

THE SERAPH

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St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows

The Seraph

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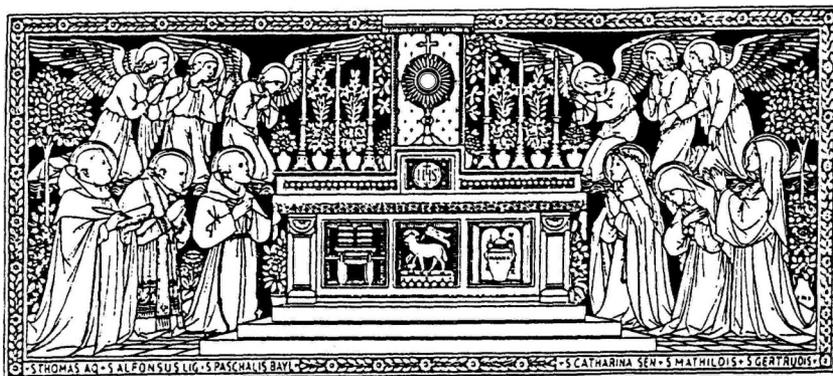
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THE SERAPH

CHURCH ETIQUETTE

Bishop Giles, OFM



Preparation for our attendance at church begins before we ever leave our homes. The evening before morning Mass is the time to make sure that all is prepared so that we may leave on time. We should strive to never be late for Mass. Old time wisdom tells us that it is better to be an hour early rather than a minute late. If our clothing is laid out and ready the night before we will not be late searching for a sock or shoe.

Once we arrive at church, we should enter as soon as possible. It is not becoming to congregate outside or in the vestibule chatting with one another. Not only because we are in the presence of God, but

also out of respect for our fellow Catholics who may wish to pray quietly. The same is true after Mass. There is no need to prop the door open and congregate chatting with one another as soon as Mass has ended. There are others who would like to spend more time with Our Lord in prayer. In the least, let us go outside, close the door, and move a short distance from the church before we turn our minds and tongues back to the world.

Our churches are not like Protestant churches. Protestants do not have or believe in the True Presence of the Holy Eucharist. The Catholic Churches are not meeting halls. Talk is inappropriate in Catholic Churches, and so, the closer we

are to the Church, the quieter we should become.

Although we are obliged to attend Mass on all Sundays and Holy Days of obligation, we should always strive to remember that attendance at Holy Mass is a privilege and honor rather than a burdensome duty. Our intention and attitude in attending Mass sets the stage for how we behave and what we can receive in church. Sadly, it appears that there are many who attend Mass with a sense of coercion rather than with a sense of invitation. If we come to church because we have to, we are often bored and restless. This begins to express itself in our posture, our dress, our comportment as well as our reverence. The magnificent graces that are placed before us are not received or benefited from because they go unnoticed, unappreciated. Sadly, the damage done to our own souls by this indifferent attitude extends beyond ourselves, and scandalizes, or gives a bad example to others, who may imitate us.

When we have a positive, pious, humble attitude we make ourselves receptive to the

many opportunities of grace that abound in the Church. We also inspire others to make themselves receptive to these graces by developing a true appreciation for the Church, the Holy Mass, and Sacraments.

We should always strive to maintain proper comportment and posture. The pews in church are not recliners because we are not supposed to be reclining in church. If we must sit, then let us sit up straight and proper. The same applies when we stand or kneel. Crossing of our legs, slouching, stretching, yawning, etc. should all be avoided.

When the sermon is given we should strive to give our full attention to what is being said. Even in the poorest of sermons, or from the poorest of speakers, there is something for us. God speaks to us if we are receptive to Him. If our attention is in fault finding, we will no doubt find much fault but we will find very little grace or spiritual inspiration. We need to strive for the grace of humility and patience as we beg of God the graces for the priest to speak the right words for us, or for us to hear what is

necessary for our own souls. The priest is an unworthy, sinful human, like ourselves, but it is not the priest that is speaking to us in a sermon – it is God speaking through him to us. We need to strive to overlook or see beyond the human weaknesses so that we may receive the Divine inspirations and graces.

Respect, honor, and reverence should be given to the priest – not because he deserves this or is worthy of it because he is not. We render these things to God through the priest. The true priest is an angel (messenger) or conduit for us to God and from God to us. It is from him that God speaks to us in sermons. It is from him that God comes to us in the Holy Mass. It is from him that God forgives us our sins in the sacrament of Penance. If we have no fear or respect for the sacredness of the priesthood, we soon lose respect for all that is sacred and holy and eventually, we no longer fear or respect God – and the true Faith is lost to us.

When our intention and attitude is to receive all the graces that we can from God through the priest, we open ourselves up for the greatest spiritual

advancements as well as inspire others to find these treasures of grace that are so freely available to us.

When we are at Mass or any other time in church, let us give our full attention as well as intention to receive these spiritual treasures. We should stand when the priest enters or leaves the Sanctuary – not so much to honor him, as in homage to God Who comes to us through him. When the bells are rung we should humbly and piously kneel because these are indications of something very solemn taking place (beginning of the Canon of the Mass or of the approaching miracle of transubstantiation – Jesus is physically coming to earth hidden under the appearances of bread and wine.) This is time for the greatest silence and stillness. If for some reason we are entering or leaving when the bell rings, we should stop and kneel down until after the Sacred Event has finished.

In general, it is most proper for us to kneel in the church, standing when the Holy Gospels are read. Seating is appropriate for listening to a sermon or during the Offertory. For those who are unable, they should seek to comply with the

best of their abilities. Those who are: old, invalids, or ill; may sit or stand if they are unable to kneel. When we must be an exception to the rule, we should strive to show true reverence and respect in some other way. Rather than scandalize others, we can be an inspiration to them. If it is observed that we cannot kneel, let others also observe with what piety, fervor, and attention we pray to God. In this way, the weak and feeble still have something to give to God and their neighbors. Very often the weak put to shame the strong. The invalids in their patient suffering and pious comportment thus admonish and encourage the able-bodied among us.

Our purpose is not to be seen by others or to preach to others, but is rather, to give our best to

God. In humbly doing this, others will undoubtedly benefit. Others will always see us, and for their souls as well as ours, we should always strive to be a positive example leading them closer to God, rather than a scandal leading them to sin and Hell.

Likewise, we should remember that we are not here to observe and criticize others. Let our criticisms be directed at ourselves. If we notice others struggling let us do what we can to help them physically or spiritually, and not tear them down or drive them away. Let us save the harsh rebukes for ourselves and always strive to have kind and gentle admonitions and encouragements for others.

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SCHISM

Bishop Giles, OFM

Most of the world appears to be oblivious to the fact that there is a huge schism from the Catholic faith. The “Second Vatican Council” broke away from the traditions of the Church, establishing many new practices, new ways of worship, as well as new prayers. This council established a new Rite of Mass as well as new rites for all of the sacraments. Rather quickly the majority would have nothing to do with the time-honored traditions and rite of Holy Mass and Sacraments.

Those who held onto and continued in the rites and practices of the Church were and are looked upon to have broken away from the Church, creating a schism. The truth is obvious that it was not those who continued what was always done that caused a schism. The schism was brought about by those who refused to continue in the time-honored and established rites and practices. However, the majority apparently cannot see clearly at all, as they point to the remnant as a troublemaker.

We must remind ourselves that the relative percentages involved in the schism have no bearing upon the true source of the schism. Just because a majority is a majority, does not make it right. If a tree is cut down and carried away leaving only a tiny shoot, it is not the shoot that has left the root, it is the huge bulk that has been cut off from its past, its root, its very life. Regardless of what the majority may say or think, the shoot is not the cause of the division, nor is it the one broken away. The shoot is weak and fragile while the removed bulk appears strong and stable. However big and solid the bulk of the tree is, it is dying because it has no roots, it may continue for a long while to form leaves from the sap that remains in the trunk, but this of necessity grows less and less over time. It is cut off from the source of life in the roots. Disease, and decay soon enter in and corrupt the severed part.

The little shoot that was left is not safe, just because it is still

attached to the root. It can, even more easily than the bulk of the tree, be cut and carried away. There is a constant temptation or longing for the shoot to be reunited to the severed majority because we quickly forget that the visible part is not where the life-giving sap originates from. The roots of tradition are essential to The Faith. The visible portion is important but, not nearly as important as the roots or solid foundation of faith and tradition. When the visible portion is cut off from the roots of faith and tradition, it loses all its importance. The only hope for it is if it can or will be re-grafted onto the root.

The end to the schism is not achieved by cutting the tiny shoot off and placing it with the rest of the cutaway tree. This only adds to the division rather than reducing it. The only true unity is to be found in returning to the original root from which these were cut off.

The remnant shoot must be constantly reminded of its own precarious and vulnerable situation, lest it begins to swell with pride. The tiny shoot is not the entire tree, nor is it the

root. Its life is relatively new and weak; its only security is in remaining attached to the older and greater life of the root. Our life and our Faith is not from ourselves, but it is a gift (grace) from God. The graces of God are easily lost if we are not constantly vigilant. Just because we are standing now is no guarantee that we will be found standing in the end. We must always take heed, lest we fall. (1 Cor. 10:12)

With the largest visible part of the tree cut away, there is created an enormous amount of decay and death even though it may appear solid and secure. In the spiritual realm, there is an enormous increase in sin and evil as grace shrivels up and dies away. Soon the death and decay are mistaken for life and growth. "Modern progress" is the euphemism that the majority has come to accept as the label for our moral degradation and depravity.

There seems to be a clear cause and effect of this great schism or falling away, and the evils in our modern world. With the great turning away from the secure and proven

rites and practices of the True Catholic Church, the world was deprived of the sources of grace and life. Decay follows clearly once the cut was made complete. Fast upon the severing schism followed (at least in the USA) the acceptance of divorces; “approval” of anti-life “contraceptives;” abortions (infanticide); “legalized” euthanasia (mercy killing) (murder of those deemed too old or unfit to live); approval, acceptance, and promotion of homosexuality and all other sexual perversions; etc. The corruption and decay are very foul smelling, yet we are told that it is good, holy, and wholesome. We are constantly told that we must accept all this; otherwise, we are narrow-minded and uncharitable. Let us remember that this is coming from a rotting log, not a living tree. True charity that condemns the evils and perversities is labeled hate. There is nothing more charitable than pointing out and condemning evil in a humble attempt to save souls that are being led away with the dead tree. In the big picture, we see that true charity has grown cold. There

is not and cannot be any real love in that which is cut away and cast off to die and eventually be thrown into the eternal fires of Hell.

Real love is found hidden deep in the roots of Tradition and Faith of the True Catholic Church. The condemnation of evils found in the councils of the True Church are not examples of hatred or bigotry. These are examples of true love of souls, as the Church seeks to save them from the evils they are following.

As we feel the isolation from the world and suffer under the accusations of being hateful, bigots, narrow-minded, etc. let us recall that the world has done the same to Jesus Christ. May we rejoice to be found worthy to suffer all this in His Name – to die to the world and have the world dead to us. In the midst of carrying this cross, let us truly remain humble as we beg of God the grace to persevere, knowing that without Him, His mercy, and grace; we too, will soon fall and be condemned with the many.

THE PRETENSE OF LOVE

Father Joseph Noonan, OFM

God created man because of His love for us. He wanted us to see His infinite goodness, but He also wanted us to have the opportunity to be with Him in Heaven for all eternity. Yes, these thoughts are the same basic ones which young children are taught as they prepare for their First Holy Communion and First Confession.

So why is it that many have the desire to constantly complicate the simple? The answer is rather simple, also. They do not love God as much as they should and allow their wills to interfere with God's Will. Far too many do not realize this and others are really good at denying it.

In creating man God did not make life so complicated that it would be overly difficult or mysterious in order to save one's soul. Man has allowed himself to be fooled into thinking there is something more or greater than loving God in all of its simplicity. Spiritual traps and distractions of this world prove a constant

smokescreen for far too many otherwise good people. The end result is that Love is not loved as God desires of us.

When Love is not loved it brings with it a host of crosses and burdens that would otherwise not be there. We become our own worst enemy. The tragedy of this thought is that most are truly unaware of the effect it has upon life which often turns us away from True Love. This is, indeed, the greatest of mistakes in this life, for we have been created to first love God above all else. God makes our desire to love Him simple, but man has mostly complicated this because he has a conflict. He must choose between God and His creation, whether it be other people or things that ultimately provides a fatal distraction from the reason for our creation.

True love of God requires among other things the need to be selfless. One must consider himself last among God and men. This is not easily accomplished unless the person

is blessed with supernatural grace. If we make use of this supernatural aid, then loving God is not only easy but quite desirable.

Religious life provides the best possible conditions to express a proper love of God. The vocation of the religious is to focus ALL of his efforts on God, the Faith, and salvation of souls. The hours of meditation over many years allow the disposed soul to unite himself with his Creator. The spiritual union which may result from these efforts is an excellent example of the desired love of God for which we have been created.

The Catholic priest at the altar is in the best possible position to express his love for God in a manner that many are otherwise unable to do. He offers Holy Mass and renews the Eternal Sacrifice which is the single greatest act of love for man. Assuming the best possible disposition of the priest, he is able to receive a superabundant amount of grace thus making it possible to unite himself ever so closely with Our Lord. There have been many of saintly priests who have shed tears of

joy while at the altar, thus expressing their love of God while offering the greatest Act of Love in this life.

Another of those comparatively unknown or misguided aspects of this life is that we have been created to love and to be loved. Sin and bad judgment often get in the way of a soul living a happy, peaceful life, i.e., one that is in the state of supernatural grace as a result of this truth.

The sins of the Sixth and Ninth Commandments are a testament to man's failures. These sins are perhaps the best example of man's selfishness. They are all about satisfying his lower passions which are in fact an expression of guttural selfishness. Some will believe this is an example of self-love but is actually an act of self-hate. Why self-hate? The person who has little regard for his soul does not truly love himself. This may not be consciously realized but does describe why a person acts in this manner.

Many are able to confuse themselves in such a way so as to fool or trick their minds and hearts. Why else would they

do these sinful things and try to justify these spiritual acts of treason? Simply, they con-fuse the true love of oneself with the hatred of oneself. How does this confusion occur? It occurs because they do not know God. They do not have a true love of their Creator.

This is a sad and unfortunate thing, but it has been the core struggle of man since the Fall. Were not Adam and Eve fooled because of selfishness? Are not souls ensnared due to a misguided love of themselves?

There is a basic principle in the spiritual life. It is to know oneself. The tragedy of far too many is that they do not know themselves and they do not realize that they do not know themselves. Therefore, they easily and continually fall into one spiritual trap after another.

Perhaps the most common example of this type of mistake is those people who make the error of marrying the wrong person or of marrying without a vocation to this state. Those who make this mistake usually allow their emotions (or their passions) to guide them. Rarely are we

able to make a good and proper decision under these conditions.

If one desires to love God above all else, he must make God the top priority in his life. Nothing else must supersede God regardless of its importance or priority. If this is accomplished then loving one's neighbor (everyone else) will be easy and very much desired. The problems of married life would be greatly reduced and family life would be quite peaceful and happy.

Love is the most talked and sung about topic in the world, but is the most difficult aspect of our lives to properly accomplish. God has made loving Him and one's neighbor an easy thing to accomplish. Man, though, has complicated this part of his life because of selfishness. If you are earnest in your desire to know how much you love God, examine your selfishness and you will find the answer. Empty your being of all selfishness and you will find plenty of room for loving God.

IS GOD CALLING YOU?

“Be not conformed to this world; but be reformed in the newness of your mind, that you may prove what is the good, and the acceptable, and the perfect will of God.”

Romans 12:2

Do you love serving God and neighbor?

Do you find yourself increasingly unsatisfied by the life of the world?

Do you yearn for something more?

Not all of us are meant for marriage or a life in the world. Some souls are set aside by God for special tasks. These are the souls that find joy and contentment in the religious life or sacred priesthood.

Do not be deterred by what you think you know or by what the world tells you. Find out for yourself. If you feel called, then at least learn more.

Any happiness we may have on earth and all the joy we hope for in heaven depend on answering God’s individual call for us. The sooner we do His Will, the happier we will be.



Learn to Pray by Praying

To the saints, the problem of living reduced itself to the following: praying and forgetting self. "Of course," you may say, "we all know that. But isn't the real question how to pray and how to forget self?" No, not immediately. The first thing you have to do is set yourself to pray. *Do* the thing. Then you will learn, as you go along, how it is done. Then you will learn, if you are faithful in the exercise of it, to forget self. Start off by wanting to pray. Start off by **deciding** to pray — always. You will be taught the rest.

If you do not pray, everything can disappoint you by going wrong. If you do pray, everything can still go wrong, but not in a way that will disappoint you. So the more you pray, the less things can disappoint you, because they are going wrong or not going wrong is, to you, now, not the whole story. By praying, you have got yourself into the position of being able to draw success out of failure. You now know that you are praying not for success, but for the glory of God. And God's glory can be served just as well in failure as in success.

But it is even simpler than that. Pray, and do not think of failure or success. You cannot measure either of them anyway, so why bother? Disappointment need not enter into your calculation at all. You have not the least idea what will be the outcome of your prayer — except that certainly, it will be pleasing to God. None of the other effects matters. If you really grasp this fact and do not try to go back on your prayer, *you are forgetting self*.

On the other hand, do not pray, and your judgment, already weakened by the effects of Original Sin, is blinded by material values. Moral principles are only half seen by people who do not pray. Not only is the judgment, without prayer to help it, likely to make many more false decisions, but without prayer

to teach it the doctrine of drawing success from failure, it is also likely to misread the consequences of its decision. Give up prayer, and you no longer see the inwardness of things; you see only the surface. And with nothing to go by but effects, statistics, and evidence supplied by natural perceptions, you arrive at the wrong conclusions.

Prayer is not, as we have seen on another page, a means supplied by God of making our lives run more smoothly. The first purpose of prayer is a means supplied by God of making our love explicit. Nevertheless, prayer *is* an answer to life on earth. Indeed it is *the* answer. This is, after all, what we would expect if we accept Our Lord's words: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added to you." (Matthew 6:33) In proportion as you draw near to Truth by prayer, you inevitably increase your own conformity to the true pattern of yourself as it exists in the mind of God. And this means that, whatever it feels like, your life is going right.

pp. 61-62

Holiness for Housewives (and other working women)



ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

An Autobiography

CHAPTER ONE EARLIEST MEMORIES

It is to you, dearest Mother,¹ to you who are doubly a mother to me, that I am about to confide the story of my soul. When you asked me to write it I feared the task might unsettle me, but Our Lord has deigned to make me understand that by simple obedience I shall please Him best. I begin therefore to sing what must be my eternal song: “*The Mercies of the Lord.*”²

¹ Her sister Pauline - in religion, Mother Agnes of Jesus. She was then as now (1926) Prioress of the Carmel of Lisieux. At the urgent request of her community, Pius XI has confirmed her in that office for life. Two other sisters of our Saint have survived in the Carmel, and one in the Visitation Convent at Caen, to rejoice in the marvelous triumph of May 17, 1925.

Here begins what St. Thérèse in her manuscript calls *THE STORY OF THE SPRINGTIME OF A LITTLE WHITE FLOWER.*

This first portion of the Autobiography, written in 1895, closes with Chapter IX.

~Rev. Thomas N. Taylor, Editor

² Ps. lxxxviii. 1.

Before setting about my task, I knelt before the statue of Our Lady which has given us so many proofs of Our heavenly Mother's loving care. As I knelt, I begged of that dear Mother to guide my hand, and so ensure that only what was pleasing to her should find place here. Then, opening the Gospels, my eyes fell on these words: “*Jesus going up into a mountain called unto Him whom He would Himself.*”³

They threw a clear light upon the mystery of my vocation and of my entire life, but above all upon the favors Our Lord has granted to my soul. He does not call those who are worthy, but those whom He will. As St. Paul says: “*God will have mercy on whom He will have mercy.*”⁴ So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.”⁵

³ Mark iii. 13.

⁴ Cf. Exod. xxxiii. 19

⁵ Cf. Rom. ix. 16.

I often asked myself why God has preferences, why all souls do not receive an equal measure of grace. I was filled with wonder when I saw extraordinary favors showered on sinners such as St. Paul, St. Augustine, St. Mary Magdalen, and many others whom He forced, so to speak, to receive His grace. In reading the lives of the Saints, I was surprised to see there were certain privileged souls whom Our Lord favored from the cradle to the grave, allowing no obstacle in their path which might keep them from mounting towards Him, and preventing sin from soiling the spotless brightness of their baptismal robe. And again, it puzzled me why so many poor savages should die without having even heard the name of God.

Our Lord has deigned to explain to me this mystery. He showed me the book of Nature, and I understood that every flower created by Him is beautiful, that the brilliance of the rose and the whiteness of the lily do not lessen the perfume of the violet or the sweet simplicity of the daisy. I understood that if all the lowly flowers wished to be roses, Nature would lose her

springtide beauty, and the fields would no longer be enameled with lovely hues.

It is the same in the world of souls, Our Lord's living garden. He has been pleased to create great Saints who may be compared to the lily and the rose; but He has also created lesser ones, who must be content to be daisies or simple violets flowering at His feet, and whose mission is to gladden His Divine Eyes when He deigns to look down on them: the more joyfully they do His will, the greater is their perfection.

I understood this also, that God's love is made manifest as well in a simple soul which does not resist His grace as in one more highly endowed. In fact, the characteristic of love being self-abasement, were all souls to resemble the holy Doctors who have illumined the Church, it would seem as if God in coming to them did not stoop low enough. He has created, however, the little child who knows nothing and can but utter feeble cries, and the poor savage who has only the natural law to guide him, and it is to their hearts that He deigns to stoop. These are the field flowers whose simplicity

charms Him; and by His condescension to them Our Savior shows His infinite greatness. As the sun shines both on the cedar and on the smallest flower, so the Divine Sun illumines each soul, great or lowly, and all things work together for its good, just as in Nature the seasons are so disposed that on the appointed day the humblest daisy shall unfold its petals.

You will wonder, little Mother, to what all this is leading, for I have said nothing yet that sounds like the story of my life; but did you not tell me to write quite freely whatever came into my mind? It will not be a biography, properly so called, that you will find in these pages, but my thoughts about the graces Our Lord has been pleased to bestow on His spouse.

I am now at a time of life when I can look back on the past, for my soul has been refined in the crucible of interior and exterior trials. Now, like a flower after the storm, I can raise my head and see that the words of the psalm are realized in me: "*The Lord is my Shepherd and I shall want nothing. He hath set me in a place of pasture. He hath brought me up on the*

water of refreshment. He hath converted my soul. He hath led me on the paths of justice for His own Name's sake. For though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evils, for Thou art with me."⁶

To me, He has indeed been always "*compassionate and merciful, long-suffering and plenteous in mercy.*"⁷ So it gives me great joy, dear Mother, to come to you and sing His unspeakable mercies. It is for *you alone*⁸ that I write the story of the Little Flower gathered by Jesus. This thought will help me to speak freely, without troubling either about style or about the many digressions I shall make; for a mother's heart always understands her child, even when it can only lisp, and therefore I am quite sure of being understood by the little Mother who made ready my heart and offered it to Our Lord.

⁶ Cf. Ps. xxii. 1-4.

⁷ Ps. cii. 8.

⁸ *Italics her own; and so, throughout the Autobiography, with the exception of quotations from Holy Scripture. [T.N.T.]*

If a little flower could speak, it seems to me that it would tell quite simply what God had done for it, without hiding any of its gifts. It would not say, under the pretext of humility, that it was not pretty and had not a sweet scent, that the sun had withered its petals, or the storm bruised its stem - if it knew such were not the case.

The flower now telling her tale rejoices in having to publish the wholly undeserved favors of Our Lord. She knows that in herself she had nothing worthy of attracting Him; His mercy it

was that filled her with good things—His mercy alone. He allowed her to see the light in a holy soil fragrant with the odor of purity. He caused eight fair white lilies to spring up there before she appeared. In His love He willed to preserve her from the poisoned breath of the world, for hardly had her petals unfolded when this good Master transplanted her to the mountain of Carmel, Our Lady's garden of delight.⁹

To be Continued.

⁹*Carmel means a garden. Formerly proverbial for its luxuriant beauty, the range of Carmel is still remarkable for its trees and flowers and sweet-smelling plants. Hermits dwelt in its caves at an early date, and during the second half of the twelfth century St. Berthold, with ten companions, settled there from Europe near the grotto once occupied by Elias. According to tradition St. Berthold was favored with an apparition of the prophet. The newcomers built a chapel in honor of the Mother of God, and the "Hermits of Our Lady of Mount Carmel" multiplied so rapidly that in 1208 the Patriarch of Jerusalem, St. Albert, drew up for them a rule of life. Pope Honorius III, who approved of the Dominicans in 1216, and of the Franciscans in 1223, gave his approbation to the Carmelite rule in 1226. A cruel persecution by the*

Turks, in 1251, compelled the Hermits to return to Europe.

In 1245, Innocent IV raised the eremitical Congregation to the rank of a mendicant Order. That same year, the first general chapter was held at Avlesford in Kent, when an English Carmelite, St. Simon Stock, was elected general. The famous apparition of Our Lady to this Saint took place near Winchester, July 16, 1251. Giving him a brown scapular, she promised that those who died wearing it would not suffer from the eternal flames.



A CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

BOOK TWO

Father Anthony Lentz, OFM

CONTINUED

NATIONALISM AND EDUCATION

The very concept of nationalism had its beginnings in ancient history; Sparta being the classic example. Modern nationalism had its origins in early Renaissance period. In the fifteenth-century the consciousnesses of England, Spain, Portugal, and France grew into a national spirit with the rise of national language, literature and culture. In the eighteenth-century the national spirit was a movement of the “enlightened philosophers,” which resulted in both the French Revolution of 1789 and then the Napoleonic era. But more precisely, modern nationalism is the product of nineteenth-century political and economic life.

Drs. Redden and Ryan give a very concise explanation of what nationalism is and what is its focus with regards to education. They write: “*According the philosophy of nationalism, man, culture, and life are*

essentially the products of the nation. Therefore, national unity in ideals, culture, patriotism, human interests, and subservience to the state in all its policies, are made the major ob-jects of the school.” Nationalism receives its roots from natural-ism which replaces nature with nation. The individual is subservient to the nation, thus making the individual’s personal interests and welfare a secondary matter. This is an extreme form of nationalism which is given the name of “totalitarianism.” In many ways it resembles the ancient Spartans in the fact that their main focus is on the physical education. Their goal is to build strong bodies able to endure excessive hardships and thus forming personalities which are able to overcome great difficulties. This is not bad in itself because it is a form of “will training,” but it should never exclude the intellectual and especially the spiritual education. There are two intellectual concepts which are at the root of present-day totalitarianism: 1) the essential

and fundamental basis of life and of all history is struggle and conflict; and 2) the complete denial of ultimate truth and absolute values. The first concept is related to Darwin's theory of "survival of the fittest," makes life nothing more than a "dog-eat-dog-world." The second with its denying the ultimate and absolute truths is identified with pragmatism, where only the concrete situations determine what is ethically good or bad.

The objections which Catholicism has with nationalism occurs when it takes this extreme form. It openly contradicts the parent's God-given right to educate the child. Its naturalistic origin disregards the fact that all men are first and foremost children of God and that all men must work out their salvation. The state's true purpose is to protect and safeguard the God-given rights of all men. It is meant to help the individual citizen to become a well functioning social being and to reach his personal intellectual and moral potential. Thus when the concept of nationalism is understood correctly, it is not opposed to Catholic teaching. To teach youth to have a patriotic love

for their country, a love that engenders the virtues of bravery, courage, and obedience to legitimate authority, is the true concept of nationalistic education. This helps towards the proper development of the individual and society as a whole. It instills in children the proper appreciation, love, and respect for their fatherland. This is where a Catholic philosophy of education is most appropriate because Catholic children are taught all of these virtues. A Catholic, properly educated, is a boon for a nation because as an individual he seeks to master himself and to deny himself for the sake of something greater. These qualities are, of course, elevated to man's supernatural end, but that does not prevent them from applying to his temporal happiness and prosperity.

COMMUNISM AND EDUCATION

Communism is founded on the philosophy of dialectical materialism, interpreted by Marx and Engels, and reduced to practice in Russia in 1917 by Lenin and his followers. There is no space in this section to give a detailed account of the

philosophy of communism, but the following descriptive definition of communism emphasizes its foregoing essential characteristics: "*Communism is a materialistic philosophy of life which advocates the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat in all countries throughout the world by violent revolution or by any means which may be deemed necessary in order to ultimately arrive at and preserve a classless society, in which there shall be no private ownership and in which all property shall be vested in the community as a whole, and all labor and human activities organized for the common benefit by a centralized group of workers' representatives.*" (R. Feely, *Just What is Communism?* Page 5) This definition clearly shows that this ideology is opposed to the Catholic Philosophy of Life. First, it denies legitimate authority given by God. Second, it does not respect human life because it uses violence as a means to achieve its ends. Third, its socialistic concept denies the individuality of man and man's entire nature as a whole. All of these are opposed to Catholic teaching and its effects on education are no different!

Drs. Redden and Ryan state clearly the intention of Communistic education: "*The aim of communistic education, in general, is to promote the development of the harmonious interests of all by the acquisition of communistic culture and knowledge which will enable everyone to become the master of the economic organization. Thus, each one will be fitted to serve the community in whatever kind of work the occasion may demand.*" All educational agencies become means for the dissemination and inculcation of communistic propaganda. Their curriculum seeks to accomplish three immediate things: 1) a rapid increase in the number of those who can read, this is a necessary tool in the spread of propaganda; 2) the technical training of industrial workers, with a close articulation of manual work in the school with the surrounding industrial life and 3) the complete destruction of organized religion.

The cancerous effect which Communism has had on the whole world and that it is the anti-thesis of Catholicism is clearly summed up by His Holiness Pope Pius XI: "*It [Communism] is a system full*

of errors and sophisms. It is in opposition both to reason and to divine revelation. It subverts the social order, because it means the destruction of its foundations; because it ignores the true origin and purpose of the State; because it denies the rights, dignity, and liberty of human personality.” (Divini Re-demptoris, Social Wellsprings)

EXPERIMENTALISM AND EDUCATION/EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

The close connection between these two chapters allows for an amalgamation of them into one brief section. Experimentalism is a relative philosophy that teaches truth to be nothing more than the product of constant change, experience, and experimentation. It promotes no true morality because it is guided by “felt needs,” which merely adapts to a group “felt need.” It clearly denies the immortality of the soul because they teach that man is nothing more than a highly developed brute animal. Free-will for the experimentalist is not something given to man by God, but it is something which man merely acquires over time. It denies all supernatural realities including God. What is even worse, is

that by their teaching that man can “remake the world to meet his needs and desires,” makes him into his own god.

There are eight tenets of experimentalism which are listed by Drs. Redden and Ryan. The last two describes its false influence upon both education and the concept of democracy: “1) Education is a continuous reconstruction of experiences wherein the individual is the end and society the means. 2) Democracy is an “inclusive way of life” requiring a continual “reconstruction of beliefs and standards.” A “continuous re-construction of experiences” is a system of education which has no fundamental principles for its foundation, and this is especially dangerous when it comes to ethics and morals. This danger is demonstrated in its false concept of democracy for which they require a “continual reconstruction of beliefs and standards.”

If you were to ask a hundred people, “What is democracy?” you would probably be given a hundred different answers. This term has been so distorted and overly sentimentalized through-out the centuries that it has

lost practically all meaning. All a person has to do is read the Declaration of Independence and he will see clearly listed those fundamental values from which a true concept of democracy is based upon: *“Certain un-alienable rights ... life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”* This short phrase gives us insight into the minds of the Founding Fathers, and it clearly points out that their concept of democracy is a Christian concept based upon the sound principles of Scholasticism. Drs. Redden and Ryan write: *“It was recognized by the Founding Fathers...that religion and morality are indispensable to a democracy, and vital to its system of education. This recognition is only right and reasonable, because a society and its government cannot be truly free and democratic unless the members that compose it recognize God as the Creator, from whom come all their rights, and to whom they owe duties. For if it is held, as some mistakenly hold, that rights come from the state and not from a Supreme Creator, then it must be remembered that if the state can give, the state can take away.”*

The correct understanding of freedom is closely related to the correct understanding of democratic education. *“This true freedom,”* as Drs. Redden and Ryan describe, *“may be enjoyed in full measure only when the spiritual aspect of man’s nature is developed in harmony with man’s other powers, physical, intellectual, moral, and aesthetic. The cultivation of this spiritual aspect is essentially the very bases of true democratic education.”* The truly spiritual is only found in Divine Revelation and its teachings are personified in the example of Our Lord Jesus Christ. From Christ we have learned the true meaning of justice, charity and self-sacrifice; which are principles that Christian democracy aspires towards. Only by following Christ’s example can man achieve true liberty in this life, that is, freedom from sin. This freedom will evidently lead him to his eternal reward with God in Heaven where freedom truly rings.



THE GIFT OF ONESELF

*From the French of
THE REVEREND JOSEPH
SCHRYVERS, C.S.S.R.*

*Translated by a Religious of Carmel,
Bettendorf, Iowa*

PART ONE

The Principles of Self-Surrender

CHAPTER THREE

ARTICLE 1

THE SOUL IS WRONG IN EXAGGERATING THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

God is the Sovereign Master of all things. He is the Principle of my being, the End of my existence, the Divine Model of my life. Over me He exercises an absolute and universal power.

Ah! I tremble before this rigorous and grave obligation of belonging entirely to God. Without committing robbery, I can keep back from Him no action, no moment.



How can I consecrate to Him an entire life composed of a thousand daily actions? Ceaselessly, the mind conceives thoughts, the heart produces affections. How can I govern all this interior world?

The strong or unsubdued passions are in constant action. With difficulty the senses submit to the yoke of the will; the imagination believes herself mistress of the house and overthrows all interior order; reason is deceived by the senses and seduced by appearances of truth; the will itself is feeble and feeds upon secret

attachments; it is in con-
nivance with the enemy.

And how can one consecrate
an entire life to God when
exterior obstacles are
multiplied around the soul? If
she wills to give herself to
God, will these obstacles
permit her to do so? Numerous
are the enemies of God and
of piety; more numerous still
are indifferent and cowardly
men. Human respect is master
of the world. A smile, a sar-
castic remark, a clever phrase:
such things have turned more
souls from God than the demon
himself has done.

And moreover, how can one
securely arm himself against
the seductions of the world,
against the allurements of
vice, bad example, pernicious
maxims? Oh, how true it is
that those who would live
piously in Christ shall suffer
persecution! (II Tim. 3:12.)

And if only this life of
abandonment to God were to
last a limited time! But it
must be prolonged until one's
last breath. There must be no
respite, no ease, no
compromise; for all belongs

to God and must be given to
Him.

How can one always keep up
such a struggle against self,
exterior obstacles, and all
kinds of enemies? In the end,
the soul is worn out, the heart
is weary, the will is
weakened, routine takes the
place of fervor, indifference
succeeds to zeal, apathy is
substituted for the former
ardor. Farewell, generous
designs, noble desires, heroic
sacrifices! You were but
beautiful dreams, shadowy
hopes! Farewell to sanctity! It
is too hard. *Durus est hic
sermo, quis potest eum
audire?* Lord, Thy word,
calling me to such a life, is
too hard, and who can hear
it?

A dark picture, indeed; My
soul, wilt thou also go away
and abandon the Saviour
Who calls thee to follow
Him?

O Jesus, to Whom should I
go? Hast Thou not the words
of eternal life? Thou hast
said: "My yoke is sweet and
My burden light." (Matt.
11:30.) "Come to Me, all you
that labor and are burdened,

and I will refresh you." (Matt. 11:28.) It is not so difficult to follow Thee. They who would make me believe that sanctity is out of reach of my weakness are deceiving me.

To all Thy creatures Thou hast given over and above what is necessary. They lack nothing essential to the attainment of their end. Am I alone unfortunate, in not having in abundance the means of sanctification?

I see that everywhere, in profusion, Thou hast provided the necessities of life: water, air, earth fail no one. Can it be then that the indispensable elements will be wanting to my supernatural life, which is much more precious in Thine Eyes? Oh, I cannot believe it! Thy Wisdom has foreseen all and rules all; Thy Power has prepared all; Thy Goodness has given all that can make the spiritual life easy for me.

Jesus, I do not wish to exaggerate the difficulties in the way of perfection. I leave that conduct to Thine enemies. Do they strive to keep souls away from Thy

Divine Heart? I desire to draw near to Thee, leading many souls. Jesus, teach us not to encumber our way with imaginary obstacles, not to load ourselves with useless burdens, not to lose ourselves in hidden bypaths, not to exhaust our strength in imprudent marches.

Show us the wide, straight way, and lead us by the hand. We will never forsake Thee. We will go with Thee to the very summit of the mountain. There, Jesus, we shall repose in Thee, and rejoice with the legions of generous souls that have gone before us.

ARTICLE 2

SUFFICIENT FOR THE DAY IS THE EVIL THEREOF

To what may we reduce this universal and absolute law that we must give ourselves to God? It reduces itself to the duty of the present moment.

To sanctify an entire life—this means to consecrate the actual present moment to God. The past is no more; the future has not yet come; only

the present is real, and it brings with it a duty.

Ah, how unreasonable it is to weigh down one's spirit by the consideration of thousands of actions to be performed for God, of sacrifices to be incessantly renewed, of numberless difficulties to be surmounted! That is an abstract view of sanctity, through the distorting glass of the imagination. Reality, actual life, is one deed to be done for God, one duty to fulfil, one cross to embrace, one sorrow to bear; sometimes, too, it is one relaxation to take under the Eyes of God, one joy to share with Him, one pleasant evening to pass near to Him.

To reduce sanctity to this single actual duty is to make it easy; it is to enter into the plans of God, Who does not desire to load us with an impossible burden. He bids us live from day to day, to take no thought for the morrow. "The morrow will be solicitous for itself. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." (Matt. 5:34.)

To let the imagination gather all the stones scattered on the road which must be traversed, to build them into a mountain which obstructs the way, then to say sadly, while folding one's arms: "What is the use of undertaking the journey? Never can I surmount such an obstacle!": this is to deceive oneself and to make happiness impossible. The wise traveler knows well that stones will be found all along the way, but that, with a little good will, he can pass them without striking against any of them.

Imagination treats souls in a detestable way. It deprives them of half their rightful joys, and it poisons the rest. It recalls past sorrows, causes the soul to live them all over again, and intensifies the bitterness. Mistakes, contradictions, slights, reproaches, injuries, injustice: all are retained by the memory, reproduced by the imagination, and are even developed, enlarged, and colored. The future, which these souls do not yet possess, already haunts them with shadowy fears, hopes

which can never be realized, and absurd premonitions.

Ah, how well has Jesus bidden us become as little children! The child does not dream of the past, still less of the future. He is near his mother; under her eyes he is at play; he knows that she is taking care of him.

O my soul, become a child again! Cast aside all care of the past, all fear or disturbing premonition of the future; remain near God in the present. Thou shalt be happy and tranquil; thou shalt have command of all the energy of thy will, all the attention of thy mind, for the duty of the present.

The actual moment alone is of value for thee. It alone comprises immense good. At every moment thou canst enrich thyself for Heaven, for each moment holds God.

Oh, the blindness of souls! They look for sanctity outside themselves; they traverse the universe; they bury themselves in the past, and they peer into the future; they pursue shadows. And lo! near to them, in the present moment, is perfection with all its goods, all its gifts, all its riches; near to them is an ocean of sanctity into which they might plunge.

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FRANCISCAN SAINTS

FEBRUARY 6TH

Servant of God

Mary Teresa Bonzel

Virgin, Third Order

A person who was acquainted with her in life writes that Mother Mary Teresa lived a holy life, practiced many heroic acts of virtues, and became a brilliant model for all the congregation which she had founded and which was so richly blessed by God. The writer then expresses the assured hope that the day may not be far distant on which she will be honored and invoked as Blessed.

Mary Teresa saw the light of day in the little town of Olpe, in southern Westphalia, as the eldest daughter of the merchant Bonzel. This was in 1830, on the feast of the Stigmata of our Holy Father St. Francis. A singular coincidence, when we remember that she was called to present to the Franciscan family a flourishing new branch, to become the foundress of a

congregation, and to renew in her person the spirit of the Poor Man of Assisi.

Already at her first Holy Communion she espoused herself with our Saviour and prayed again and again: "O Lord, I am your victim, accept me as your victim, do not reject me." She entered the Third Order when she was not quite twenty years of age. Her whole being impelled her toward convent life. But a heart ailment and the opposition of her mother crossed all her finest plans.

Then it was that a devout woman made the unusual statement: "You are called to found a convent of perpetual adoration in your native town." Providence guided her. Already on December 30, 1860, Mother Mary Teresa and eight young women who were similarly minded,

received the holy habit in the parish church at Olpe. After many difficulties, the foundation was incorporated in the great family of the saint of Assisi under the name of the Poor Franciscans of Perpetual Adoration.

The members pledged themselves to acquire the spirit of the Poor Man of Assisi, to keep perpetual adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, to engage in the education of youth and the care of the poor and the sick.

When death summoned the foundress to receive her well-earned reward on February 6, 1905, her sisters were active already in both the Old and the New World. The servant of God had no doubt earned this blessing from on high, particularly through her Franciscan spirit, the piety which permeated her whole being, her willing and resigned acceptance of bodily and spiritual afflictions coupled with complete trust in God, and last, but not least, through the charity which she never refused either to her sisters or to the poor, the sick, and poor sinners. "To become all to all" was the motto of her life, and

it appears that even now she wishes to become all to all through her intercession at the throne of God.

ON CHARITY TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOR

1.) Charity will always bring us blessings. It was not in vain that the Saviour said: "As long as you did it to the least of my brethren you did it to me" (Matt. 25:40). From this we can understand that the great and tender charity of the servant of God Mother Mary Teresa laid the foundation for her holiness and merited so many blessings for her community. — Love God in your neighbor, and do good to your neighbor, if you wish to receive special graces from God.

2.) The love of God must be joined to the love of our neighbor. Thus it was in the case of Mother Mary Teresa. That is the reason why she united the works of mercy with perpetual adoration of her dear Lord in the tabernacle and with deep-seated piety. To do good from mere natural motives or even from selfish motives is no virtue. "Do not

also the heathens and the publicans do this?" (Matth. 5: 46, 47).

3.) It is an essential point of charity that we bear with the weaknesses and faults of our neighbor. "Bear ye one another's burdens" (Gal. 6:2). That, too, Mother Mary Teresa did most faithfully. Such patience and self-denial are more pleasing to God than a long series of prayers and works of penance. "To forget injuries, and to forgive one's enemies is the most godly act of penance." — Have you always fostered patient and forbearing charity?

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Thou dost permit, O Lord, that to those who love Thee, all things tend to their good. Grant us the imperishable sentiments of charity, so that in those things which we feel impelled to do in charity through Thy inspiration, we may not be made to waver because of any adversity. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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CHAPTER III IN HOLY MASS JESUS ADORES AND HONORS GOD FOR US

*In our name the Divine Child
adores and honors His
Eternal Father.*

The story is told of a holy soul, burning with love for God, that while she was repeating, "O my God, my God, would that I had as many hearts and as many tongues as there are leaves on the trees, grains of sand on the seashore, and drops of water in the ocean, that I might love and adore Thee as Thou dost deserve; rather, would that I were able to love and honor Thee more than all creatures together, more than Thy angels, more than all Paradise," she heard the Lord say: "Be consoled, my daughter, be

consoled. By assisting reverently at Holy Mass, you can give me glory infinitely great."

Do not wonder at this. It is really so. By assisting at Mass with reverence and devotion, we pay God a tribute, an infinite honor, which is superior to the honor which all the angels and saints of themselves could pay Him. In the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass Jesus unites with us in honoring God. In fact, it is Jesus Christ Himself Who renders tribute to God, Who honors God; He does this with us and for us.

Jesus Christ is infinite: therefore, the honor and glory which we give to God when we assist at Mass, with Jesus, through Jesus, and by Jesus, is an infinite tribute.

Here, dear reader, in the Holy

Sacrifice of the Mass is the easiest and surest manner of honoring God, of giving glory to Him, our Creator, our Father, thus paying the first debt we owe Him. But to do so it is necessary to hear Mass with lively faith and great devotion.

In the life of Blessed Dominic Savio (a pupil of St. John Bosco, the wonder-worker), who died in a state of holiness at only fifteen, we read that he was accustomed to assist at Mass with so much piety that often, especially after Holy Communion, he was rapt in ecstasy. He would rise several inches from the ground and remain with joined hands and happy countenance, his eyes fixed on the altar for a

considerable time, until his companions or Superiors would with difficulty succeed in distracting him to recall him to his duties. In these ecstasies, little Dominic would speak familiarly with God, and he often received important revelations. In such moments he fully understood how sweet it is to adore God.

Accustomed as we are to hear Mass hurriedly, with languid faith and distracted devotion, we cannot comprehend the great gift as the saints did; but if we have courage and good will we will gradually attain to such understanding of the Mass as they had.

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