just in our own conduct as regards our own sinfulness and holiness. We have this ability also in the doing of the spreading of the Gospel. We need not wander from town to town, or neighborhood to neighborhood to spread the Gospel. We can do this and never leave our abode. We can do this whether we are bed bound, or able to go anywhere and do anything which it is possible to do, or live average lives. We can do this by living our own lives in accordance with The Way taught by Christ, and making it obvious we are so

(Continued DOMINICK on page 18)

There was a man named Dominick who lived bed-bound for many years with Lou Gehrig's Disease (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or ALS). Before the illness made its presence known to him, he was a successful driving force in the business world. After the diagnosis he rapidly became incapacitated. And after his incapacitation he did more to live and thereby to teach the Peace of Christ through his restricted life than he had during all of his healthy life. He did more than most healthy people do. And he did it by simply being nice.

(Continued DOMINICK from page 17)

doing without glorifying ourselves or giving ourselves accolades.

Each of us has talents or abilities which we are able to exercise. Some of these talents are wearisome to us when we exercise them. Perhaps they are wearisome because we are exercising them in a venue not inductive to focus on Godly things. We should be able to ascertain a method of utilizing some if not most or all of our talents in a manner which will serve for the glorification of God and the salvation of souls.

There was a man named Dominick who lived bed-bound for many years with Lou Gehrig's Disease (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or ALS). Before the illness made its presence known to him, he was a successful driving force in the business world. After the diagnosis he rapidly became incapacitated. And after his incapacitation he did more to live and thereby to teach the Peace of Christ through his restricted life than he had during all of his healthy life. He did more than most healthy people do. And he did it by simply being nice.

He could not preach from the street corners. He could not give money alms. He could only rarely attend Divine Liturgy, and was unable to attend Divine Liturgy for many years even on those rare occasions when it was prayed in the nursing home where he resided because of his inability to be moved - his skin was very fragile, easily broken, and almost transparent. He only received the Sacred Eucharist when it was brought to him. But his attitude was in concert with God and the will of God. Thus he taught The Way of Christ, and did more than most to present an example of the living Word of God.

Surely if a person with Lou Gehrig's Disease can spread the Gospel, so also can each of us.

Ref: James 1:22-27; John 16:23-30

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LORD JESUS, MAY WE, YOU AND I, MAKE ME WHOLLY THINE

Towards the end of the liturgy of the Stations or Way of The Cross, a prayer states: "Let not Thy bitter agony and death be fruitless in my soul, but may they make me wholly Thine."

Considering what we know Christ to have endured solely out of or in His Divine Love for each of us, and solely for our benefit, we should fervently attempt to really mean and put this prayer into practice, to make it reality. That prayer, again, is "**Let not Thy bitter agony and death be fruitless in my soul, but may they make me wholly Thine.**"

Under the Law of the Old Testament blood sacrifices were lavishly used to cleanse everything from defilement and from sin. The Israelites as a people as well as individuals were cleansed from their sins annually and more often through the blood of the sacrificial animals which generally were immolated after being slain. There were also offerings of crops and other items, but the blood sacrifices were the major ones. Circumcision itself, the outward sign of God's chosen people, was a bloodletting, and the first born was redeemed with a bloody sacrifice.

By the time of Christ the sacrificial bloodletting had disintegrated into a form of excessive debauchery so that what once had been a series of sacrifices sparsely spread out through each year, with an annual large sacrifice for the sins of the people, had turned into almost continual sacrifices so that the bloody stench around the Temple must have been horrible. By that time, for all practical purposes it was impossible for an individual to bring his or her own animal to be sacrificed, for the priests would find something wrong with the animal and the person wishing to have a sacrifice made would have to purchase one from the herds maintained by the priests. It is not unlikely that an animal rejected by the priests because of a blemish would be sold to someone else

for use as a sacrificial animal by the priests later that day.

The Old Testament was prophetic, and in Christ the permanent, perfect, prophetic sacrificial victim was incarnate. The Jews, concerned with the outward, physical world, ignored the Old Testament Prophets and the few Holy Kings who attempted to lead the people into internal conversion, which is the prerequisite for entry into the eternal kingdom.

Christ preached the necessity of this internal conversion, taught how to accomplish it - knowing and showing it is a struggle but one which may be accomplished with persistent application, effort, and prayer - and explained the mercy of God to mankind as had never before been explained.

Christ clearly and plainly stated the eternal kingdom of God is spiritual; when accessed by man is accessed interiorly; and of extreme importance, He taught that only the Blessed of the Sermon on the Mount will have access to that kingdom.

He stressed the reality of the necessity of bloody sacrifice from a sacrificial victim. He taught and reinforced the Old Testament teaching that the perfect sacrificial victim who would once and forever make atonement for the sins of the repentant by redeeming them through that Sacrifice's own blood **must be God and man** voluntarily offering Himself, for no other was capable of being an effective such sacrifice. It therefore was imperative that Christ not only clearly state His true identity as the unique God man, but also prove it, which He did in part through His numerous miracles.

Christ's resurrection from the dead not only was the ultimate proof of His Divinity, but also the proof of His teachings, and a statement as to the future resurrection of every human being: some to eternal joy, some to eternal damnation; based on the individual's following of Christ's teachings and ac-

(Continued MAY WE on page 19)

(Continued MAY WE from page 18)

ceptance of that which Christ provided - prior to their own death.

But most important of all is this: Jesus provides redemptive salvation to those who accept and follow Him and His teachings because His sacrifice is pleasing to God. But God accepts this perfect sacrifice only by virtue of the Divine Charity - the Agape Love - which inspires (yes, inspireS, not inspireD) it.

Ref: Phil 2:5-11; The Passion according to Saint Matthew

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THE SALVATION OF EACH INDIVIDUAL IS ACCOMPLISHED IN THE UNION OF EACH INDIVIDUAL IN THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST whereby each individual fully participates in the life, passion, death, and resurrection of Christ attaining the deification available to a creature.

It is sufficient for us to know that Christ made salvation available to us and that we may accept it or reject it through either acting Divinely or failure so-to-do. But the reality is much deeper. The greater our comprehension and understanding of that reality the greater our ability to persevere in doing that which is necessary for us to operate Divinely.

In the Incarnation, the conception of Jesus Christ God as human, all of humankind and every human being becomes open to being deified. In the life, Passion, death, and Resurrection of the same Jesus Christ, all of humankind and every human being, not only has atonement for their sins made, but also in His own overcoming evil, sin, and the effects of evil and of sin, Christ has made the same available to every human being.

Deification is made available to or, more accurately, attainable by, every human being.

It is very difficult to explain deification of the human. God is God and no human will ever be God yet each of us has the potential to be deified. Yet God is the Deity. Christ is the Deity, is God, and also became incarnate, fully human, being both God and Man in one Person. He is unique, as is God, the Blessed Trinity. But humans are not unique. A very poor analogy is, deification is like unto a person who becomes a plumber, but since there already is a permanent Master Plumber that plumber will never be the Master Plumber but that person is a plumber non-the-less. A poor analogy, but it serves the purpose of leading thought in a generally correct direction.

The most accurate analogy is that provided by Our Saviour Himself. He is the vine and we are the branches. Yet He also, being the vine, is also the branches. It is not that we, as branches, are grafted on to Christ, the root stock, or Christ, the root stock and vine. No, it is that through the Incarnation each human is able to re-establish his or her birth, his or her conception, from a stand alone plant seeking what nourishment it is able to obtain, to being sprouted from the vine as a branch through Sacramental Baptism to accept the life which flows from the vine and to grow and flourish in accordance with that nourishment and yield good fruit. But each also has the ability to reject that nourishment and wither from the vine - or to be pruned from the vine if one refuses to yield good fruit.

Change the analogy from a vine to a person. Think of Christ in His human nature so you are able to somewhat visualize. Intellectually add yourself as being immersed in Christ yet remaining totally yourself while Christ remains totally Himself yet with you immersed in Him. One may or may not be able to approach imagining this, but one is able to intellectually approach this. We do not actually put on Christ and button ourselves up within Him, yet we actually do just that.

With that in mind, it is more readily

comprehended that each human member of the Mystical Body of Christ fully participates in the Life, Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ God. Even though in the running of time, and in history, these events took place long before anyone alive today was born, in the Mystical Body of Christ there is no time. Therefore, each member of the Mystical Body of Christ participates in His Life, Passion, Death, and Resurrection. The more closely attuned one is to Christ - the more one becomes holy, the more one acquires of the Holy Spirit - the more fully one participates in Christ's Life, Passion, Death, and Resurrection.

The Blessed Ever Virgin Mary was in total harmony with God even at the instant of her conception making her a member of the Mystical Body of Christ from the beginning of her existence and continuing all throughout eternity. This is so even though in the running of time the Mystical Body of Christ could be considered as not yet having been brought into existence since Christ had not yet become Incarnate; yet in the eternal now it existed.

Though in the running of time the Mystical Body of Christ began with the Incarnation, it exists in the Eternal Now. Therefore, in the Eternal Now, we who in the running of time will eventually become full members of the Mystical Body of Christ, fully participate, while in the running of time we attain and increase, hopefully, in holiness - while in the running of time we ever increasingly operate divinely; while in the running of time we ever increasingly think and act in accordance with the Divine Virtue of Faith.

This really is not complicated. It is totally beyond our ability to comprehend or understand, yet, since God has revealed it to us, it is easily knowable. And it really is Divinely simple.

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

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STRIVING TO BE LIKE THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN

Jesus Christ, God, retained His divinity and took on full human nature. He offered the perfect Sacrifice, Himself, to God. Since He is perfect, and His Sacrifice is perfect, neither He nor any of us have any need to offer additional sacrifice for our salvation ever again.

But that is not the end of the relationship between God and mankind.

The Ever Virgin Mother of Jesus Christ God, Queen of Heaven, Bearer of God (Theotokos), Mary Most Holy, shows us that there is much more to the relationship between God and each human being.

Not only *can* we rely on salvation having been wrought by the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ; *we must* rely on it. But for it to be effectuate for an individual that individual must follow the example of our Mother Mary the Mother of Christ God.

She accepted Jesus as God even before He was conceived of the Holy Spirit in her womb. She ascertained God's desires and followed them, and when there were no clear instructions from God she ascertained the course or direction of God's desires and followed that course and direction without any influence from herself.

Her desire to follow God's direction was so thorough that, though like any other good mother she did not want her Son to suffer, she embraced her Son's suffering and death. For she knew that God the Father did not want His Son to suffer, but that *He* embraced His Son's suffering and death.

Following this example: Even though we have no need to offer additional sacrifice for our own salvation; we must unite with the Sacrifice Christ offered and offer ourselves with it for only then is it perfected or made effective in us.

Please understand that while the Sacrifice of Christ is perfect, for it to be ef-

fective in us we must join in offering the sacrifice and in being the offering to fullness of our *ability*. A little child has little comprehension of these matters, and what that child must offer is in proportion to its comprehension. A more mature person has greater potential comprehension of these matters, and what that more mature person must offer is comparable to its greater *ABILITY* to comprehend.

If the mature intellect has, through inability, failed to ascertain the truth, it is held accountable only for that which it could have ascertained. But in these times that situation is rare.

Christians who have been raised in a Christian environment are held to the standard of knowing they must offer themselves with Christ because not only have they had the opportunity to learn this - they have actually been taught and have learned this.

Offering one's self in union with Christ is not just a mental exercise. It is a reality.

It is a reality in which we love God and are in pain because our hearts are not pure, our desires are not pure, and our lives are not pure, and we therefore can not offer ourselves in purity to God. Purity here is not connected just with sexual or lustful matters, but with all sinful matters. If you have no anguish in not offering a pure heart in union with Christ's Sacrifice - if anguish or at least the desire, intention, and effort to make yourself a more pure offering are not in you - then you either are the Ever Virgin Mary, or you are not really offering yourself in union with Christ.

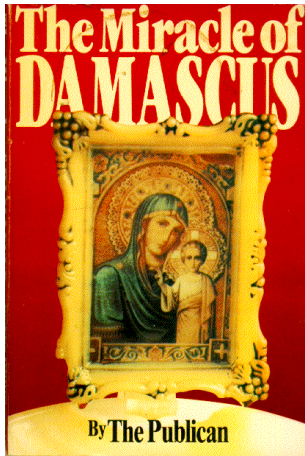
It seems that most of us sometimes unite ourselves with Christ in Sacrifice, and sometimes we do not. We are not like the Ever Virgin Mary Queen of Heaven. But we can strive to be like her, and in truly striving we will attain - not just on Sunday in Church but every day in every thing.

Think of The Lord's Prayer, The Our

Father. Only if you have united yourself as an offering pleasing to God, as a pure heart offered in union with Christ the Sacrifice, only then do you become an adopted child of God; and only then can you say in truth, "Our Father, Who art in Heaven".

Ref: Eccclus. 24:5,7; 9-11, 30-31; Luke 1:26-33

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*(More than ten years ago we published **THE MIRACLE OF DAMASCUS** in **REUNION**. The message, a command for reunification of the Church, remains not only unfulfilled but also apparently no closer to being accomplished. Instead, some jurisdictions of the Church seem to be abandoning their traditional Sacramental and Liturgical foundations and to be seeking common grounds with apostates and heretics. Those jurisdictions seem to forget there is no common ground with such, and such are most easily identified in these times because all of such embrace at least one of five positions: (1) abortion is permitted, (2) artificial contraceptives are permitted, (3) Sacramental Absolution is not necessary because . . . well a number of reasons amongst which the phrase, "I confess my sins directly to God so I do not need a Priest" is resonant, (4) The Eucharist, Holy Communion, is not Jesus but only represents Jesus, (5) Apostolic Succession - an ordained Priesthood which traces itself to the Apostles - is not necessary, anyone may receive "the calling".*

Therefore, this reprint as a reminder: Jesus does not want us to reunite with the devil, with Satan. He died to free us from Satan's dominion. Therefore, do not seek to reunite with the apostates and heretics, but with those of Apostolic Succession and mainly valid dogma.

From the Orthodox perspective, there

may soon be only the Byzantine rites in communion with Rome with which there can be harmony. But with those who hold any of the five aforementioned positions, there can be NO UNION. - Ed.)

[Copies of the book in PDF format are available at:

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THE MIRACLE OF DAMASCUS by the publican

"Go and preach to all nations, and tell them without fear, that they have to work for unity."

_Our Lord to Mirna Nazour
Visionary of Damascus, Syria

THE MESSENGERS OF UNITY Glendale, California 91203

IMPRIMATUR: + Rom Catholic
Bishop Paulus Barkhash
Damascus

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(Continued DAMASCUS on page 22)

(Continued DAMASCUS from page 21)

CHURCHES AND THE POOR

Any Church or charity that wishes to promote this book or related items from the Messengers of Unity, and has received permission from its superior to do so, may sell them at a profit. This is in compliance with the messages themselves, since such profits will go to the Churches or to the poor.

THE MESSENGERS OF UNITY

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1990

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to all those who WORK for the unity of all the Christian Churches. There are many who talk unity, many who want God to effect it, many who want a miracle, many who want Mirna to come to their town or their house; but there are few who are willing to give to God what He is asking of them.

Five people out of the initial thousands who knew about this miraculous series of occurrences have resolved to give their all to God's requests. These five have organized THE MESSENGERS OF UNITY. Vatche Hovsepien has risked his house, his business, his cars, his life to answer God's plea.

Nabil Choukeir had a video shop three hundred feet from Mirna's house in Damascus, Syria. For eight years he took videos of all that happened at her House in Soufanich and gave them free to anyone who asked. Never has he made so much as one penny from the films. He has given his all to Our Lady.

Armen Hovsepien went from a life of sin to being a soldier of Mary in a single day. Armen has given over his entire life to this work for unity. Never has he been paid even one penny.

Joseph Haddad organized the best

prayer sessions in the United States for Mirna's visits. Every church she went to was packed, and concelebrated Masses were common.

We must also thank Father Joseph Malouli. For without his help and his prayers, we would have been stopped by the devil long ago. He, and he alone has the last word in The Messengers of Unity.

LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM THE ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP OF DAMASCUS

ARCHEVECHE GREC-CATHOLIQUE

BOSRA, HAURAN ET JABAL AL - ARAB

KHABAB - HAURAN

R. A. S.

Kahabab, Le June, 18, 1990

Peace and Benediction and Prayer with God's Salutary Blessings to all those who are reading this interesting book about the Soufanieh extraordinary events.

These events are still occurring since late 1982 till this hour.

I, myself, was more than one time, an eyewitness of the oil coming out of the hands and face of Mrs. Myrna and from copies of the Soufanieh Icon.

So, we congratulate the writer for assuming the responsibly of publishing the Soufanieh events for God's Glory and to Honor the Virgin Mary and to motivate the believers to prayer, penitence, and urgent work for the Unity of Church as was said in the Virgin's Mary letters to Mrs. Myrna.

As we motivate the believers to read this precious book, we assure then that what was mentioned concerning the supernatural happenings, words and letters about the Soufanieh events are identical

to what happened.

So we ask God for the Benediction and Success for the readers of this precious book and all those who contributed in its publishing.

/S/ (seal)

TESTIMONIALS

Patriarchs & Bishops

DAMASCUS:

Patriarch Zakka I Iwas, Syrian Orthodox

Patriarch Ignatius Hazeem IV, Greek Orthodox

Patriarch Maximos Haklm, Greek Catholic (Melkite)

Auxiliary Bishop Francois Aboumoukh, Armenian Orthodox

Bishop Francois Abou-Moukh (Nihil Obstat-1987), Roman Catholic

Bishop Boulos Pandeli, Greek Orthodox

Bishop Stephanos Haddad, Greek Orthodox

Bishop Youssef al-Mounayer, Syrian Catholic

Bishop Boulos Coussa, Armenian Catholic

SYRIA:

Bishop Boulos Bourkhocke, Greek Catholic (Khabab)

Bishop Neophyte Edelby, Greek Catholic (Aleppo)

Bishop J. B. Habib Hafouri, Greek Catholic (Hassakeh)

LEBANON:

Bishop Artoine Belouneh, Syrian Catholic (Beirut)

Bishop Nicolas HajJe, Greek Catholic (Lebanon)

IRAQ:

(Continued DAMASCUS on page 23)

<p>(Continued DAMASCUS from page 22) Archbishop George Garmo, Chaldean Catholic</p>	<p>Father Saba Rihani Father Mikhail Father Saad Sawaqued Father Hanna Dagher Father Halim Abdallah</p>	<p>Father Gabriiel Killizli Father Mansour Father Nasri Salmo Father Mansoor Yorkhanna</p>
<p>JERUSALEM:</p>	<p>ARMENIAN CATHOLIC:</p>	<p>CHALDEAN CATHOLIC:</p>
<p>Bishop Bahnane Jijaou, Syrian Orthodox</p>	<p>Father Antoune Adam Father Jean Ortchanian Father Antranig Atramian Father Ephrem Derghazarian Father Adevik Talatinian Father George Father Youssef Khoury Father Philippe Mansour</p>	<p>Father Emmanuel D. Rayes Father Annes Hanna Father Sarhad Jammo</p>
<p>ALEXANDRIA:</p>	<p>ROMAN CATHOLIC:</p>	<p>C O N T E N T S</p>
<p>Bishop Choreveque Benoit, Syrian Orthodox</p>	<p>Father Joseph Malouli Father Paul Fadell Father Maroun Lahan Father Pierre Toussa (O.F.M.) Father Marcel Latricon Father Michel Regalon (Salesien) Father Elias (Capuchin) Father Ilario Anthoniazzi Father Guiseppe Civerra Father Bitar Father Masri (O.F.M.) Father Pierre Boz Father Colombini Father Jean Claude Darrigaud Father Mansour Mistrih (O.F.M.) Brother Galeb Ammar (Capuchin)</p>	<p>DEDICATION LETTER OF THE CATHOLIC BISHOP OF DAMASCUS</p>
<p>AUSTRALIA:</p>	<p>RUSSIAN GREEK CATHOLIC:</p>	<p>TESTIMONIALS_PATRIARCHS & BISHOPS TESTOMINIALS_PRIESTS</p>
<p>Bishop George Riachi, Greek Catholic</p>	<p>Father Alexei Smith</p>	<p>ATTESTATION OF THE PUBLICAN</p>
<p>AMERICA:</p>	<p>MARONITE CATHOLIC:</p>	<p>INTRODUCTION</p>
<p>Bishop Youssef Taouil, Greek Catholic</p>	<p>Father Naoum Atallah Father Michel Attalah Father Francois Ballouz Father Elias Abdelmalek Father Boulos Sleiman Father Joseph Ibrahim Father Mass'oud Mass'oud Father Ibrahim Salloum Father Khalil Rustom Father Mouwannes Father Laurence Fares</p>	<p>CHAPTER1 The Miracle of Damascus CHAPTER 2 Testing the Spirits CHAPTER 3 The Kingdom of Heaven CHAPTER 4 Analyzing the Messages CHAPTER 5 History of Divisions CHAPTER 6 Attempts at Unity CHAPTER 7 What Unites? CHAPTER 8 Organizing Towards Unity SUPPLEMENTS</p>
<p>Chor-Bishop Joseph C. Feghali, Maronite</p>	<p>SYRIAN CATHOLIC:</p>	<p>ATTESTATION OF THE PUBLICAN</p>
<p>TESTIMONIALS</p>	<p>Father Georges Masri Father Mounir Sakkal Father Fawaz Ayoub Father Elias Jarjour Father Mikail Chahine Father Razzouk Elias Hannouche</p>	<p>I stand full of confusion and doubt, asking the Most High Lord from the bottom of my soul, to transfer my pen to the hands of an angel, in order that no injustice may be done to the subject of this discourse; or that He Himself, the all-powerful and most wise God, may speak for me and enlighten my faculties, so that, governed by His divine light, they may be fit instruments of His will and truth and be free from the human frailty of an ignorant man.</p>
<p>Priests</p>	<p>SYRIAN CATHOLIC:</p>	<p>In obedience to the Decree of Pope Urban VIII, I declare that I do not attribute more than human faith to any extraordinary facts narrated in this book, nor do I anticipate the definitive judgment of the Church, to which I offer herewith and beforehand my fullest submission.</p>
<p>GREEK ORTHODOX:</p>	<p>SYRIAN CATHOLIC:</p>	<p>(Continued DAMASCUS on page 24)</p>
<p>Father Dimitri Ma'amar Father George Gilo Father Samih Mansour Damaskinos Father Youhanna al-Talli Father Constantine Yanni Father Georges Abou Zakhm Father Boulos Challah Father Myro Zayat Father Michel Farah Father Nicolas Youssef Rizk Father Athanassios Salloum Father Elias Abdouka Father Ibrahim Sarrouj Father Girios Badra Father Spiro Sanna Father Ayoub Father Girgi Aljatt Father Anis Elius Deacon Spiro Habbour Deacon Elias Kfoui (now Bishop)</p>	<p>SYRIAN CATHOLIC:</p>	
<p>MELKITE_GREEK CATHOLIC:</p>		
<p>Msgr. Adib Badaoui Father Mirti Hagi Athanassiou Father Elias Zahlaoui Father Gibrail Khoury Father Ibrahim Mosleh Father Antoune Hibbi Father Antoune Hannouche Father Elias Baladi Father Elias Sargi Father Naaman Rouaini</p>		

(Continued DAMASCUS from page 23)

INTRODUCTION

It is a paradox that I wrote this book. I have made it my avocation to write against apparitions, mystics, cults, and new religious movements. I have no fear in writing against these things, as it is easy to spot the false with simple discernments from the Bible and the teachings of the Church. Moreover, true saints throughout the ages have warned against such things and have given great guidelines to follow. Padre Pio often saw the devil in the form of: Christ Crucified, his Spiritual Director, St. Francis, and the Virgin Mary. He was never fooled. Padre Pio warned Raffaelina Cerase:

"The devil, as you know, is a great artificer of evil in which he has been engaged only too long. When he sees how keenly you desire it (the miraculous), he could deceive you by some diabolical illusion or apparition disguised as an angel of light. Who would believe it? This unhappy apostate even knows how to disguise himself as a Capuchin and to act the part quite well. I beg you to believe one who has undergone an experience of this nature."

As I said, it is easy to spot the false, but it is not so easy to be sure of the true. It makes me very uneasy to write in favor of an apparition as I am doing this time. I believe, however, with all my heart (leaving the final judgment to the Church) that God sent me to Damascus for no other reason than to spread this message throughout the world. You can judge for yourself as you read this book.

Why me? **Since I normally write against apparitions**, perhaps I will be believed. My readers know I am not easily fooled.

This introduction, at any rate, will confine itself to the dangers of false apparitions. These dangers were never more apparent to me as they were while writing this story.

God, in His infinite wisdom, saw to it that I became isolated in a monastery (I am not a religious) until I finished His work. Without this place, it would have taken me five times as long to complete it. There (in this closed community) the effects of the false become more and more conspicuous.

There were over one hundred seminarians, ten priests, and some guest teachers in the monastery. For over ten years they lived with a charismatic, mystical leader, who got his instructions direct from Heaven, or so he said.

Oh, I don't doubt his sincerity. Mere theory, this, but what probably happened is that he lost his confidence in his spiritual director, his superiors, his Church.

Once this happens, Satan gains a foothold, for he has succeeded in convincing the man that he (and not his spiritual director) is the last judge in all things spiritual. When this person is deprived of this guidance, he will fall into

"every vice, even the most abominable. He will be so blinded that nothing will then avail to snatch from the road to perdition on which he is launched.

"Such a person will reach the stage at which he will believe he has no further need of help, even of God's help, and this will be apparent at least from his actions.

"As a proof of what I tell you, there is no need to turn to what the history of past centuries teaches us, because we can see it happening before our very eyes and being repeated thousands of times at every moment. (Padre Pio)

This is what probably happened to this man. (He is known all over the world.) Eventually he was exposed. The evidence against him was monumental. Once the priests (his superiors) started to suspect him, they did an extraordinary job of gathering proof of his wrongdoings. This proof piled higher and higher before they acted against

him. Notwithstanding this evidence (it would shock you), half the community still follows him. The rest are disillusioned, depressed, quiet.

It is in this atmosphere of upset, confused and muddled seminarians that I tried to write this book.

Actually, I believe God sent me there. (My coming wasn't of my own choice.) I believe He wanted me to use my past experience and what I have learned in this community.

I must show my reader the dangers of false apparitions and false mystics, and at the same time, present this true story without it being associated with them, or to simply put this story on the shelf with 700 other pseudo-apparitions since Fatima.

This will happen if I don't warn the reader. Pray, then, that I make you understand.

The hardest thing for me over the years has been to answer this question:

"Why would Satan allow people to become good, holy, religious, to pray more, to stop sinning, etc? What would he have to gain?"

The answer is diffusion, confusion, and disillusionment. For example, how many of you know about a true apparition of Our Lady in Nicaragua in 1978? How many know about an apparition in Japan within the past few years? And, of course, Damascus has been going on for eight years. Not many, I'll bet! Diffusion!

How many lovers of Mary know that Lucia of Fatima is still receiving visits from Our Lord? How many lovers of Mary are still promoting the messages of Fatima? How many are promoting other apparitions and think Fatima is old hat? Diffusion!

In the community I sat for lunch and dinner everyday with a Professor of

(Continued DAMASCUS on page 25)

(Continued DAMASCUS from page 24)

Moral Ethics. He knew I was writing a book about a miracle and that there are "messages from Heaven."

After two months of conversation twice a day, he still doesn't know one word of the messages from Damascus. Why? It is not because I didn't try to tell him.

Everyday, at every lunch and dinner, he told me over and over about another "so-called apparition." He knew I didn't believe in it, and with good reason. (Pay attention to where I am trying to take you.) He was so busy trying to convince me of this other apparition, he had no time even to listen to the messages of this book. As far as he is concerned, if I don't believe in his, mine must be false. Satan has won again. Diffusion!

Another man, in this same monastery, wouldn't even sit with me. I don't believe in the mystic mentioned above. He does; and so, I must be bad, Satanic, an adversary of God. He will soon become a priest. God help us. Diffusion!

There are apparitions in the world today that say Vatican II was Satanic, that Pope Paul VI was a false pope, that the New Mass is not real. There are others that say all religions are the same in the eyes of God: Moslem, Protestant, Catholic, everything. Some say the Anti-Christ is alive. Many say they are the voice of God and that we should no longer listen to the Church, since it is no longer orthodox.

Finally, hundreds are predicting the Second Coming of Christ and the end of the world. I'm not talking about things years ago. I'm talking about apparitions that are going on right now, this very minute. Confusion?

Even though I mostly write against these things, there are 25 supernatural happenings in the past 80 years that I do believe in. I have not become disillusioned.

The brothers, priests, etc., of this house, were fooled for a long time by a mystic,

and now, they don't want to hear about, talk about, think about anything supernatural—not even Fatima. They were fooled--fooled badly. They don't want to think about the supernatural, not now, not ever. Satan has won again. How? Disillusionment!

Once I finished the book in Rome, I went back to the United States. No sooner did I arrive than Mirna came to California. Again the divine hand of God was at work. Day after day Mirna sat with me going over all the details of the visions, the messages, the meanings, and how we should bring about unity.

In between all these sessions with Mirna, people by the hundreds came to pray with her everyday. And everyday without exception oil came from her hands or an Icon. Sometimes there was a cure. The oil from her hands comes when she prays, when a priest gives her a blessing, when she shakes the hand of a bishop, when we are talking about unity or when we are simply loving each other and God is happy with us. Some days there were two, three, four, or five miracles.

As I completed the last words of this book, the oil poured around me, people were being cured of body and spirit. In the evening prayers, I gave short talks on the miracle, and then everyone prayed with Mirna. In the afternoon, between the prayers, we worked on the book.

But no matter how many miracles they see, many could not stop talking about other apparitions that have not been approved by the Church. Finally we had to make up a sign in very large letters. We wrote:

MIRNA AND "THE MESSENGERS OF UNITY" HAVE PERMISSION FROM THE BISHOPS OF DAMASCUS TO ANNOUNCE THE MESSAGES AND THE MIRACLES OF SOUFANIEH. WE DO NOT HAVE PERMISSION

TO SPREAD INFORMATION ABOUT ANY OTHER APPARITION. PLEASE DO NOT TALK ABOUT OR BRING LITERATURE ABOUT ANY OTHER REPORTED MIRACLE.

The Messengers of Unity

Why is this so important? Because in order to attract the priests and bishops of the world to the Miracle of Damascus we have to become noted for obedience to the churches. We do not want people to change their beliefs. That is not our job. We just want to concentrate on the messages to Mirna.

Moreover, some of these other reported apparitions have exactly the opposite messages from the messages of Soufanieh.

They have many reported cures, but not one provable cure. They have many reported miracles, but not one that Satan, himself, could not do. They have much apparent holiness, but the long-term fruits are bad. The followers of Jim Jones had apparent holiness.

One boy (from one of these other apparitions) became very holy for almost six months, saying the Rosary everyday and going to Mass seven days a week. Then he fell into Satanic worship. He began to play Satanic music and beat his head against the walls. Mirna was asked to pray for him. I don't know how he is now.

But the greatest example of these problems can be shown in a comparison of two good and two bad days of prayer with Mirna.

First, the two good days. There was a very holy priest, who said a prayer to St. Michael against Satan and then blessed Mirna with a crucifix and a holy relic. The minute he did it, oil came from her hands.

A second time, a holy priest blessed a
(Continued DAMASCUS on page 26)

(Continued DAMASCUS from page 25)

house with holy water to drive out the devils. Mirna was with him. As he blessed the house, oil began to mix with the holy water.

In all the hundreds of times I saw Mirna pray in California, only twice was there no miracle.

Once was during a Mass where the priest gave a sermon against unity. The other time is very, very important. There were four hundred people praying with Mirna. I gave a talk about unity before the prayers. Mirna prayed for over one and one half hours, but no oil. She finally quit. She looked at me and as if to say,

"I don't know why?"

But I knew why. In spite of the sign we had put up, and in spite of our pleas, a priest came with ten of his followers. They passed through the crowds, handing out medals, pictures and messages of an unapproved apparition, as we were trying to pray. There was no miracle, because we let Satan into our group.

What does Satan have to gain by making people seem more holy, pray more and stop sinning?

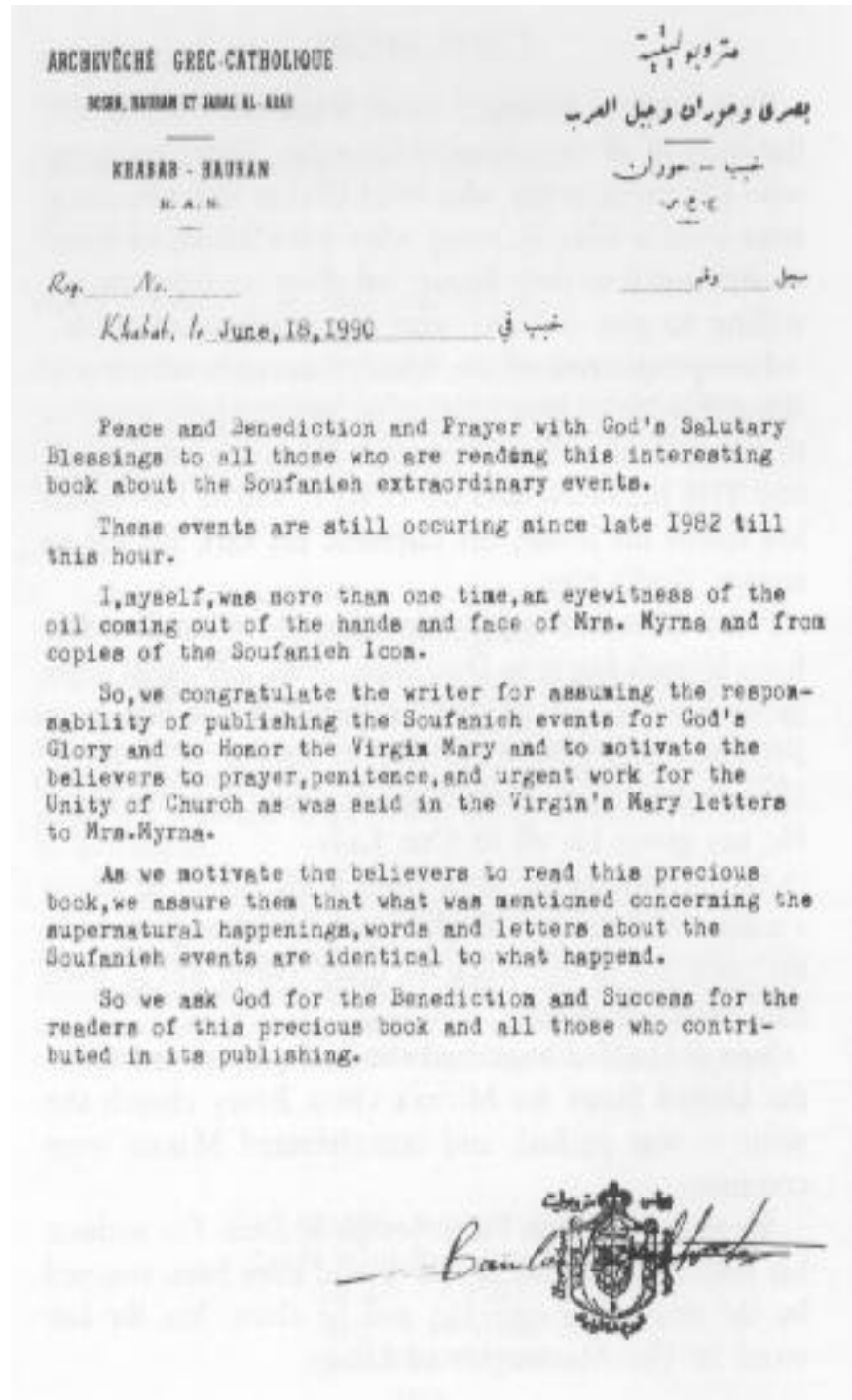
What does Satan have to gain? A great deal I would guess! He sees all the world at once. He has a pretty good idea of what God and Mary are up to. He wants to stop them. I hope and pray you don't fall for his traps.

So, with these crosses, with my eyes wide open, with full knowledge of the future problems, I write this book, hoping upon hope that someone will read it, believe it, and act on it. For I firmly believe that if we don't do what God wants in these messages, God will unify us anyway. We will not like how God does it. Then some will say,

"But Lord, if you had told us?"

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(To be continued.)



**THE CHURCH HISTORY OF
EUSEBIUS**

BOOK II.

(Continued)

CHAPTER X.

Agrippa, who was also called Herod, having persecuted the Apostles, immediately experienced the Divine Vengeance.

1 THE consequences of the king's undertaking against the apostles were no, long deferred, but the avenging minister of divine justice overtook him immediately after his plots against them, as the Book of Acts records. For when he had journeyed to Caesarea, on a notable feast-day, clothed in a splendid and royal garment, he delivered an address to the people from a lofty throne in front of the tribunal. And when all the multitude applauded the speech, as if it were the voice of a god and not of a man, the Scripture relates that an angel of the Lord smote him, and being eaten of worms he gave up the ghost.

2 We must admire the account of Josephus for its agreement with the divine Scriptures in regard to this wonderful event; for he clearly bears witness to the truth in the nineteenth book of his Antiquities, where he relates the wonder in the following words:

3 "He had completed the third year of his reign over all Judea when he came to Caesarea, which was formerly called Strato's Tower. There he held games in honor of C'sar, learning that this was a festival observed in behalf of C'sar's safety. At this festival was collected a great multitude of the highest and most honorable men in the province.

4 And on the second day of the games he proceeded to the theater at break of day, wearing a garment entirely of silver and of wonderful texture. And there the silver, illuminated by the reflection of the sun's earliest rays, shone marvelously, gleaming so brightly as to pro-

duce a sort of fear and terror in those who gazed upon him.

5 And immediately his flatterers, some from one place, others from another, raised up their voices in a way that was not for his good, calling him a god, and saying, 'Be thou merciful; if up to this time we have feared thee as a man, henceforth we confess that thou art superior to the nature of mortals.'

6 The king did not rebuke them, nor did he reject their impious flattery. But after a little, looking up, he saw an angel sitting above his head. And this he quickly perceived would be the cause of evil as it had once been the cause of good fortune, and he was smitten with a heart-piercing pain.

7 And straightway distress, beginning with the greatest violence, seized his bowels. And looking upon his friends he said, 'I, your god, am now commanded to depart this life; and fate thus I on the spot disproves the lying words you have just uttered concerning me. He who has been called immortal by you is now led away to die; but our destiny must be accepted as God has determined it. For we have passed our life by no means ingloriously, but in that splendor which is pronounced happiness.'

8 And when he had said this he labored with an increase of pain. He was accordingly carried in haste to the palace, while the report spread among all that the king would undoubtedly soon die. But the multitude, with their wives and children, sitting on sackcloth after the custom of their fathers, implored God in behalf of the king, and every place was filled with lamentation and tears. And the king as he lay in a lofty chamber, and saw them below lying prostrate on the ground, could not refrain from weeping himself.

9 And after suffering continually for five days with pain in the bowels, he departed this life, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and in the seventh year of his reign. Four years he ruled under the

Emperor Caius--three of them over the tetrarchy of Philip, to which was added in the fourth year that of Herod --and three years during the reign of the Emperor Claudius."

10 I marvel greatly that Josephus, in these things as well as in others, so fully agrees with the divine Scriptures. But if there should seem to any one to be a disagreement in respect to the name of the king, the time at least and the events show that the same person is meant, whether the change of name has been caused by the error of a copyist, or is due to the fact that he, like so many, bore two names.

CHAPTER XI.

The Impostor Theudas and his Followers.

1 LUKE, in the Acts, introduces Gamaliel as saying, at the consultation which was held concerning the apostles, that at the time referred to, "rose up Theudas boasting himself to be somebody; who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered." Let us therefore add the account of Josephus concerning this man. He records in the work mentioned just above, the following circumstances:

2 "While Fadus was procurator of Judea a certain impostor called Theudas persuaded a very great multitude to take their possessions and follow him to the river Jordan. For he said that he was a prophet, and that the river should be divided at his command, and afford them an easy passage.

3 And with these words he deceived many. But Fadus did not permit them to enjoy their folly, but sent a troop of horsemen against them, who fell upon them unexpectedly and slew many of them and took many others alive, while they took Theudas himself captive, and cut off his head and carried it to Jerusalem." Besides this he also makes mention of the famine, which took place in the reign of Claudius, in the follow-

(Continued EUSEBIUS on page 28)

(Continued EUSEBIUS from page 27)
ing words.

CHAPTER XII.

Helen, the Queen of the Osrhoenians.

1 "AND at this time" it came to pass that the great famine a took place in Judea, in which the queen Helen, having purchased grain from Egypt with large sums, distributed it to the needy."

You will find this statement also in agreement with the Acts of the Apostles, where it is said that the disciples at Antioch, "each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren that dwelt in Judea; which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Paul." But splendid monuments of this Helen, Of whom the historian has made mention, are still shown in the suburbs of the city which is now called 'lia, But she is said to have been queen of the Adiabeni.

CHAPTER XIII.

Simon Magus.

But faith in our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ having now been diffused among all men, the enemy of man's salvation contrived a plan for seizing the imperial city for himself. He conducted thither the above-mentioned Simon, aided him in his deceitful arts, led many of the inhabitants of Rome astray, and thus brought them into his own power. This is stated by Justin, one of our distinguished writers who lived not long after the time of the apostles. Concerning him I shall speak in the proper place. Take and read the work of this man, who in the first Apology which he addressed to Antonine in behalf of our religion writes as follows: "And after the ascension of the Lord into heaven the demons put forward certain men who said they were gods, and who were not only allowed by you to go unpersecuted, but were even deemed worthy of honors. One of them was Simon, a Samaritan of the village of Gitto, who in the reign of Claudius C'sar performed in your impe-

rial city some mighty acts of magic by the art of demons operating in him, and was considered a god, and as a god was honored by you with a statue, which was erected in the river Tiber, between the two bridges, and bore this inscription in the Latin tongue, Simoni Deo Sancto, that is, To Simon the Holy God. And nearly all the Samaritans and a few even of other nations confess and worship him as the first God. And there went around with him at that time a certain Helena who had formerly been a prostitute in Tyre of Phoenicia; and her they call the first idea that proceeded from him." Justin relates these things, and Iren'us also agrees with him in the first book of his work, Against Heresies, where he gives an account of the man and of his profane and impure teaching. It would be superfluous to quote his account here, for it is possible for those who wish to know the origin and the lives and the false doctrines of each of the heresiarchs that have followed him, as well as the customs practiced by them all, to find them treated at length in the above-mentioned work of Iren'us. We have understood that Simon was the author of all heresy. From his time down to the present those who have followed his heresy have reigned the sober philosophy of the Christians, which is celebrated among all on account of its purity of life. But they nevertheless have embraced again the superstitions of idols, which they seemed to have renounced; and they fall down before pictures and images of Simon himself and of the above-mentioned Helena who was with him; and they venture to worship them with incense and sacrifices and libations. But those matters which they keep more secret than these, in regard to which they say that one upon first hearing them would be astonished, and, to use one of the written phrases in vogue among them, would be confounded, are in truth full of amazing things, and of madness and folly, being of such a sort that it is impossible not only to commit them to writing, but also for modest men even to utter them with the lips on account of their excessive baseness and lewdness. For what ever could be conceived of, viler than the

vilest thing -- all that has been outdone by this most abominable sect, which is composed of those who make a sport of those miserable females that are literally overwhelmed with all kinds of vices.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Preaching of the Apostle Peter in Rome.

1 The evil power, who hates all that is good and plots against the salvation of men, constituted Simon at that time the father and author of such wickedness, as if to make him a mighty antagonist of the great, inspired apostles of our Saviour. For that divine and celestial grace which co-operates with its ministers, by their appearance and presence, quickly extinguished the kindled flame of evil, and humbled and cast down through them "every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God." Wherefore neither the conspiracy of Simon nor that of any of the others who arose at that period could accomplish anything in those apostolic times. For everything was conquered and subdued by the splendors of the truth and by the divine word itself which had but lately begun to shine from heaven upon men, and which was then flourishing upon earth, and dwelling in the apostles themselves. Immediately the above-mentioned impostor was smitten in the eyes of his mind by a divine and miraculous flash, and after the evil deeds done by him had been first detected by the apostle Peter in Judea, he fled and made a great journey across the sea from the East to the West, thinking that only thus could he live according to his mind. And coming to the city of Rome, by the mighty co-operation of that power which was lying in wait there, he was in a short time so successful in his undertaking that those who dwelt there honored him as a god by the erection of a statue. But this did not last long. For immediately, during the reign of Claudius, the all-good and gracious Providence, which watches over all things, led Peter, that strongest and

(Continued EUSEBIUS on page 29)

(Continued EUSEBIUS from page 28)

greatest of the apostles, and the one who on account of his virtue was the speaker for all the others, to Rome s against this great corrupter of life. He like a noble commander of God, clad in divine armor, carried the costly merchandise of the light of the understanding from the East to those who dwelt in the West, proclaiming the light itself, and the word which brings salvation to souls, and preaching the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER XV.

The Gospel according to Mark.

AND thus when the divine word had made its home among them, the power of Simon was quenched and immediately destroyed, together with the man himself. And so greatly did the splendor of piety illumine the minds of Peter's hearers that they were not satisfied with hearing once only, and were not content with the unwritten teaching of the divine Gospel, but with all sorts of entreaties they besought Mark, a follower of Peter, and the one whose Gospel is extant, that he would leave them a written monument of the doctrine which had been orally communicated to them. Nor did they cease until they had prevailed with the man, and had thus become the occasion of the written Gospel which bears the name of Mark. And they say that Peter when he had learned, through a revelation of the Spirit, of that which had been done, was pleased with the zeal of the men, and that the work obtained the sanction of his authority for the purpose of being used in the churches. Clement in the eighth book of his Hypotyposes gives this account, and with him agrees the bishop of Hierapolis named Papias. And Peter makes mention of Mark in his first epistle which they say that he wrote in Rome itself, as is indicated by him, when he calls the city, by a figure, Babylon, as he does in the following words: "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son."

CHAPTER XVI.

Mark first proclaimed Christianity to the Inhabitants of Egypt.

And they say that this Mark was the first that was sent to Egypt, and that he proclaimed the Gospel which he had written, and first established churches in Alexandria. And the multitude of believers, both men and women, that were collected there at the very outset, and lived lives of the most philosophical and excessive asceticism, was so great, that Philo thought it worth while to describe their pursuits, their meetings, their entertainments, and their whole manner of life."

CHAPTER XVII.

Philo's Account of the Ascetics of Egypt.

1 It is also said that Philo in the reign of Claudius became acquainted at Rome with Peter, who was then preaching there. Nor is this indeed improbable, for the work of which we have spoken, and which was composed by him some years later, clearly contains those rules of the Church which are even to this day observed among us. And since he describes as accurately as possible the life of our ascetics, it is clear that he not only knew, but that he also approved, while he venerated and extolled, the apostolic men of his time, who were as it seems of the Hebrew race, and hence observed, after the manner of the Jews, the most of the customs of the ancients. In the work to which he gave the title, On a Contemplative Life or on Suppliants, after affirming in the first place that he will add to those things which he is about to relate nothing contrary to truth or of his own invention, he says that these men were called Therapeut' and the women that were with them Therapeutrides. He then adds the reasons for such a name, explaining it from the fact that they applied remedies and healed the souls of those who came to them, by relieving them like physicians, of evil passions, or from the fact that they served and worshiped the Deity in purity and sincerity. Whether Philo

himself gave them this name, employing an epithet well suited to their mode of life, or whether the first of them really called themselves so in the beginning, since the name of Christians was not yet everywhere known, we need not discuss here. He bears witness, however, that first of all they renounce their property. When they begin the philosophical mode of life, he says, they give up their goods to their relatives, and then, renouncing all the cares of life, they go forth beyond the walls and dwell in lonely fields and gardens, knowing well that intercourse with people of a different character is unprofitable and harmful. They did this at that time, as seems probable, under the influence of a spirited and ardent faith, practicing in emulation the prophets' mode of life. For in the Acts of the Apostles, a work universally acknowledged as authentic, it is recorded that all the companions of the apostles sold their possessions and their property and distributed to all according to the necessity of each one, so that no one among them was in want. "For as many as were possessors of lands or houses," as the account says, "sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet, so that distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."

Philo bears witness to facts very much like those here described and then adds the following account: "Everywhere in the world is this race found. For it was fitting that both Greek and Barbarian should share in what is perfectly good. But the race particularly abounds in Egypt, in each of its so-called nomes, and especially about Alexandria. The best men from every quarter emigrate, as if to a colony of the Therapeut's fatherland, to a certain very suitable spot which lies above the lake Maria upon a low hill excellently situated on account of its security and the mildness of the atmosphere" And then a little further on, after describing the kind of houses which they had, he speaks as follows concerning their churches, which were scattered about here and there: "In each

(Continued EUSEBIUS on page 30)

(Continued EUSEBIUS from page 29)

house there is a sacred apartment which is called a sanctuary and monastery, where, quite alone, they perform the mysteries of the religious life. They bring nothing into it, neither drink nor food, nor any of the other things which contribute to the necessities of the body, but only the laws, and the inspired oracles of the prophets, and hymns and such other things as augment and make perfect their knowledge and piety."

10 And after some other matters he says: "The whole interval, from morning to evening, is for them a time of exercise. For they read the holy Scriptures, and explain the philosophy of their fathers in an allegorical manner, regarding the written words as symbols of hidden truth which is communicated in obscure figures. They have also writings of ancient men, who were the founders of their sect, and who left many monuments of the allegorical method. These they use as models, and imitate their principles." These things seem to have been stated by a man who had heard them expounding their sacred writings. But it is highly probable that the works of the ancients, which he says they had, were the Gospels and the writings of the apostles, and probably some expositions of the ancient prophets, such as are contained in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and in many others of Paul's Epistles. Then again he writes as follows concerning the new psalms which they composed: "So that they not only spend their time in meditation, but they also compose songs and hymns to God in every variety of metre and melody, though they divide them, of course, into measures of more than common solemnity." The same book contains an account of many other things, but it seemed necessary to select those facts which exhibit the characteristics of the ecclesiastical mode of life. But if any one thinks that what has been said is not peculiar to the Gospel polity, but that it can be applied to others besides those mentioned, let him be convinced by the subsequent words of the same author, in which, if he is unpreju-

dated, he will find undisputed testimony on this subject. Philo's words are as follows: "Having laid down temperance as a sort of foundation in the soul, they build upon it the other virtues. None of them may take food or drink before sunset, since they regard philosophizing as a work worthy of the light, but attention to the wants of the body as proper only in the darkness, and therefore assign the day to the former, but to the latter a small portion of the night. But some, in whom a great desire for knowledge dwells, forget to take food for three days; and some are so delighted and feast so luxuriously upon wisdom, which furnishes doctrines richly and without stint, that they abstain even twice as long as this, and are accustomed, after six days, scarcely to take necessary food." These statements of Philo we regard as referring clearly and indisputably to those of our communion. But if after these things any one still obstinately persists in denying the reference, let him renounce his incredulity and be convinced by yet more striking examples, which are to be found nowhere else than in the evangelical religion of the Christians. For they say that there were women also with those of whom we are speaking, and that the most of them were aged virgins who had preserved their chastity, not out of necessity, as some of the priestesses among the Greeks, but rather by their own choice, through zeal and a desire for wisdom. And that in their earnest desire to live with it as their companion they paid no attention to the pleasures of the body, seeking not mortal but immortal progeny, which only the pious soul is able to bear of itself. Then after a little he adds still more emphatically: "They expound the Sacred Scriptures figuratively by means of allegories. For the whole law seems to these men to resemble a living organism, of which the spoken words constitute the body, while the hidden sense stored up within the words constitutes the soul. This hidden meaning has first been particularly studied by this sect, which sees, revealed as in a mirror of names, the surpassing beauties of the thoughts." Why is it necessary to add to

these things their meetings and the respective occupations of the men and of the women during those meetings, and the practices which are even to the present day habitually observed by us, especially such as we are accustomed to observe at the feast of the Saviour's passion, with fasting and night watching and study of the divine Word. These things the above-mentioned author has related in his own work, indicating a mode of life which has been preserved to the present time by us alone, recording especially the vigils kept in connection with the great festival, and the exercises performed during those vigils, and the hymns customarily recited by us, and describing how, while one sings regularly in time, the others listen in silence, and join in chanting only the close of the hymns; and how, on the days referred to they sleep on the ground on beds of straw, and to use his own words, "taste no wine at all, nor any flesh, but water is their only drink, and their relish with their bread is salt and hyssop." In addition to this Philo describes the order of dignities which exists among those who carry on the services of the church, mentioning the diaconate, and the office of bishop, which takes the precedence over all the others. But whosoever desires a more accurate knowledge of these matters may get it from the history already cited. But that Philo, when he wrote these things, had in view the first heralds of the Gospel and the customs handed down from the beginning by the apostles, is clear to every one.

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(To be continued.)

(Continued CONTENTS from page 32)

ticle which was first published in the December, 2001, issue of REUNION, Vol. 11, No. 10) To learn about a people, learn about their religion. To know a religion one must examine its writings, its dogma. So, briefly, of course: What does Islam teach, what does the Koran teach? . . . *Koran XLVII (47) [47.4] "When ye encounter the infidels, strike off their heads till ye have made a great slaughter among them, and of the rest make fast the fetters."* page 9

CHILDREN'S PAGE *The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism Q. 1341. What should one do who doubts whether or not he is obliged to fast? - Q. 1370. Why does the Church dislike mixed marriages?* page 10

THE SACRIFICE WAS ACCEPTED BECAUSE OF THE CHARITY (Divine Love) WHICH INSPIRED IT Of equal importance that we comprehend the reality that we must accept, work with, and think and act in accordance with the redemption and salvation made available to us by the teachings, passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ is that Jesus makes redemption and salvation available to us because His sacrifice is pleasing to God, *but that God accepts the sacrifice only by virtue of the Charity which inspires it. . . . It is virtually impossible for those who have even a slight measure of a sense of moral values to comprehend a totality of commitment to evil, and it is therefore difficult for most people to accept there are innumerable individuals who have made a total commitment to evil, to total evil.* page 14

THE CHURCH IS ONE FLOCK, AND SHOULD ACT LIKE IT It seems as though there are a multitude of flocks which claim Jesus as their shepherd. Jesus made it very clear there is but one fold, one flock. There therefore *is* but one flock, one fold, of which Jesus is the shepherd. Jesus also made it very clear there are other sheep which He desires to bring into the fold, page 15

FAITH IS LOGICAL Failure to believe in God, in one, supreme, not created, eternal, never changing, self-existing, good, entity, which created everything else, and which has other characteristics and attributes too numerous to readily enumerate, is illogical, as is failure to have Faith in God - Faith in its simplest being acting and living in accordance with the standards established by God. These are very sweeping statements, but they are accurate and they are true. page 16

ONLY IF WE FOLLOW CHRIST WILL WE ASCEND **Those who do not do, don't.** When Our Lord ascended into heaven He not only physically and spiritually ascended, but also gave a real, realistic, tangible example of what instantaneously occurs to the faithful at the end of their time in this world. . . . **There was a man named Dominick who lived bed-bound for many years with Lou Gehrig's Disease (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or ALS). Before the illness made its presence known to him, he was a successful driving force in the business world. After the diagnosis he rapidly became incapacitated. And after his incapacitation he did more to live and thereby to teach the Peace of Christ through his restricted life than he had during all of his healthy life. He did more than most healthy people do. And he did it by simply being nice.** page 17

LORD JESUS, MAY WE, YOU AND I, MAKE ME WHOLLY THINE Towards the end of the liturgy of the Stations or Way of The Cross, a prayer states: "Let not Thy bitter agony and death be fruitless in my soul, but may they make me wholly Thine." page 18

THE SALVATION OF EACH INDIVIDUAL IS ACCOMPLISHED IN THE UNION OF EACH INDIVIDUAL IN THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST whereby each individual fully participates in the life, passion, death, and resurrection of Christ attaining the deification available to a

creature. It is sufficient for us to know that Christ made salvation available to us and that we may accept it or reject it through either acting Divinely or failure so-to-do. But the reality is much deeper. The greater our comprehension and understanding of that reality the greater our ability to persevere in doing that which is necessary for us to operate Divinely. page 19

STRIVING TO BE LIKE THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN Jesus Christ, God, retained His divinity and took on full human nature. He offered the perfect Sacrifice, Himself, to God. Since He is perfect, and His Sacrifice is perfect, neither He nor any of us have any need to offer additional sacrifice for our salvation ever again. But that is not the end of the relationship between God and mankind. The Ever Virgin Mother of Jesus Christ God, Queen of Heaven, Bearer of God (Theotokos), Mary Most Holy, shows us that there is much more to the relationship between God and each human being. Not only *can* we rely on salvation having been wrought by the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ; *we must* rely on it. But for it to be effectuate for an individual that individual must follow the example of our Mother Mary the Mother of Christ God. page 20

THE MIRACLE OF DAMASCUS page 21

THE CHURCH HISTORY OF EUSEBIUS BOOK II. (Continued) CHAPTER X. page 27

CONTENTS page 32

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CONTENTS

TOPIC/TITLE

Page

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS TO FORCE RELIGIONS TO SACRIFICE VIRGINS page 1

~ GOD, HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY THAT I LOVE YOU ~
From Metropolitan Archbishop Lee S. Mc Colloster, S.S.B. To the flock entrusted into my care: A very popular song contains the phrase, "Have I told you lately that I love You." With a few modifications that song could easily be a song of worship to the true God. page 1

THE VIRGIN MARY'S MEASURE OF LOVE FOR GOD IS A TRIUMPH OVER SIN WHICH WE ARE ABLE TO ATTAIN The special position of The Blessed Ever Virgin Mary has been the topic of extensive theological discussions and her status has been referred to as a special privilege granted to her by God. While many of those weighty and knowledgeable done theological works make reference to an extremely important factor very

few dwell on that factor in its simplicity. But we are simple and will contemplate this factor in a simple manner. The factor is love page 1

PUBLICATION NOTICE page 2

LETTERS (none) page 2

WORLD WIDE WEB: and InterNet Mailing Lists page 2

THE BASILIAN FATHERS The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil
 The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil exists for the purpose of glorifying God. It and its members, and hopefully their families, attempt to operate divinely, which is a technical, theological term which means to think, act, and live in accordance with the Divine Virtue of Faith. It is by operating divinely that one attains eternal salvation. In the course of operating divinely and seeking to attain eternal salvation we pursue happiness with Christ here on Earth and for all eternity in Heaven. page 4

OBAMACARE APPEASEMENT AND COMPROMISE ARE PATHS

CHOSEN BY PEOPLE OF FEEBLE SOULS AND MINDS WHO ARE MORALLY INCAPABLE OF CONFRONTING EVIL * *(This is a reprint of an article which appeared in the March, 2012, issue of REUNION, Vol. 22, No. 2. It is being reprinted because the majority of that issue of REUNION was devoted to another matter and this article may therefore have been overlooked by some readers. This article also is a companion to the main article on page one of this issue of REUNION. - Ed.)* When the Supreme Court of the United States of America overstepped its Constitutional authority and made contraceptives and then abortion legal in the United States the immorality and illegality went unchallenged partially because the leaders of many of the largest and most influential Churches and religions were working with the President and the Executive Branch, as well as with Congress - both the House and the Senate - on a combination of several other matters. page 7

HOW CAN WE LEARN ABOUT MOSLEMS? *(Edited reprint of an ar-*

(Continued CONTENTS on page 31)



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