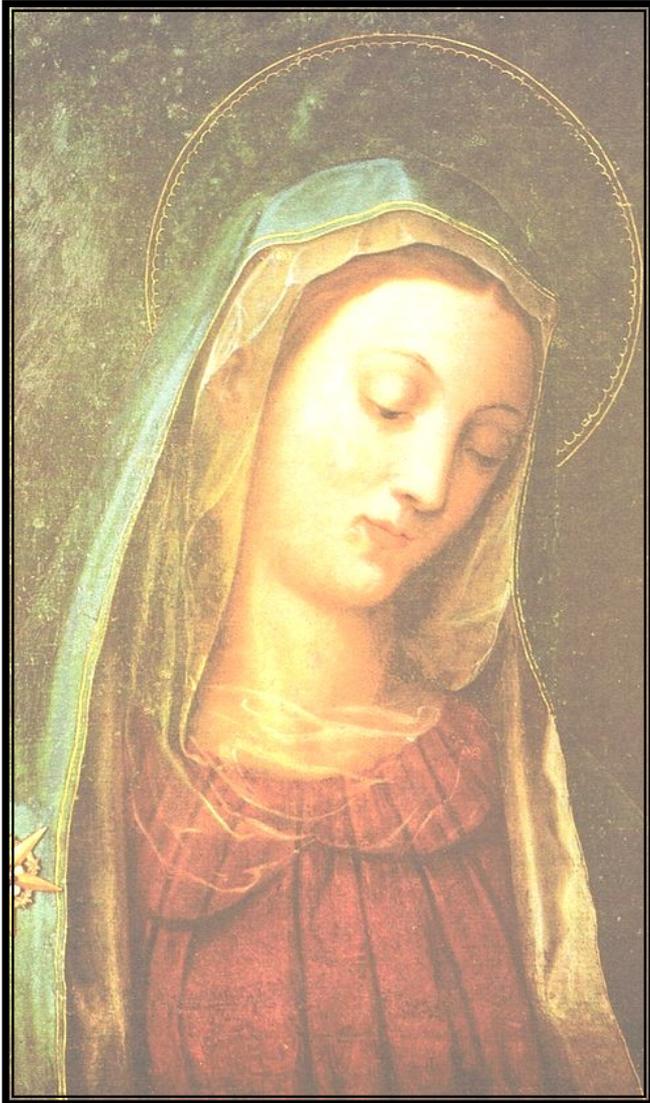


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*In essentia - Unitas. In dubio - Libertas.
In omnibus - Caritas.*

THE SERAPH

TELL THE TRUTH

Bishop Giles, OFM

There is a children's story "The King's New Clothes" which is presented to children to teach them an important lesson of honesty and a love of the truth rather than human respect. In this story, the vain king desires a new set of clothes and a scam artist appears with some "magic" cloth and agrees to make the king the finest clothes ever. The vain king is easily convinced that this magic cloth can only be seen by good people and it is the finest cloth ever made. No one can see this cloth, but all pretend that they can because they do not want to be labeled as bad. The scammer pretends to measure and sew this cloth and the great day arrives and the king parades in front of the kingdom in his underwear but only a small child has the integrity and honesty to speak the truth – the king is naked.

In this world of "political correctness" that we find ourselves in today, this seems to be a worthwhile story to re-instruct ourselves with. We are faced with many instances of "respecting" all manner of deviancy. We are not allowed to demand that honesty and integrity and all that is good should be respected. Goodness and truth have no place in

"political correctness," only evil and deviancy are to be respected and promoted in this inversion of right order.

The unnatural homosexual unions are off-limits from any condemnation or even admonition. The murder of children still in the womb is tolerated and must not be condemned. Evil is constantly placed on equal ground with the truth, to eventually eliminate the truth and hold only evil in high esteem or respect.

Religion and faith are now considered backward or superstitious – something that only the ignorant follow. The "wise" and the "intelligent" in this world have freed themselves from all restraint of morality and doctrine. They have freed themselves from God – just as Lucifer and the fallen angels have done.

We must respond to this inversion of right order with honesty and integrity, not with political correctness that is afraid to speak the truth, for fear of offending some delusional soul. We must remember that it is charity to speak the truth, in spite of the world telling us that it is uncharitable to speak the truth and offend those living a lie of self-delusion. The boy

who wants to pretend he is a girl needs to hear the truth; he needs spiritual and/or psychological help. While pretend may be okay in our games or play, we must not allow ourselves to confuse this pretend with reality. We must leave the pretend behind and embrace the truth and the reality. The sooner these delusional souls understand this, the better off they will be. The charitable thing to do is to help them understand and return to reality.

God made two different sexes. We are either male or female. If God has given us male genitalia, then it is God's Holy Will that we live and fulfill our lives as men. If God has given us female genitalia, then it is His Holy Will that we live and fulfill our lives as women. To try and change our very biological natures is inherently a rebellion against God. Medical science may be able to cosmetically destroy God's design of a person, but this does not give them the right to do so. Cosmetically destroying one gender and rebuilding the opposite gender in a person does not give them the opposite gender, but makes them aberrations – they become cosmetically one gender while genetically they are the other. This is an insult to God and His design and creation.

This is demonic. The devils have since the beginning of time

sought to destroy the works of God. The greatest work of God is mankind that is made in His Image and Likeness. When the demons convince us to mutilate, degrade, disfigure, or even rebelliously fight against God's plan, they are not only destroying us but they are waging war against God. We become pawns in their futile war against God. They will lose and spend eternity in Hell with all those who cooperate with them or willingly give themselves over to their perverse rebellion.

God does not put men in women's bodies, nor does He put women in men's bodies. Such talk is blasphemy. God does not intend for women to be sexually active with women or for men to be sexually active with men. Men are created by God to be sexually involved only with women. Lesbianism and homosexuality are perversions of the Will of God. It is God's Holy Will (for those who are called to an active sexual life) that one man is united to only one woman in the bonds of holy matrimony. All deviations from this are demonic perversion and rebellion against God.

The killing of God-given life (inside the womb or outside the womb) is demonic and flies directly in the face of the Fifth Commandment of God: "Thou shall not kill." If we are honest

with ourselves our eyes tell us very clearly that these babies are human and are real. It is an illusion and fantasy that suggest otherwise.

This seems so simple and clear that even little children understand it, but why can't "adults" grasp this simple concept? It seems to be pride and vanity that will not allow them to speak the simple and honest truth. "Political correctness" is abhorrently incorrect. It is the "adults" and leaders of our society that are living in the realm of fantasy and pretend. We must return to the simple honesty and integrity of children if we desire to enter into the eternal Kingdom of Heaven. "Unless you become as little children you cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." (*Matt. 18:3*)

Jesus has foretold this time when men would call darkness light and light darkness. It seems unbelievable that men could become so blind, yet we see it every day in the world around us. The "political correctness" of this world tells us that: babies are not babies; boys are not boys and girls are not girls; that men can be united with men and women with women; that marriage is not for life or that marriage should not be monogamous; and so on. We find ourselves immersed in the world of men living in darkness believing or wishing that this

were light. Anyone that dares to contradict this illusion and lie is labeled as hateful when in all actuality the truth is the kindest and most loving thing that we can offer them.

May we never fear to speak the obvious truth even if it is not "politically correct" – even if it means that we must suffer for the truth. We must not become proud or boastful because we see the truth, but rather become ever more humble because God has spared us from this illusion. We must not become mean or hateful to those living in darkness, but rather ever more charitable to them in their weaknesses. This is what Jesus has taught us and He gave us the example as He died for us upon the cross of Calvary.

STANDING UP FOR THE TRUTH

Bishop Giles, OFM

From time to time it is good to remind ourselves or perhaps instruct ourselves in the truths of the Faith and where we stand in relation to those around us. In *The Seraph* we use the term “sede-vacante” frequently. This is often the only way to explain ourselves or our position to others. While it is sometimes uncomfortable to have to explain ourselves, we must do so for two reasons: 1) in defense of the truth and 2) out of love and concern for the souls of others.

The term “sede-vacante” literally means “empty chair.” It refers specifically to the chair of St. Peter / the Holy Roman See. We believe and hold that Pope Pius XII (who died in 1958) was the last true successor of St. Peter – the last to sit in the Chair of St. Peter and reign over the Holy Roman See as the universal pastor of the Roman Catholic Church. This makes all the succeeding claimants to this position false popes or anti-popes.

The basis for this position is found in the “Second Vatican Council” where a “new order” of rites and ceremonies was

introduced to supersede and supplant the rites and ceremonies codified and guaranteed forever true and valid by the Council of Trent. A new and unproven set of rites for all the Sacraments and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass were introduced and forced upon Catholics. Perhaps we should not use the terms “new” and “unproven” because these rites were composed with the aid of many Protestant sects. These Protestants have been using false rituals and doctrines for many years. They were invited to the “Council” to participate in creating these new rites and care was taken to be “politically correct” and not to offend any of their false beliefs. The “new rites” were consequently stripped of all Catholic dogma that is offensive to the heretics.

Because Protestants hate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and transubstantiation, the “new rite” of the Mass was made a “Memorial Meal” or celebration of the “Last Supper” rather than the Sacrifice of the Mass – which is one and the same Sacrifice with the Sacrifice of Calvary, where Jesus Christ is truly made present and offered in Sacrifice

upon our altars. In doing away with Sacrifice, the altar had to be ignored and/or replaced with a table which is more in conformity with a meal and more acceptable to the heretical beliefs of Protestants. The rites and ceremonies worshiping The Son of God in the Host or Holy Eucharist were watered down and done away with as the heretics reject this dogma and practice. They do not find belief in a symbolical presence within the ceremonies offensive. So we find the removal of many genuflections (acts of adoration), we find the communion rails were removed so that people received in a standing position a symbol of Jesus' Body but not The Body of Jesus Christ. From there they instituted "lay ministers" of this symbol and receiving of this symbol in the hands. It is not disrespectful or unbecoming to receive a symbol of Jesus standing or in our hands or from the hands of "lay-ministers," but it is disrespectful and unbecoming to receive The True Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ in this manner. We can receive bread like this, but not God.

Because Protestants hate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, they likewise hate the Holy Priesthood that is necessary to have this sacrifice. Therefore,

it was necessary to have a new rite of ordination that would essentially ordain or make a man a minister rather than a priest.

The same was done with all the other sacraments. They left no stone unturned in destroying the Roman Catholic Church in all Her rites and ceremonies, and then in all her doctrines. When they changed the law of worship they also changed the law of belief or doctrine. Hence, all the offensive doctrines of the Church had to be re-examined, re-defined, and ultimately destroyed so that they now conform to heretical Protestant beliefs. This is "political correctness" at its finest.

The simple truth which so many find "offensive" or not "politically correct" is that the "Second Vatican Council" created a new church and new religion that is in opposition to the true Holy Roman Catholic Church. The Novus Ordo (New Order) Church is not the Catholic Church but is another Protestant sect. Granted, it is a large one and has possession of once Catholic properties and titles, but it is not the Catholic Church.

This new church has its popes, but these are not Roman Catholic Popes. They are

conciliar popes or popes of the “Second Vatican Council” / popes of the Novus Ordo / New Order religion. The true Catholics have been radically reduced to a remnant who have no human means of regaining the possession of Rome. Rome is in the possession of heretics and has lost the Faith. They have their popes and bishops but these are not Catholic popes and bishops in the true sense of the words. They use Catholic terms, titles, and possessions but they have given them heretical meanings.

If we need any further proof of the state of sede-vacante we need only open our Catechisms and study the First Commandment of God where we are instructed that a Catholic may not worship with non-Catholics. The penalty for this is ex-communication (being cut off or cut out of the Catholic Church). Then we can simply examine what these conciliar popes have done. They have con-celebrated (worshiped with) Protestants, they have welcomed all religions (even non-Christians) to a common “prayer for peace”, they have kissed and thus honored the “sacred books” of non-Christians, the list could go on for any who are not afraid to be labeled as being not politically correct.

The logic is simple, and we do not need advanced study or intellect to draw obvious conclusions.

- 1) *Those who participate in non-Catholic worship are no longer Catholic.*
- 2) *The conciliar popes have participated in non-Catholic worship.*
- 3) *The conciliar popes are not Catholic.*
- 4) *Anyone who is not a Catholic cannot be the visible head of a body he is not a member of.*
- 5) *The conciliar popes are popes of a new religion and not popes of the Holy Roman Catholic Church.*
- 6) *The true Chair of St. Peter, the See of the Holy Roman Catholic Church is empty – Sede Vacante.*

We need not create a fairy tale – imaginary reality. We only need to simply and honestly observe the obvious truth – “The king is naked!” – “The See of Peter is vacant!” This statement won’t win us any friends among the majority because the majority is afraid of what others may think or say about them. They don’t want to offend anybody, but they do not fear to offend the

Truth – God.

There is no way to honestly believe that the conciliar popes are “material” popes but not “formal” popes of the Catholic Church. Simple logic says a thing cannot be and not be at the same time. This concept seems to have been dreamed up to reconcile the inherent problem of a heretical pope. The entire world knows that the pope is Catholic. However, we now see that heretics are having and holding this title. The conciliar popes are the heads of a new religion that is not the True Catholic religion. It is not surprising that this new religion is heretical, nor is it surprising that the head of this new religion is a heretic.

This is a very difficult pill to swallow, but it is a simple truth. We must with all childlike innocence, honesty, and integrity hold to the painfully obvious truth. If we do not stand with God and the truth, we may gain many friends and advantages in this

world, but we have paid the ultimate price in choosing the world over God. May we always choose God and the truth (no matter how painful it may be), rather than the “political correctness” of the world.



***“We put great confidence
in the Holy Rosary, for the
healing of evils which
afflict our times.”***
~Pope St. Pius X

THE TRUTH BEHIND TRICK OR TREAT

Brother Charles, TOSF

This is a subject that can be difficult to discuss, even among fellow Catholics. On one side, are those who denounce any participation in the world's festivities, calling them all satanic. These people are sometimes dismissed as fanatics.

On the other side are those who have fond memories of Halloween from childhood and do not wish to deprive their offspring of these experiences.

These people are viewed by some as incredibly naïve. Back in the days when Holy Mother Church had great influence over the western world, feast days were taken seriously.

They were days when high and low alike could celebrate. These days needed to be prepared for, both spiritually and materially.

That is why the eve of such feasts was held important, as well. The Feast of All Saints (or the Feast of All the Hallowed Ones) was one of these. The word "Halloween" is a contraction of hallow and evening. In fact, it was also called All Hallow's Eve.

So, from this history one can see that it all seems to have started out well enough. But

worldliness can have an effect on any pious practice. Especially, this is true for All Hallow's Eve, which used to be celebrated in the spring.

As early as the eighth century we find this feast was moved from May 13th to November 1st to counteract the already existing high day for devil or pagan worship.

Practically every worldly Halloween tradition is rooted in satanism or paganism. This includes: carving pumpkins, bobbing for apples, dressing in costume, and going door to door. I am not going too deep into the origins of these practices as such information is readily available from other sources.

Another incontrovertible fact is that the Eve of All Hallows is a date of the highest significance on the satanist's calendar. Great atrocities are committed on this night.

Great evil is flourishing, it is all around us. While the masses are caught up in costumes and candy, murder and mayhem are on the rise. While we parade our children around the neighborhood or sit at home filling the bags of a whole new generation

of diabetics, we are doing nothing to fill hearts with devotion. Prayer and penance are the only way to combat evil. Again, the internet (or for the old fashioned, the library) has well-documented information about the devilish side of this holiday.

All right, we can see pagan and satanic aspects of Halloween. But some parents, who will accept these facts and resolve to avoid them, still hold on to as much of it as they can.

For example, they might not decorate their homes or give out candy, but they still insist that their young children simply must have this wonderful experience of walking around in costume to get candy. I ask, how is this practice helping them get to heaven? How are the narcissistic nature of the costume and the gluttonous nature of the sweets teaching them virtue?

Even separating the satanic parts (which is practically impossible) we are left with a heap of worldliness. Parents must ask themselves, "*Am I Catholic or not?*" "*Are my children's souls worth saving, or not?*" This may seem harsh, but the truth usually is. Just look at all the evil that is glorified during this time of year. If such things are the fruit of these practices, then we know the tree to be evil. Can we really afford to expose our children to such things? It is

my opinion that Catholic parents must draw the line when it comes to Halloween. No participation, no substituting, no toleration of anything that glorifies sin. Your own souls are at stake, too. I find it quite unlikely that, when you stand before Jesus the Judge, He will praise your virtuous participation in pagan Halloween practices.

At the very least, we know this to not be a virtue. If it is not virtuous, is it really worth doing? Can you really afford to take any chances? Getting to Heaven is hard enough as it is.

In conclusion, parents, fight the temptation of the world. And make no mistake, it is a fight.

A fight against hell, itself. So, please, stand up and fight for your children. And fight for yourselves, too, so that you can declare, as did Joshua of old, "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." (*Joshua 24:15*)

Sister Agnes' Favorites

A Guide to Charity

Be slow to contradict your neighbor, and never be stubborn in maintaining your opinion. Avoid arguments; seek to bring peace everywhere. Never interfere needlessly in the affairs of others; never seek to uncover the secrets of your neighbor. Respect their opinions and their ways: you will rarely change either of them. Ignore scandal and slander about others. Never pass judgment on anyone. And to make easier the practice of that charity, which is the virtue of God's children, always look upon your neighbor as being better than yourself.

Resolution: In moments of temptations against charity, pray thus: "O my God, help me to love my neighbor as myself for the love of Thee. Give me the grace to forgive those who have injured me, and give me the humility to ask pardon of all whom I have injured."

From A Sunday Missal, Copyright 1952. Edited by Rev. William Carroll

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THE CORDBEARERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Father Joseph Noonan, OFM



*Note to Reader: The entire contents of this article are from the book *Manual of the Arch-Confraternity of the Cord of St. Francis.**

The origin of the Cordbearers of St. Francis of Assisi seems to have its origin with St. Dominic, founder of the Order of Preachers, otherwise known as the Dominicans.

HISTORY AND PURPOSE

Wadding (A 17th century English Franciscan) relates that St. Dominic after many entreaties obtained from Our Holy Father St. Francis the rough cord with which he had girt himself, and wore it constantly with great devotion until the hour of his death. When we recollect how great was his esteem for St. Francis, and how ardent his desire that the two orders of Friars Preachers and Friars Minor

should have but one heart and one soul, we can easily believe that St. Dominic did this not only to show his devotion to St. Francis, and his confidence that he would obtain many favors from God through the merits of His servant, but also that it might be a mark and a symbol of that brotherly affection which he desired ever to exist between those two Orders.

St. Dominic soon found many imitators, and the practice of wearing a cord which had belonged to a member of the Franciscan Order or was made in imitation of those which the Friars Minor wear, quickly spread throughout Europe, and men delighted to testify in that manner their attachment to the Seraphic Order, and their confidence of obtaining, through the merits and prayers of St. Francis, a particular right

to the Divine protection, and a larger share in God's favors. Besides, it was a sort of *via media* between the religious state and the world, and in an age when all Europe appeared eager to be enrolled in one of the great Orders which then flourished, and apparently threatened to transform the world into a cloister, it was eagerly assumed by those admirers of St. Francis who, precluded by their duties or by weak health from embracing the rule or practicing the austerities of one of his three Orders, yet longed ardently to find some bond of union with him whose poverty and burning love of God had ravished their hearts, some title by which to call him Father.

It was not, however, until the sixteenth century that the practice of wearing the Franciscan cord received the formal sanction of the Holy See by the erection of the Arch-Confraternity. Pope Sixtus V, himself a Franciscan, by his Constitutions "*Ex supernae dispositionis*" of November 19, 1585, and "*Divinae Charitatis*" of August 29, 1587, instituted this Confraternity in honor of Christ's Passion, and enriched it with many spiritual favors and privileges. Nor was it without reason that a Confraternity, which was an

offspring of the devotion to St. Francis, should have for its principal object to honor the sufferings of Our Lord; because it was the special mission of St. Francis to inflame the hearts of men with the love of Jesus, by reproducing in the most vivid manner in his whole life all that was most painful and humiliating in Our Lord's career: His rejection by men, His poverty, His austerities, His Passion and Crucifixion - all were reflected in St. Francis.

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

First, to receive the cord from one of the Superiors of the Franciscan Order or from a priest, secular or regular, to whom the faculty of enrolling in the Confraternity has been delegated.

Second, to wear this holy cord habitually girt around the body, either under or over the inner garments, and not to lay it aside without necessity or for a notable time. But should anyone neglect to wear it, he does not cease to belong to the Confraternity, but only forfeits during that time the right to gain the indulgences granted to the members. It suffices that the first cord is blessed; it can be renewed afterward without any formality or benediction.

Third, one must be inscribed in
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the register of the Confraternity in someplace where it is canonically erected. This formality is not, however, absolutely required, and if omitted, does not render the reception invalid.

A fourth condition has been added by the Province of St. Peter of Alcantara. The Confraternity does not have a minimum age requirement, but the Province does require the person to have received his First Holy Communion.

Besides these conditions of membership, it is customary for the members to recite daily five Our Fathers, Hail Mary's, and Glory Be's to the Father, in honor of the Five Wounds of Our Lord and St. Francis, adding one Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father, for the intentions of the Papacy. These prayers are said to gain the indulgences granted to the members; and this custom is admirably calculated to maintain and increase in the heart the spirit of the Confraternity, namely, the devotion to the Passion of Our Lord and the imitation of St. Francis. They should also endeavor to honor their holy Father, whose cord they wear; to invoke him frequently, and imitate his virtues.

THE CORD

The design of this Con-
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fraternity is to refresh the minds of devout Christians with a daily remembrance of the Passion of their dear Redeemer. That they may more effectually do this, the members of it wear a cord, wherein are made five knots in honor and remembrance of the Five Wounds of Our Blessed Savior. It is a symbol of penance, to put us in mind that as sinners we ought daily to do penance for our sins and to offer up to God, especially in the Holy Mass, the infinite merits of Christ's sufferings in satisfaction for our sins. The life of a Christian ought to be a life of penance, as the holy Council of Trent observes. Penance is absolutely necessary for us, sinners as we are. Truth itself has said, "Unless you do penance, you shall all perish." (*Luke, XIII*). The cord is also a symbol of chastity, to inform us that as Christians we are consecrated temples of the Holy Ghost by Baptism, children of God, and heirs of heaven, into which no unclean thing shall enter. Our great care then must be to preserve our bodies and souls chaste and undefiled, free from the least impurity either by thought, word, or deed. The cord is further a symbol or perpetual memorial of Christ's Passion, and of those rough cords with which He was

cruelly bound by the Jews, tied to a pillar, and dragged to His Crucifixion.

SPIRITUAL ADVANTAGES

The end and design of all pious associations or societies being the spiritual advantage of the members, those who associate together endeavor to increase in grace by the practice of good works here and obtain eternal glory hereafter. These spiritual advantages may be largely obtained by devout Christians in this Confraternity of the Cord of St. Francis; for as it is instituted chiefly in honor of the Passion of Jesus Christ, the source from whence all spiritual graces flow, it is not to be doubted but that Christians who therein daily honor the Passion of Christ by a daily memorial of His sufferings will receive from Him those graces and favors they humbly ask.

The members of this Confraternity do, as before observed, share in and are mutual partakers of each other's good works. They also share in and are partakers of all the prayers, fasts, and good works of all the religious of the three Orders of St. Francis, that is to say, of the First Order, the Franciscan Friars; of the Second Order, which is

that of the Poor Clares; and of the religious men and women of the Third Order, called the Penitents; because they become members of the same body, of the great Franciscan family, and as such, share in the spiritual treasures of that family, in its good works, merits, and privileges.

Inquiries about the Cord-bearers may be emailed to Fr. Joseph Noonan, OFM at father@catholichour.org.

THE THREE LIGHTS

Father Anthony Lentz, OFM

Part II

Probably the most widely read book on Christian perfection, next to the Bible itself, is *The Imitation of Christ* by Father Thomas á Kempis. It has been a guide for both saints and converted sinners. The spirituality of this book has at its source a love for the God-man - Our Lord Jesus Christ. It enters into a deep conversation between Christ and the Christian soul, where One guides and the other seeks guidance. The reader comes to understand that to truly imitate Christ he must learn to take up his cross, that is, the struggles and temptations of life, and follow Him.

For any disciple to truly learn from a master he must have obedience, and more than that, unquestioned obedience. It is easier for man to obey a master who intimidates him, and who appears to be superior in every respect. The usual motive for such obedience is fear. Even though Christ is superior to us in all things and could easily have appeared intimidating He chose instead to give us the example of meekness, humility,

and obedience. It is easy to see the connection between *The Imitation of Christ* and Franciscan spirituality. For both have at their core the simple truth: ***the imitator of Christ must learn to love Christ poor; Christ despised; Christ suffering; and Christ crucified.*** In short, we must first follow Christ towards the sufferings of Mount Calvary before enjoying the bliss and joy of Mount Thabor. Understanding the Franciscan element it is then not surprising that when the identity of the book's author was uncertain that a Franciscan should have been suspected. This was St. Anthony of Padua.

St. Anthony was not born in Padua nor was he even Italian, but rather he was born in Lisbon, Portugal on August 15, 1195, and baptized with the name Fernando de Bouillon. He was from a noble family, but that earthly status did not match the nobility of his soul. So, it was not surprising that he eventually joined the Canons Regular of St. Augustine, who had a monastery in Lisbon, and was ordained a priest. He was later

transferred to the monastery of Santa Cruz. He requested the transfer because the frequent visits from family and friends were a spiritual distraction. Now at Santa Cruz, away from the distractions, he could peacefully continue his life of study, prayer, and penance. This quiet life was not to last, for God would soon call his servant to the active apostolate of the Friars Minor.

It is not certain what exactly inspired Fernando to become a Franciscan. It was probably, as it usually is, a mixture of things. He may have been inspired when the bodies of the first Franciscan Martyrs came up from Morocco through Portugal, for he did desire martyrdom. He also may have been inspired by the friars who lived near the monastery, for he was in frequent contact with them. Nevertheless, he became a Franciscan and took the name Anthony, after St. Anthony of the Desert, the patron of that small friary.

There is a very simple principle that if properly understood can grant to a soul a certain amount of peace, that is, - *if you do not get what you want - do not complain, be content, and accept it as God's Will.* St. Anthony desired the martyr's crown, he

did not receive it. He desired then to live the life of a simple brother in obscurity, but God had other designs. God wanted St. Anthony to be "a city on the top of the mountain," "a light on the lamp stand," a mover of hearts, a herald of truth, and the "Hammer of Heretics." He was destined to be a preacher!

The office of preacher never crossed St. Anthony's mind! He wanted to hide his great memory for Sacred Scripture and his erudite intellect. He accomplished this to such an extent that he was viewed by his brothers as a simpleton and useful for very little. This is why the provincial of Bologna, Father Gratian, was hesitant to accept this young friar into his province. It was more out of necessity than pity, that he recruited Anthony to be the chaplain for a small group of hermit lay-brothers. All of this begs the question: why did St. Anthony wish to hide his God-given intellect? He did this not out of fear or selfish pride, like the servant who buried his talent in a handkerchief, (*St. Luke 19: 20-21*) but rather it was out of humility. In his humility, he sought to use his talent to grow closer to God in solitude. Now that which comes from humility is from God! God

was merely preparing His servant for his future vocation, and it was He who set the time that this light would shine upon the souls of men. He did this through a simple act of obedience.

In Ember Week – March 19, 1222, Father Gratian took his young simple priest to Forli, Italy where they attended an ordination of candidates to Holy Orders from both Friars Minor and Friars Preacher. Father Gratian had been requested to give a sermon in honor of this occasion by the bishop of the province. Father Gratian offered this honor to the Sons of St. Benedict, but since none were prepared they refused. So Father Gratian turned to his young friend, whom he suspected was much wiser than his humility would admit, and asked him to preach. St. Anthony quickly asked to be excused due to his inexperience and lack of intellect. Father Gratian would hear nothing of this and ordered St. Anthony under “holy obedience” to give the sermon, using as his subject the Scripture passage: “*Christ became for us obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.*” (Philippians 2:8) This Anthony did humbly without question and preached such a sermon that he appeared to all

to have a deep knowledge into all things spiritual. Thus began Anthony’s vocation as a preacher.

Let us now return to the book, *The Imitation of Christ*. Here is what this inspired author writes concerning the importance and benefit of obedience: “*It is a very great thing to obey, to live under a superior and not to be one’s own master, for it is much safer to be subject than it is to command. Many live in obedience more from necessity than from love. Such become discontented and dejected on the slightest pretext; they will never gain peace of mind unless they subject themselves wholeheartedly for the love of God.*”

Go where you may, you will find no rest except in humble obedience to the rule of authority. Dreams of happiness expected from change and different places have deceived many.

Everyone, it is true, wishes to do as he pleases and is attracted to those who agree with him. But if God is among us, we must at times give up our opinions for the blessings of peace.

Furthermore, who is so wise that he can have full knowledge of everything? Do

not trust too much in your own opinions, but be willing to listen to those of others. If, though your own be good, you accept another's opinion for love of God, you will gain much more merit; for I have often heard that it is safer to listen to advice and take it than to give it. It may happen, too, that while one's own opinion may be good, refusal to agree with others when reason and occasion demand it, is a sign of pride and obstinacy."

We can take from this text two principles that are necessary for proper discernment of God's Holy Will. First, if it is a sin, clearly against the Commandments of God and the Church, then it is not God's Will. Second, if your superior commands you to do something, even if it is a small task, then you know that is God's Will for you at that moment. The first principle applies to everyone – whether a priest, religious or a layman. The second principle is directed mainly towards religious as a daily practice! It may, though, be practiced by the laity, such as following the guidance of one's confessor.

How do these two principles of obedience apply to Franciscans in today's modern

world? I used a Latin phrase to explain poverty, so I will do the same with obedience. It is *nihil mutavit*, which means "nothing has changed"! That's why they are principles – they never change! The Rule of our Blessed Father St. Francis commands that we obey our superiors in all things that are not sinful and not against our conscience or the Rule. Obedience is an easy thing, when we are asked to do something we like or, at least, agree with. Obedience instantly becomes unbearable when we are asked to do something that is displeasing to us. A Friar who practices true obedience does not try to figure out the reasons why Father Guardian commanded him to do something. He does not waste his time judging whether or not he thinks it is beneficial or wise. The goal is unquestioned humble obedience and a readiness to perform any task! St. Anthony sought to be obedient throughout his entire life, and it was because he did it with a humble spirit, he is now elevated with the Seraphs in heaven!

To Be Continued

A Prayer to St. Anthony



“O, St. Anthony, the second light of the Franciscan Order! Pray for us, your children! So that we may practice humble obedience and perfect charity. May we use the gifts that God has given us for His greater honor and glory. May we consider what we have so far accomplished as nothing and continually strive to grow in wisdom and holiness! Amen.”

ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

An Autobiography

CHAPTER TWO A CATHOLIC HOUSEHOLD

I felt no grief at leaving Alençon¹: children love change and anything out of the common, so I was pleased to come to Lisieux. I remember distinctly the journey and the arrival in the evening at our uncle's house; I can still see our little cousins Jeanne and Marie waiting with aunt on the doorstep². How touching was the affection all these dear ones showed us!

Next day they took us to our new home, Les Buissonnets³ and there everything proved a fresh source of delight. The trim lawn in front of the house, the kitchen garden at the back, the distant view from the large attic windows — all this appealed to my young imagination. Its situation, too, was an added charm, for it stood in a quiet part of the town, within easy reach of a beautiful park⁴ laid out with flowers. This pleasant abode became the scene of many joys, and of family gatherings which I can never

forget. Elsewhere, as I have said above, I felt an exile; I cried and fretted for Mamma; but here my little heart expanded, and I smiled on life once more.

When I woke, you were there to caress me, and at your side I said my prayers. My reading lesson followed later, and I remember that "Heaven" was the first word I could read alone. Lessons over, I ran upstairs, where Papa was generally to be found, and how pleased I was when I had good marks to show!

Each afternoon I went with him for a walk and made a visit to the Blessed Sacrament in one or other of the churches. It was in this way that I first saw the chapel of our

¹M. Martin's object in coming to Lisieux was to bring his girls nearer their mother's brother, M. Guérin, a chemist in that town, as well as to secure Mme. Guérin's advice in the upbringing of the younger ones. [CARMEL.]

²M. Guérin lived quite close to the Church of St. Pierre, above what was then the Pharmacie Guerin.

³The house and grounds have been beautifully restored and many souvenirs of Thérèse's childhood are now gathered there. The room where Our Lady appeared to her has been fitted up as an oratory, blessed in May 1913, by Mgr. Lemonnier, Bishop of Bayeux. In the garden may be seen one of her miniature altars.

⁴Jardin de l'toile. It is not open to the general public. The pilgrim in search of Les Buissonnets goes to the Church of St. Jacques, passes behind St. Pierre, and a little further along the Boulevard Herbet-Fournet, a narrow road to the right, called the Chemin des Buissonnets, leads to the house occupied for eleven years by our Saint.

(*Rev. Thomas N. Taylor, Editor*)

Carmel: “Look, little Queen!” said Papa, “behind that grating there are holy nuns who are always praying to Almighty God.” Little did I think that nine years later I should be amongst them, that in this blessed Carmel I should receive so many graces.

On returning home I learned my lessons, and then spent the rest of the day playing in the garden near Papa. I never cared for dolls, but one of my favorite amusements was making colored mixtures with seeds and the bark of trees. If the color turned out pretty, I would pour some of the liquid into a dainty little cup and coax Papa to taste. He would at once stop his work, and with a smile pretend to drink.

I was also very fond of flowers, and in a recess which by some good fortune happened to be in the garden wall, I used to make little altars and decorate them. When all was ready, I would run and call Papa. To give me pleasure he would appear lost in admiration over the wonderful altar that to me seemed a masterpiece.¹ If I were to tell you of the thousand and one such incidents my memory treasures, I should never stop. How, indeed, could words convey all the love and devotion which that best of fathers lavished upon his little Queen!

¹The tiny monstrance, chalice, missal, cruets, candlesticks, statues, etc., are still carefully treasured at Les Buissonnets.

(Rev. Thomas N. Taylor, Editor)

Those were supremely happy days when my dear “King,” as I called him, went fishing and took me with him. Sometimes I tried my hand with a small rod of my own, but more often I preferred to sit on the grass at some little distance. My reflections would then become really deep, and without knowing what meditation meant, my soul was absorbed in prayer. Far-off sounds wafted towards me on the murmuring breeze, and faint notes of music from the neighboring town, tinged my thoughts with gentle melancholy. Earth seemed a land of exile and I dreamed of Heaven.

The afternoon passed quickly. It was soon time to turn home, and before packing up I would eat the provisions I had brought in my little basket. Somehow the very slices of bread and jam you had prepared looked different; in the morning they were so fresh and tempting, and now they appeared stale and uninviting. Even a trifle such as this made earth seem sadder, and I understood more fully still that only in Heaven will there be unclouded joy.

To Be Continued.....

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 TWO

The Practice of Abandonment

CHAPTER ONE

The Practice of Abandonment in General



ARTICLE 7

SELF-SURRENDER AND OCCASIONAL FAULTS

The inexperienced soul imagines that, as soon as she has made her act of surrender to God, she will be free from all sin. When she discovers her weakness, she despises herself and becomes discouraged. Side by side with the positive practice of self-surrender we must place what may be called the negative practice.

Assuredly, nothing is more opposed to self-surrender than sin. Sin is the disordered love of self; it is egotism. And yet it is true that souls who have given themselves to Jesus, and that a thousand times, still commit faults. The contradiction is little more than apparent. For one's peace of soul, it is important to

understand this.

Two loves, as Saint Augustine says, dispute the empire of the soul: the love of God and the love of oneself. The love of God, advanced even to contempt of self, is perfect love. The love of self, exaggerated even to hatred of God, is mortal sin, the overthrow of the reign of God in a heart.

When God rules in the soul, He is powerful enough to crush His adversary, self-love. Nevertheless, He is content to cast it down and keep it in humiliation beneath His sceptre. God does not will that self-love must disappear all at once in the heart of which He takes possession. He permits that it continue to live there, but in a state of servitude and abasement. God has many reasons for this course of action; and He permits

the soul to glimpse some of them.

First, it is hardly glorious for God to rule over a dead enemy. But to permit an adversary to dwell in a certain place and to force him to respect and submission, to forbid him to lessen one's power, this is to give proof of generosity as well as strength.

Moreover, was it not well that the Philistines continued to live side by side with the chosen people? An enemy who is always menacing, always ready to attack, compels vigilance. If the soul had nothing to fight, she would fall asleep in languid carelessness. Then where would be the strength of virtue? Where would be the merit?

But, too, if there is struggle, the soul sometimes weakens, and commits sin. It is an inevitable condition of the unceasing combat which God has willed that man should wage here upon earth. If He has willed the combat, it must be that He permits the fall. His glory is increased by drawing good out of evil and by granting to the enemy naught but fleeting victories.

Moreover, the permitting of evil is, in the Divine intention, the best safeguard of humility. The human soul is singularly in error on the subject of its own merit. Except for the Saints, no one judges himself with justice on this point. The soul must have

repeated, daily experiences. Not for a long time will she cease to attribute to herself a merit she does not possess. And at each moment it is necessary that God should remind her that, without His grace, she is absolutely powerless for good. For this purpose, He permits little repeated falls. He even permits that the soul remain subject to slight defects of character, to impatience, susceptibility, and envy.

Under these exterior imperfections, God hides the real perfections which He infuses into the soul, and which are developing daily, sometimes without the soul's knowledge, sometimes with her generous cooperation.

Moreover, in the soul that is surrendered to God, faults do not take root. As these weeds rise, they are uprooted. On the other hand, the good plant is continually growing and developing.

Thus, every day, we efface all these little faults by contrition, and God blots them out of His book of accounts; but our acts of love and self-surrender are added, one after another, until, after some years, they form an enormous capital of grace and merit.

ARTICLE 8

THE GREAT DANGER-POINT IN THE LIFE OF SELF-SURRENDER.

There is a great danger-rock in

the life of self-abandonment; and some souls strike against it and are shipwrecked. This danger is secret presumption, disguised pride, which blinds the soul so that she exaggerates her own excellence and is vexed after her falls.

Ah, how subtle is this poison! It assimilates itself into our substance and spreads through the whole organism. Generally, this poison does not kill; it causes weakness and exhaustion. The infected soul feels that she is growing languid; she does not understand the cause.

The first years of the spiritual life are passed in great fervor. Ardently the soul sets to work to destroy her faults, to acquire virtues; she multiplies her resolutions and her examinations of conscience; she stimulates herself with the thought that she will soon be perfect, faultless.

Months pass; years succeed one another; and there are always the same resolutions, the same efforts, and, alas, the same weaknesses. At last, a certain sadness and distrust of God rises in the depths of the soul. She no longer possesses the firm hope of attaining sanctity. Her repeated weaknesses seem to her to be insurmountable obstacles to perfection. The holy projects of her spiritual youth seem to her like far-off dreams. She is disillusioned. "Sanctity," she says, "is not for me."

Wrong, poor soul! Sanctity is for

thee; and to be perfect, only one thing is wanting: that, before God, thou shouldst recognize thyself as thou art. Thou art excessively weak and prompt to sin. Acknowledge this with good grace. Thou art incapable of any supernatural good. Willingly avow this to the good God. Thou dost commit faults every day, although thou formest a sincere resolution not to fall again. Bravely put thyself in thy rightful place.

It is one of the greatest secrets of the spiritual life not to be disquieted after one's falls. But this is a secret that God alone can teach the soul. It supposes in the soul, on the one hand, a more than ordinary knowledge of the extreme weakness of the will and of the excessive volatility of the human mind; and, on the other hand, it supposes an intimate experience of the unwearied goodness of God, of His inexhaustible tenderness for His little creature. Jesus is so good and so full of condescension that no weakness, no fault, causes Him to turn away from a soul of good will.

As exiles, we are all journeying upon this earth, toward our heavenly fatherland. The way is long and monotonous. Why should we be astonished if, sometimes, lassitude paralyzes us or casts us down in the road? Sometimes the objects we behold upon the way prove too absorbing; we enjoy ourselves to the detriment of our progress.

However, we do not cease to advance; neither does it ever occur to us to retrace our steps.

The young Tobias, traveling to the country of the Medes, sometimes paused. He reposed and took refreshment upon the shores of the lakes. Perhaps these relaxations might have delayed him too long; in any case they might have exposed him to danger; but the angel watched over him and made up for his imprudence.

Thus, God aids souls of good will. He sees the depths of the heart. He beholds the sincere desire of belonging to Him; and willingly He forgives the occasional faults which proceed from weakness.

Our pride does not understand that the will may be sincere in promising fidelity to God, and yet, an instant afterward fall again into its fault. Still less does pride understand that this very promise and these very faults may succeed one another until the end of life, without lessening the divine tenderness of Jesus, His compassion for human weakness.

O Jesus, how little we know of the mystery of sanctification! We think that we, personally, have such a considerable part in it! We contribute to it only by recognizing our perpetual inconstancy, without being astonished at our faults. The rest is Thy work.

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FRANCISCAN SAINTS

OCTOBER 18TH

Servant of God Anna Tellier

Widow, Third Order

Our servant of God was born of noble and wealthy parents at Pont Andemar in northern France. For many years her father held an important post at the royal court. His wife died at an early age, and after that he never saw his daughter without shedding tears, so overcome was he at the thought of the child's loss.

To be better assured of her proper education, he placed Anna with the Benedictine sisters in a neighboring convent, where the little girl grew up in the fear of the Lord. Although cordial and affable with the other girls of the institution, she showed a certain seriousness of character that was absent in them. She took special delight in hearing the lives of the saints read by one of the sisters. She kept the lessons learnt from these lives ever before her mind, and at times she would remind her companions of them.

If it had been left to her, Anna would have remained with the sisters and have become a

religious. But when she had attained to young womanhood, an aunt, who lived alone in the world, desired to have her as a companion, and as her father wished it, she yielded to the aunt's request.

Not long after, she again bowed to the wishes of relatives and married a devout young nobleman. But when he died a few years later without leaving any children, Anna resolved to devote all her spare time to the service of God. To forestall further offers of marriage, she made a vow never again to marry. Then she entered the Third Order of St. Francis, and devoted her time to prayer, works of mercy and charity. She soon distinguished herself so much among the Tertiaries of the town that in two years she was chosen their prefect.

Now Anna felt obliged to lead a still more exemplary life. She dressed so simply that her distinguished rank would never have been guessed. Her relatives reproved her severely. But she

had a pleasant way of appeasing them, and they themselves declared that if you wanted her to be particularly good to you, you needed only to offend her.

She retained but one maid and kept the simplest kind of household. During the day her bed was beautifully made up, but at night she used nothing but a straw tick. In churches where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed for adoration, she assisted at devotions in a most edifying manner. When the Blessed Sacrament was carried to the sick, she would accompany It, and gradually others joined her in this pious practice. She was a thoughtful mother to the poor and the sick. She visited them, nursed them, and used practically all her wealth on them. It was her special pleasure to take poor ignorant children home with her, to instruct them, conferring on many of them benefits for time and eternity.

Anna Tellier died at forty-five, on October 18, 1676, deeply mourned by all the poor, sadly missed by the members of the Third Order, and honored as a saint by all the town.

ON INSTRUCTING YOUTH

1. The servant of God Anna gladly used the knowledge she had acquired in youth to instruct poorly educated children, for she perceived on her rounds of mercy what a misfortune it is

not to have received the proper education in one's youth. Learning, of course, will not get us to heaven, and many parents undoubtedly provide their children with an extensive education from motives of vanity rather than to make useful citizens of them. But far greater is the number of those who provide little or no education for their children in truly essential matters. Such parents bear the blame for the temporal and eternal misery of their children. Ignorance leaves so many people helpless in life, and, as St. Joseph Calasanza says, vicious lives result from lack of Christian training. — Do you have to accuse yourself of neglect in the matter?

2. Consider how meritorious it is to be concerned about the education of youth. St. Joseph Calasanza resigned his position as vicar general of a diocese, in order to give instructions to underprivileged children. Although provision is made nowadays that all children can receive an education, it is still possible to support and promote Christian education. Parents have the obligation to see to it that their children actually attend the classes, and that they do any homework assigned to them. Others can share the merit of educators by taking interest in the things the children are taught, by encouraging them to be diligent, by giving extra help

to the backward, and by teaching the children useful things for which there is not time in school. To teach a child any useful act, is to do him a greater service than to give him bread to eat or clothing to wear. In instances such children have cause to be grateful to their benefactors for life.

3. Consider that the most valuable instruction that can be given a child is instruction in the Christian religion. St. Chrysostom says: "Those who are concerned to provide their children with secular knowledge, while neglecting to instill in them the fear of God, will be the first to reap the fruits of their folly by rearing forward and vicious children." It is said of Tobias, who had so much joy of his son: "From his infancy he taught him to fear God and to abstain from all sin" (*Tob. 1:10*). How pleasing it is to Jesus, to lead to Him the children He so loved! For that purpose St. Theresa always cheerfully interrupted her prayers, saying: "The greatest service we can render Jesus, is to leave Him out of love for the children." In so doing, we do not really leave Jesus at all. Rather we take Him to ourselves, as He Himself says: "He that shall

receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me" (*Matt. 18:5*). — Hear the children's catechism, relate and read them stories from the lives of the saints - and other sources, and above all pray with them.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

(Saturday in Passion Week)

We beseech Thee, O Lord, let Thy people who are consecrated to Thee, advance in the spirit of pious devotion, that, instructed by the sacred rites, they may abound in the higher gifts the more pleasing they become in the sight of Thy divine majesty. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



THE GREATEST TREASURE

Reverend L. Chiavarino



CHAPTER IX

HOLY MASS BRINGS GOOD FORTUNE

Our human nature is such that we constantly seek our own interests; we naturally desire to enrich ourselves, to accumulate wealth, to pile gain upon gain. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is a powerful means of intercession for temporal favors.

In the life of St. John, the Almoner, we read of two workmen who plied the same trade at Alexandria in Egypt. One, although obliged to support a large family, seemed always able to save and put aside something from his earnings. The other, despite the facts that he had no children, worked hard all week, and even on Sundays,

was always in need: he never seemed able to make ends meet. Thinking of the prosperity of his friend, he resolved to ask him to reveal the secret of his good fortune. His friend promised to let him into the secret if he would agree to meet him at an early hour in the morning. The poor workman willingly promised and, next day, at the appointed hour, he arrived at the home of his friend. He took him to church to assist at Mass. This was repeated for three consecutive days. At the end of this time the second workman grew weary, and spoke to his friend in impatience:

“I know the way to church myself; and as far as hearing Mass every day is concerned, I have no time for that. If you

intend to keep your word and reveal to me the secret of your prosperity, do so. If you do not intend to tell me, goodbye.”

The fortunate workman replied: “You see, my friend, the secret of my prosperity is that I assist at Mass every morning. I well realize that it is for this reason that God blesses my work and sends me good fortune. If you resolve to hear Mass every day and are faithful to your resolution, you too will experience a change in fortune.”

As a matter of fact, this is just what happened. The poor workman began to hear Mass daily, he obtained better work, he was able to pay his debts, and to improve the condition of his home.

Let us follow the example which has been given to us by many truly great men, by Christopher Columbus, by Thomas More, by John Sobieski. They placed their entire confidence in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and in Holy Communion.

In 1683, the city of Vienna was besieged by the Turks. All human hope was lost, and

the inhabitants looked forward to ruin and death. On the morning of the twelfth of September, General John Sobieski, full of faith in God, went to Church, assisted at Mass, himself serving the priest and receiving Holy Communion. Finally, having obtained the blessing of the celebrant, he went into the thick of battle with his valiant soldiers. Full of enthusiasm, he performed deeds of valor, put the enemy to flight, and won a splendid victory.

Do you seek good fortune? I repeat: Let us cling to the most certain means of attaining it—the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. And whenever it is possible to do so, let us unite to it the reception of Holy Communion by which we most fully and completely participate in the Mass.

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