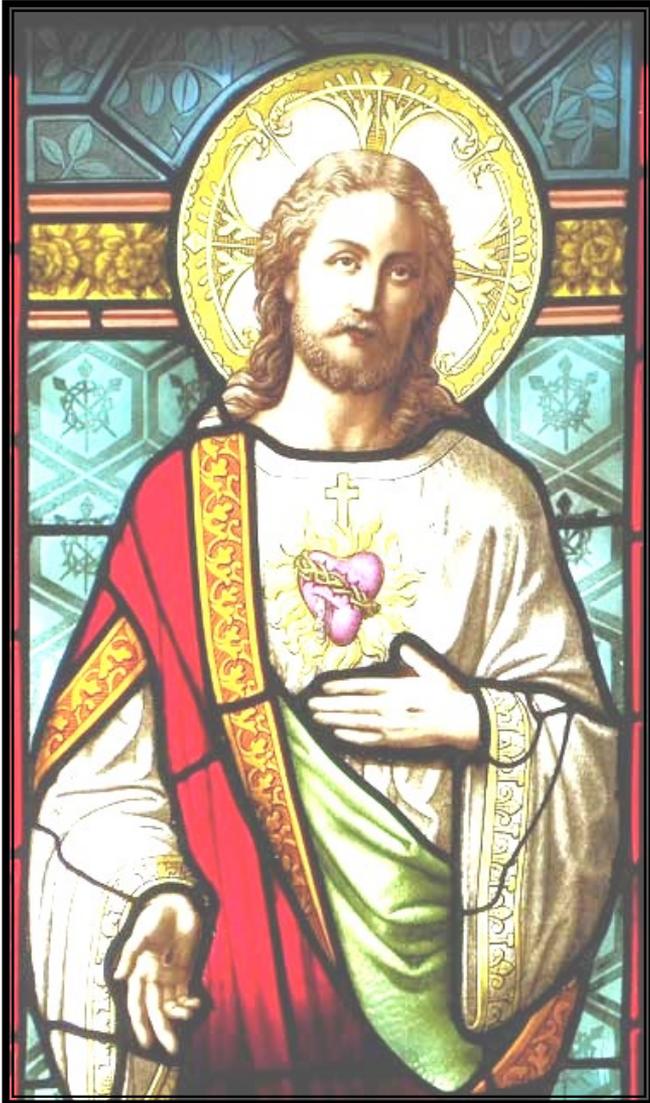


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The **SERAPH** defends the authentic doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church and the moral values upon which Godly nations were founded.

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The **SERAPH** seeks to serve and unite in spirit all Roman Catholics, faithful to tradition, and all men of good will, for the betterment of society according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of Saint Francis of Assisi.

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*In essentia - Unitas. In dubio - Libertas.
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SPIRITUAL MATERIAL

Bishop Giles, OFM

Saint Paul reminds us that as Abraham had two sons, the one by a free woman and the other by a slave, so we – through our baptism – have been made free, and we are children of the free woman. The children of the slave woman are the children of this world and the children of the free woman are the children of God. Those who live on a worldly or material plane are slaves. Those who live a spiritual life are free. We came forth from our mother's womb as slaves and materialists; and we rose from the Baptismal Font as children of God and, are, therefore, free.

We have a dual ancestry to reconcile in this world, and it is, often, a life long struggle. The demons through sin and vice are constantly striving to enslave us again or hold us in the bonds of slavery. The grace of God is constantly working to lift us up and preserve us in the state of freedom. Slavery is death and freedom is life. The choice is ours – slavery or freedom, death or life.

As long as we see everything as slaves or materially we do not see anything at all. The

truth of reality is hidden from us. The Gospels are full of examples of Jesus showing us that we must look beyond the material and into the spiritual. We must rise above the letter of the law and embrace the spirit of the law. It is the slave that observes the letter of the law and cannot see the spirit of the law. Jesus has shown us that it is not enough to observe the letter of the law, but that we must enter into the spirit of it. The commandment “thou shall not kill” goes further than avoiding murder. The letter of the law suggests that we are permitted to abuse or harm anyone to any degree as long as we do not take his life. Jesus tells us that this is not the law at all. Those who harbor hatred in their hearts against their neighbor are already guilty before God. God looks into the heart and the mind much more closely than He looks at our actions. God accepts the desire for the deed. This is wonderfully consoling to those who are free children that spiritually walk in the Light of God. All the good that we desire to do (even if we cannot actually do it) God accepts as if we have done it, and will reward us for

it. It is a frightening and fearful thing to the slave children in their servile material “obedience.” All the evil that we desire to do (even if we cannot actually do it) God accepts as if we have done it, and will punish us for it.

We see many in the world claiming to be “Christians” and therefore free children walking in the Light of Jesus Christ, however, we also see that many of these also are living in sin and darkness. They justify the darkness in their own minds and call it light proving that they are not free but are rather slaves obeying the letter but not the spirit of God's laws. The commandment against adultery does not permit fornication or divorce and remarriage, yet many otherwise “believers” refuse to see this and fail to keep this commandment. However, Jesus has gone even further and said that willful sexual lust is likewise forbidden. The man who lusts after another is already guilty of adultery.

The slaves in the world today tell us that sexual reproduction is evil, but sexual gratification is good and permitted in any and all manner – no matter how depraved it may be. Thus, self-abuse, fornication, homosexuality, bestiality, etc. are presented as good. They would

have us believe that none of these are listed in the law against adultery. These children of darkness have gone even further and say that “faithfulness” in any relationship (no matter how perverse or unnatural) is marriage and should be recognized by everyone as good and acceptable. If we object to this we are labeled as being unkind or uncharitable, and even hateful. The free children have become the enemies of the children of darkness because they tell them the truth. The slaves hate free children because they have first hated the Truth.

God has attached pleasure to our sexual acts for the same reason that He has given us pleasure in eating – for our survival and continuance in this world so that He may gather from this world saints for Heaven. It is against the truth, the natural law, and God's law to abuse these pleasures and pervert them. It is not good to eat when we are not hungry and overindulge. It is not good to induce vomiting so that we can further enjoy the pleasure of eating. Our eating needs to be moderated by a higher understanding than the slavish pursuit of pleasure. The same is true with the pleasure that God has attached to sexual reproduction. Few of those

claiming to be Bible believers consider the heinous sin of Onan which offended God so much that he was struck dead. This is probably the first recorded instance in the Bible of “birth control.” In the culmination of the sexual act, Onan withdrew from the act and spilled his seed (semen) on the ground – thus preventing the conception of a child. The Catholic Church has always taught that this sin and all those related to it are grievous and detestable to God.

The spiritual children of God, using right reason, understand that the pleasures associated with sexual intimacy in marriage are good and pleasing to God, and are worthy to be pursued, as long as the path to conception and birth are not frustrated or aborted. It is not lawful to bring forth children outside of marriage, hence it is unlawful for those who are not married to engage in sexual intimacy in any manner or degree. Only those in a true marriage are permitted to legally engage in this holy intimacy. When children are conceived illegally, they are termed illegitimate (not legal) children. These children are not less human or less worthy. The sin is imputed to their “parents,” however, these poor children will suffer much because of the sins of their

parents (even to the third and fourth generation).

Any deliberate attempt to interpose a barrier and prevent conception is evil and sinful. The mutilation (physical or chemical/hormonal) of one or the other spouse to render them sterile is evil. The obvious intent and desire of these actions are to frustrate God’s purpose and design. Just as it is immoral to amputate a healthy part of our bodies, so it is immoral to destroy a healthy reproductive system.

Every human from the moment of conception is made in the image and likeness of God. It is the devils, who hate God, who seek to kill and destroy this image in us – especially in tiny infants. These demons are the authors of abortion, bodily mutilation, onanism, self-abuse, homosexuality, pedophilia, bestiality, etc. When the devils succeed in leading us down these sinful paths, we rebel against God in defying His design, His plans of filling Heaven with human souls; we make ourselves guilty of the murder of our own children (infanticide); we defile ourselves – disfiguring the image of God in our own souls. We lose our status of children of God, we renounce our freedom and enslave ourselves to devils.

The materialist observes the similarity of creatures and concludes that there is a linear progression or evolution from one to the other. The spiritual and free man, observes the similarity of creatures and concludes that they have been made by one and the same Creator. There is a beautiful and wonderful dynamic harmony and unity among all of God's creation. The slave can only see himself, but not very well or very clearly. His self-centeredness blinds him to the goodness in others all the while it destroys any goodness within himself. He cuts off every connection with others and hence can only conclude that others are there only to serve him. He makes himself a false god. The free children of God see themselves as a tiny part of something much greater than themselves. They are spiritual and observe goodness all around themselves. The spiritual man seeks to fulfill

his role or purpose in God's plan, knowing that this is the best and most perfect plan – better than all others. This sets him free and fills his soul with true life, peace, and joy.

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FOLLOWING JESUS TO CALVARY

Bishop Giles, OFM

Death and dying are unavoidable aspects of our material world. Our physical bodies are all destined for the grave. Only our souls have the opportunity to live forever. As soon as death is mentioned many think of depression and despair. Depression is truly a problem in our society today, however, it does not need to be this way. We should be able to think about and prepare for our mortal demise without the risk of entering into depression or the sin of despair.

The root cause of these evils is sin. Sin is the ultimate cause of our mortal death, and it is sin that causes fear and depression as we consider the end of our mortal lives here on earth. Many of the saints looked forward to the end of their lives on earth because they saw this not as the end but the beginning. Our lives here on earth are only temporary. We are as pilgrims just passing through this world. It is a time of trial or testing of our love for God.

We sometimes grow weary of this life with all its sickness, pains and worries, and death appears like an easy escape.

We must remind ourselves that seeking to escape our crosses and burdens often leads us into depression and other evils. Jesus would have us, rather, embrace our crosses and bear them as long as God presents them to us. A simple method to combat depression and an unhealthy desire to escape this temporary suffering is to develop a longing desire to be with God. It is much better to seek a loving union with God in Heaven than to desire an end to our mortal lives with all its burdens. It is much better to be motivated by love rather than fear or loathing. We should avoid desiring death as an escape from physical evils and rather desire death as an entrance into eternity – to be with Jesus. Rather than say that “I want to die,” let us say: “I long to be with Jesus.”

It is the devils that suggest to us that we loathe our temporary crosses and seek to escape them through an unholy death that will only increase our suffering and seal our eternal suffering in Hell. Jesus has shown us that we must embrace lovingly our crosses and then when God wills it, we will be eternally

freed from them in Heaven.

Our world has prepared all manner of means to alleviate or eliminate pain and suffering. However, most of the treatments presented to us only exasperate the difficulty. Physical pain is something to be embraced rather than avoided at all costs. It is through this pain that we truly are able to follow Jesus to Calvary. It is good for us to use the means God has given us to ameliorate our pain so that we may function productively in this world, but we should avoid the tendency to seek to remove all pain and suffering from our lives. Many of our strong pain medications only mask the pain and inhibit our cognitive abilities, hence the warnings not to operate a motor vehicle or other dangerous machinery while taking them. If the pain is not crippling then why should we allow the medical alleviation of pain to cripple us? It is a balance that we should seek. Embrace our pain as a gift from God that allows us to make a worthy sacrifice and offering to God, but at the same time deaden enough of the pain so that we are still able to carry our crosses.

The infirm and the dying are not easy to take care of – they are a cross to themselves as

well as to those who are entrusted with their care. It is a shame that our society has developed methods of avoiding seeing or thinking about these souls by relegating them to dedicated homes or facilities. With the destruction of the family and the murder of children (abortion), has come also the rejection of the old, ill, and dying. We would much rather pay someone to care for our loved ones, rather than do it ourselves. Hired or mercenary care workers can never be as good as having loved ones do this work of charity. It is not easy work nor is it very pleasant or monetarily rewarding. It is only well done when it is done out of true love of God and neighbor.

The person who is leaving this world is facing eternity and this is the most trying point in their entire lives – whether they understand it or not. They are often in great physical pain as well as intense spiritual trials. A medically induced mental fog designed to eliminate physical pain often only exasperates the duties of spiritual preparation. A patient that is sleeping most of the time is much easier to care for than one that is awake, in pain and perhaps complaining and/or making other demands

upon our time and attention. It seems that the many tranquilizers, muscle relaxants, pain killers, etc. are not so much designed to help the patient, but rather are for the benefit of the caregivers.

As important as it is for these patients to embrace their cross and bear with their sufferings in imitation of Jesus and out of love for Him, it is equally important for those who are caring for them to embrace their own crosses for the same reasons. The dying person is a burden to himself, as well as a burden to his caregivers. The caregivers are often a burden to those who are ill – they are seldom there as quickly as desired nor do they always understand what is wanted or needed. The dying are a pain to those who love them and are trying to care for them because they are an interruption to their lives and are a huge imposition upon their time and other duties and desires.

As much as we truly love one another so much do we become one another's cross. This is a beautiful arrangement from God and a source of great merit for everyone involved. Those whom we love the most, have the greatest ability to hurt us and often they do this even without

intending to do so. When we truly love, then we do not hide from the cause of our suffering, but rather we lovingly embrace them. We are grateful for the opportunity to make a sacrifice for our loved ones who need our assistance. When we are on the receiving end of these services, even though they are not perfect or the best, we should be appreciative of the effort and sacrifices that are made on our behalf. It is not easy to suffer patiently, hence we should make ever greater efforts to be patient with those who are depending upon us. Also, those who are ill must ever strive to be patient with those who are trying to care for them.

Dying is serious business and should not be taken lightly. It is not fair to mask or hide the seriousness of their deteriorating physical health from them. They need to know this and should be encouraged to set their affairs in order as quickly as possible, especially the affair of their soul's eternity. All sources of temptations should be removed as much as possible. The devils are sure to provide many spiritual temptations at this time, we need not help them in destroying these souls with material temptations. These final days and hours are the

decisive ones for eternity – the devils will not be holding back anything. We should make the room physically comfortable to them, but above all, we should make sure that their room is spiritually uplifting and encouraging. A crucifix should be prominently displayed for them to see at all times. We should often encourage them to kiss and embrace the crucifix. We should pray with them making acts of contrition, faith, hope, and charity. Frequent short prayers are better than long prayers that tire or frustrate them. A favorite ejaculatory prayer, hymn, or devotion could be repeated from time to time throughout the day. These devotions should be designed to help to lift their spirits yet not become oppressive to them.

In caring for the dying, we should avoid uncontrolled weeping and mourning as well as foolish laughing and gaiety. We should set aside our own selfish feelings and seek only to serve the spiritual and material needs of those whom God has given us to care for and prepare to meet Him. Presumption, as well as despair, are to be avoided. We must not promise them Heaven as we cannot do this because we are not God. We

must not condemn them to Hell either because, again, we are not God. We should encourage them to be truly sorry for all their sins and to truly love God. Help them to see death as God's loving Will that needs to be embraced in penance and reparation for our sins, and as the gate to eternal glory and hopefully not to eternal suffering.

Most importantly, we should make sure that a true priest is contacted so that they may receive as many of the graces and sacraments that can be given to them. We want them to enter into eternity heavily laden with as many of God's graces as possible.

Caring for the sick and dying is a wonderful opportunity for us to draw closer to God and serve Him as we care for others. It is a cross but it is a beautiful and rewarding cross. Serving others in drawing them closer to God and properly preparing them fills our own hearts and souls with countless graces – it is truly its own reward.

Being sick or dying and having to be humiliatingly and humbly dependent upon others is an almost crushing cross for us to have to carry, but it, also, is beautiful and rewarding as we draw ever nearer to Jesus in His sacrifice and death.

When this is embraced for the love of Him, we find greater hope and courage that we will rise gloriously with Him on the Last Day.

These works of mercy are much more powerful in saving souls from Hell and shortening their stay in Purgatory than we can even imagine. Slight sacrificial pain or suffering here on earth will spare souls long-suffering in Purgatory or even eternal suffering in Hell. It is good to pray and offer sacrifices for the Souls in Purgatory, but let us not abandon the better course of helping souls here on earth to avoid or lessen this purgatorial suffering before they enter into eternity.

NOTE:

THE SERAPH is not published in July and August.

We wish all our readers a most blessed Summer, and look forward to being with you again in September in our 40th year of publication.

SOCIALISM

Father Joseph Noonan, OFM

Through the course of the Church's two-thousand year history, it has had to deal with many different types of national governments. It has seen good and bad leaders of nations along with their respective governments. Some of the good leaders have been among the Catholic monarchies but some of the worst have also come from the monarchy.

The Catholic Church has never stated that one form of government is better than another. It has stated, though, that the Catholic monarchy is the best example of the Kingship of Christ.

In recent years, the Church has had to battle governments that are intrinsically evil, the Communist and Nazis. The Nazis are National Socialists, thus the name. Communists are international Socialists. What is the difference between the two governments? One is nationalistic and the other is international with different degrees of socialism.

The basic question to be asked is what is socialism? Socialism is a political or governmental system that seeks to control the production and distribution of

goods and services. In a purely socialist state, there is no privately-owned property. It must be added that depending upon the severity of the socialist state, the state seeks to control more and more of your life.

In the last one-hundred years or so, there have been a number of different types of socialism which have been developed in many countries, from Soviet communism to socialist democracy.

One should not be fooled. All of these types of governments seek to take away your God-given (inalienable) rights. It is the desire of the socialists to control some, if not all of your life. Quite often there is more. There is also the desire to control the churches and to control your desire to practice the Catholic Faith freely and openly.

The most important question for the Catholic is, whether or not one may support socialism in any form. Pope Pius XI, in his encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* answers this question which is as important today as it was on May 15, 1931.

“Whether considered as a doctrine, or an historical fact, or a movement, Socialism, if it remains truly Socialism, even after it has yielded to truth and justice on the points which we have mentioned, cannot be reconciled with the teachings of the Catholic Church because its concept of society itself is utterly foreign to Christian truth.”

Currently, this answers a most important question. There are many in the United States and undoubtedly a number of Catholics among them who are openly promoting a socialist form of government to replace the constitutional republic upon which this nation was founded.

It would be safe to state that socialism, and even communism, have always had their supporters. It is the “blind leading the blind,” for no reasonable person would support this type of government. As already stated, it strips away the rights of men and limits or eliminates the freedom of religion.

The Church has condemned Communism numerous times through the Popes in the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries because it is godless and totalitarian. The following is a brief example of their condemnations.

“In the face of such a threat, the Catholic Church could not and does not remain silent. This Apostolic See, above all, has not refrained from raising its voice, for it knows that its proper and social mission is to defend truth, justice, and all those eternal values which Communism ignores or attacks. Ever since the days when groups of ‘intellectuals’ were formed in an arrogant attempt to free civilization from the bonds of morality and religion, Our Predecessors overtly and explicitly drew the attention of the world to the consequences of the dechristianization of human society. With reference to Communism, Our Venerable Predecessor, Pius IX, of holy memory, as early as 1846 pronounced a solemn condemnation, which he confirmed in the words of the Syllabus directed against ‘that infamous doctrine of so-called Communism which is absolutely contrary to the natural law itself, and if once adopted would utterly destroy the rights, property and possessions of all men, and even society itself.’ Later on, another of Our predecessors, the immortal Leo XIII, in his Encyclical Quod Apostolici Muneris, defined Communism as ‘the fatal plague which insinuates itself into the very marrow of human society only to bring about its ruin.’ With

clear intuition he pointed out that the atheistic movements existing among the masses of the Machine Age had their origin in that school of philosophy which for centuries had sought to divorce science from the life of the Faith and of the Church.” (Divini Redemptoris, Pope Pius XI, March 19, 1937)

The socialist movement in the United States today seems to be particularly dangerous because there are a number of politicians who are leading it. There is nothing new here, for the new socialists want you to believe that this right-robbing movement will somehow be an improvement over the damaged form of government the United States now has. The *modus operandi* is the same. The traitors of this country work very hard to undermine the government and its daily functions to create an “all hope is lost” environment. Their answer to the “problem” is the destruction of this nation as it has been known.

Many in this country quickly complain about the existing conditions in the political arena. How many of these same people pray for this nation’s leaders? How many pray for the spiritual welfare of the United States? Who prays

for the conversion of this nation?

The answer to the problems of any country is prayer and action. Good people must be involved in politics to keep evil people from overthrowing this nation. All citizens, especially Catholics should be praying for the United States and its spiritual welfare.

This writer is convinced this nation is in a morally deplorable state because too many do not pray for this country, and perhaps never did. If you want to be a real patriot, (a good Catholic and a good citizen) pray for this country and its many leaders. Only then may we expect the present-day traitors to be defeated and for God to bless this nation.

HISTORICAL REVIEW: WHO WAS THE FIRST POPE?

Father Anthony Lentz, OFM

History is a peculiar thing, or rather man makes history peculiar. The peculiarity arises when men argue among themselves about the accuracy or veracity of historical events or persons. Regardless of that, there are certain things, fixed things, that we all know are true. Here is an example. Everyone knows that among men there have always been leaders, but we may not all agree that a particular leader was good. Some may say that Louis IX of France was holy and just; others may argue that he was a religious fanatic, but neither one would say that he was not a king. How do we know that he was a king? The facts of history, which have been preserved and archived, proclaim it. These types of historical facts are, in themselves, morally indifferent. They are indifferent because they do not examine motives or the moral character of individuals, they are simple objective history. So when something is proposed that goes against such facts that have been around since time immemorial, that is facts that have been around longer than any living person can remember otherwise, we must raise the red flag. In honor of the Feast of Ss. Peter and Paul, I present one such

proposition which has a direct impact upon the Catholic Church, - who was the first pope?

Protestants cannot deny the fact that the Papacy exists. If they did then why do they call some people papists? They know that the popes have played a key role in the structure of Christian Europe and have exercised a special preeminence over it. This is all objective and factual. They would call this tyranny, while Catholics would call it a “fatherly concern for the care of souls”. To deny that men have held these positions would be historically useless, but to deny its true origin is a different matter. Some have proposed that the Papacy, and the Catholic Church for that matter, was not divinely instituted by Christ, but rather it is a man-made institution. Which man? Who instituted it then, if not Christ? Who was the first pope then, if not St. Peter? Some would tell us that it was Emperor Constantine the Great, of the Roman Empire, who was both founder and pope.

We as Catholics would look at this as quite a stretch, and it is, but some people take this theory very seriously. One argument is that since Constantine used the

title “Pontifex Maximus,” a title that has been used over the centuries in reference to the pope, he must have been the first pope of the Catholic Church. It is true that it was Constantine, Emperor of the Western Empire, who gave Catholicism equal standing with paganism with the *Edict of Milan* in 313. Then when he became sole emperor in 324, he declared that Catholicism was the religion of the state. All of this is true, but none of this makes him the first pope. Quite honestly it won’t take much to prove that this idea is merely a fabrication of someone who has an agenda and a hatred for Catholicism.

Before going into the history of this claim I just want to point out one very important thing, that is that Constantine was “canonically ineligible” to ever become pope. The Church teaches in Canon Law that there are two basic requirements for a person to assume the office of the pope. The first requirement is that the person has to be of the male gender, and second, this man must be a Catholic. Obviously, Constantine fulfilled the first requirement but what about the second? The truth is that Constantine was not a Catholic when he signed the *Edict of Milan* (313) nor was he Catholic when Catholicism became the religion of the empire (323). Constantine was baptized on his deathbed by the

Arian bishop Eusebius on May 22, 337. “How could,” a reasonable person may ask, “this man then be Christ’s vicar on earth if he were not even a member of His Church – the Mystical Body of Christ?” Such a simple question, but will people give you a simple answer?

Now let us get back to history and Constantine giving himself the title, “Pontifex Maximus.” (Head bishop) In order to understand this, we need to look at Constantine’s own history. The book *“A History of the Church”* by Philip Hughes recounts this pivotal point that led towards Constantine’s “conversion”: *“His parents were Pagans, and his father’s religion a form of that new moral monotheism, popular with the army, whose symbol was the Sun – Sol Invictus. One form of that cult had seemed destined to high fortunes under (Emperor) Aurelian (269-275). After Aurelian’s death Constantius Chlorus (Constantine’s father) was its most eminent supporter. The cult then probably came to Constantine as part of his paternal inheritance, and as he shook himself free of the influence of (Emperors) Diocletian and Maximian (whose son-in-law he was) the young emperor showed himself openly the protector of his father’s cult. By the time of his expedition against Maxentius, his evolution in religion had gone beyond this. He had abandoned the last*

traces of a cult of the Sun and reached the point of a simple belief that there is but one God. The final, decisive step was not the fruit of any further meditation but was due to something which happened to Constantine the very night before the battle at the Milvian Bridge, a mile or two outside the Flaminian Gate of Rome. In a dream, the emperor was bidden to mark his soldiers' shields with the sign of God and go into battle with this as his badge. He did so. In the fight which followed he was victorious, and Maxentius was drowned in the Tiber (a river near Rome) as he fled from the field. Constantine entered Rome convinced now that the one, supreme God was the God whom the Christians worshipped — Jesus Christ.” (page 175) We can see that Constantine was not that far removed from being a full-fledged pagan and in pagan Rome, the emperor was head of the religion. It would have been natural for Constantine to believe he had a greater say in Church matters than what was actually appropriate and giving himself a title would seem to him to have been logical.

So Constantine may have seen himself as someone more than just emperor of Rome and protector of the new religion, but history shows that the Catholic religion has just one founder and that is Christ. Christ appointed St. Peter to be His

vicar on Earth and the bishops of Rome to be his successors in that office. Scripture, Fathers of the Church and Ecclesiastical history show this to be true. All we need to do is make a cursory examination of history to prove that it was St. Peter, not Constantine, who was the first pope and that the [true] bishops of Rome are his valid successors.

Mr. Paul Whitcomb, a scholar and a convert from Protestantism, wrote a wonderful pamphlet called *The Catholic Church has the Answer*. In it, he answers the most asked questions about the Church. Concerning the primacy of St. Peter and the popes he explains:

“The Pope, which means *head bishop (Pontifex Maximus)* of the Church, is referred to as the “rock” of the Church, or as the “shepherd” of the Church. Christ used that terminology when He appointed the Apostle Peter the first head bishop of His Church, saying: “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona . . . Thou art Peter, and upon this rock, I will build my church.” (*Matt. 16:17-19*). “There shall be one fold and one shepherd.” (*John 10:16*). “Feed my lambs . . . feed my sheep.” (*John 21:15-17*). The words “rock” and “shepherd” must apply to Peter, and they must distinguish him as the head Apostle, otherwise, Christ's statements are so ambiguous as to be meaningless. Certainly, the other Apostles

understood that Peter had authority from Christ to lead the Church, for they gave him the presiding place every time they assembled in council (*Acts* 1:15, 5:1-10), and they placed his name first every time they listed the names of the Apostles. (*Matt.* 10:2, *Mark* 3:16, *Luke* 6:13-14, *Acts* 1:13).

“In addition, there is the testimony of the Church Fathers. In the second century St. Hegessipus compiled a list of Popes to the time of Anicetus (eleventh Pope) which contained the name of St. Peter as first. Early in the third century the historian Caius wrote that Pope Victor was “the thirteenth Bishop of Rome from Peter.” In the middle of the third century St. Cyprian related that Cornelius (twenty-first Pope) “mounted the lofty summit of the priesthood . . . the place of Peter.” Even Protestant historians have attested to Peter's role as first Bishop of Rome, first Pope of the Catholic Church. Wrote the eminent Protestant historian Cave in his *Historia Literaria*: “That Peter was at Rome, and held the See there for some time, we fearlessly affirm with the whole multitude of the ancients.”

Besides Mr. Whitcomb, I am going to now consult the Rev. Bertrand L. Conway, C.S.P.'s book “*The Question Box*” in order to give more examples of popes exercising their supre-

macy during the first three centuries. I will give three examples. He writes: “*Before St. John died, Pope Clement of Rome (90-99) of his own accord wrote to the Christians in Corinth, urging concord and submission to their ecclesiastical superiors. There is no record of the Apostle John intervening, although Ephesus was easier of access than Rome. The Corinthians accepted Rome's message and legates gladly, and the Pope's letter was placed almost on a level with the Sacred Scriptures for nearly a century.*” (*Clement, Ad Cor., i., 1, e, 44*)

“*Pope Victor (189-198) at the close of the 2nd century summoned the Bishops of the time to come together in councils to determine the date of celebrating Easter. The Asiatics accepted the Jewish Pasch for their feast, while Rome observed it on the Sunday after the Jewish Pasch. Although the Council of Asia appealed to St. John and St. Philip as their authorities together with Papias and St. Polycarp, the Pope threatened the Bishops with excommunication, unless they abandoned their custom. Could there be a more striking evidence of his realization of his supreme authority? Who but a supreme Bishop would have dared to separate Bishops from the unity of the whole Church? No other Church ever claimed such*

power.”

“St. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, wrote in 180 his well-known treatise against the Gnostics of his time. In it, we find a clear assertion of the unity of the Church’s teaching, and the supremacy of Rome, the guardian of the Apostolic tradition, over all other Churches. He says: “Indeed, the superior pre-eminence of that Church is such that every Church – I mean the faithful of any country whatsoever – necessarily agrees with her, that is, every Church in any country in which the Apostolic tradition has been preserved without interruption.” (Adv. Haer., iii., 3)

These are just a few examples of how loudly history can speak! But in the end people are going to believe what they want to believe, that is their free-will choice. Just keep in mind that all the subjectivism in the world does not make something objectively true. Objective history is how something actually happened and not as a certain group perceives it. Simply put, the facts of history are nothing more than our recording of effects and their causes. Every truth is built upon another truth until it reaches that Supreme Truth, Jesus Christ – *“Jesus Christ, yesterday, today, and the Self-same forever!”* This is the truth of history and the gift of our faith.





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ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

An Autobiography

CHAPTER ONE EARLIEST MEMORIES

Continued

Dear Mother, how happy I was at that age! Not only was I beginning to enjoy life but virtue itself wore a charm. It seems to me that my dispositions were the same then as now, for even at that time I possessed a very large measure of self-control. I made it a practice never to complain when my things were taken, and if at any time I were unjustly accused, I preferred to keep silence rather than attempt an excuse. There was, however, no merit in all this, for it came to me quite naturally.

How quickly those sunny years of early childhood passed away, and how sweet the memories they have left behind! I think with delight of the Sunday walks, when our beloved Mother always accompanied us. Indeed, I can still feel the vivid and poetic impressions made on my childish heart by the vision of the cornfields studded with cornflowers, poppies, and marguerites. Even at that age I loved far-stretching views, sunlit spaces, and stately trees: in a word all the beauties of nature cast their spell upon me and raised my soul to Heaven.

Often during these walks, we met

poor people, and I was always the one chosen to give them alms, which made me feel happy indeed. Sometimes Papa took me home, knowing the way was too long for his little Queen. This was a cause of trouble, and to console me Celine would fill her pretty basket with daisies and give them to me on her return. Truly everything on earth smiled on me; I found flowers strewn at each step, and my naturally happy disposition helped to make life bright. But a new era was about to dawn. I was to be the spouse of Our Lord at so tender an age that it was necessary I should suffer from childhood.

As the early spring flowers begin to come up under the snow and open at the first rays of the sun, so the Little Flower, whose story I am writing, had to pass through the winter of trial and have her delicate cup filled with the dew of tears.

END OF CHAPTER ONE

To Be Continued.....

THE PROTECTION OF LIFE

Bishop Giles, OFM

We have many things that we should pray for. It is possible that God allows many evils so that we may be drawn closer to Him in prayer. The True Faith tells us that God can make a greater good come from any evil no matter how bad it may be. For the repentant sinner He has promised that even if his sins be as scarlet, He will make them white as snow. One of the more important things that we should be inclined to pray for is the protection of life. It is God Who gives life, but the devils are seeking at every turn to destroy life. The demons suggest to us that the old, the sick, the pre-born, or anyone who creates a burden for us should be killed and thus lessen the burden they cause others.

The physical lives of many souls are weighed in the balance of material convenience or pleasure. It is a demonic suggestion that a child unintentionally conceived is a burden, embarrassment, inconvenience, or has come at an inopportune time and therefore should be destroyed. This life has been created by God and He has

directly instructed us not to kill one another.

Many have jumped upon a band-wagon of vain excuses to make the murder of another person acceptable. They suggest to us that a baby criminally con-ceived should be killed. It is not the baby's sin or crime, so we ask, why should the baby be killed? The Old Testament would have the adulterer, the fornicator, the rapist, or the incestuous person stoned to death for their crimes against God, society and humanity. It seems that if anyone should have their physical lives forfeited, it should be the ones who committed the crime not the one conceived in crime. However, Jesus has lifted the harshness of the Old Law and given us a New Law grounded in love. Let us forgive as we desire to be forgiven. God will forgive any and all our sins if we will only humbly and penitently seek His forgiveness.

It is very easy for men to adopt a righteous attitude and seek swift and harsh punishment upon those who have committed evils. St. Peter once

was rebuked by Jesus for such an attitude. Jesus reminded him that He had come to save not to destroy. Far from seeking the destruction of others, we should seek their conversion and salvation. This is nothing less than the implementation of the law of loving our neighbor as we love ourselves – the second commandment after loving God with a preferential love of our entire being.

We should fervently pray for the souls of the children being murdered in their “mother’s” womb, but we should also pray for all those involved in and cooperating in these murders. To end this great evil, we need to convert hearts and minds. To outlaw this crime is a step in the right direction, and it appears that several states are progressing in this direction. However, this is not enough, the crime will continue to be committed with or without the law. What we need to do is change the hearts and minds of people. They need the saving grace of Jesus through the True Catholic Church, the True Faith and Sacraments. They need to see that our crosses and burdens in this life are to be loved rather than rejected or destroyed. Other people may

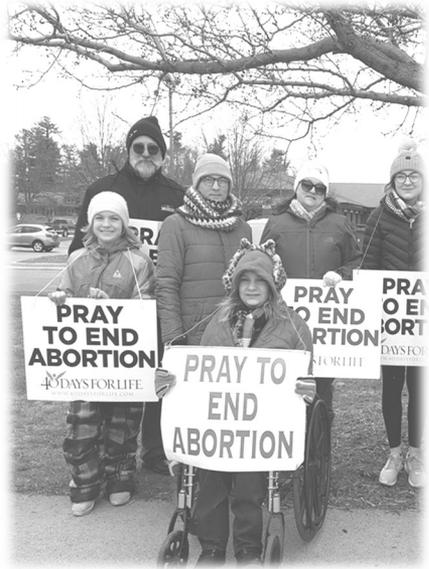
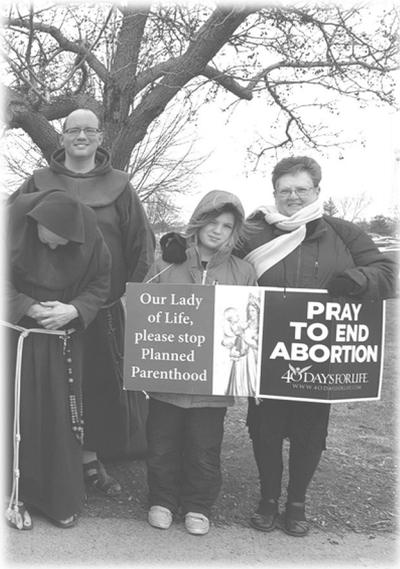
be constant crosses and burdens to us, especially our children, but they are very rewarding crosses that fill our hearts and souls with grace and joy. In the service of others, we find the greatest happiness. It is very true that it is better to give than to receive.

Let us increase our prayers that God will bring an end to this abomination of disdain for the life He gives by converting the hearts and minds of all in our country. We need to pray for the conversion of our legislators and leaders, but most importantly we need to pray for one another. It will not matter if the state is pagan and says it is OK to kill children in the womb if no one is willing to do it. If we can convince women to love the fruit of their wombs which God gives them – regardless of any immoral acts on the part of men that have brought this about – then we have done much to save not only physical lives but even more importantly – immortal souls.

Let us add a “*Memorare*” to our daily prayers that God may bring about the conversion of so many misguided, misinformed, or hardened hearts.



LET US PRAY TO END ABORTION



The Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to thee do I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.



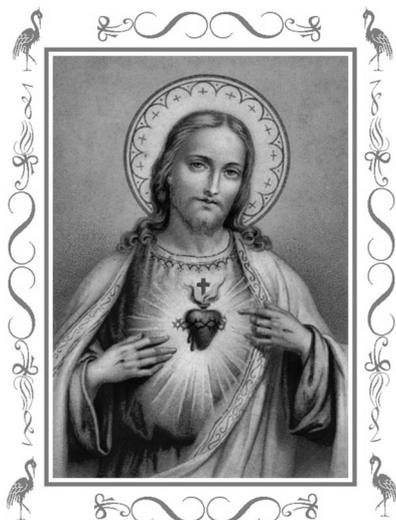
Sister Agnes' Favorites

JESUS, SWEET JESUS

JESUS, sweet Jesus, my treasure divine,
Oh! with what rapture I call Thee all mine;
 Brilliant, celestial, my glory, my sun,
Oh, that I loved Thee, Thou beautiful One!

Fountain of sweetness, abyss of delight,
Robed in Thy splendor, immortal and bright,
Thou God of my heart, oh! when shall I flee
 Away from my prison, to love only Thee?

Jesus, my Jesus, so priceless in worth,
 Joy of the Angels and hope of the earth!
Strong are the links and the bonds which confine
My heart and my soul to Thee, Jesus, all mine.



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



ARTICLE 3

THE EXERCISE OF SELF- SURRENDER

When a soul of good will has given herself to God by a generous act of love, the foundations of the spiritual edifice have been laid. Now the building must go on, that is to say, the act of giving must be renewed frequently. This is the exercise of self-surrender. It is practiced with the same simplicity, the same quiet sweetness, which the surrendered soul gives to all her duties.

In the morning, on awakening, the soul turns to God and gives Him her whole being, praying Him to dispose of her as He wills. For her, this act takes the

place of long prayers. It is a loving acceptance of all that is to happen to her in the course of the day: sweet and bitter, agreeable and painful. It is a joyous disposition to do all and suffer all in order to please God.

The soul strives to keep herself peacefully in this essential disposition, and, from time to time, repeats her favorite act. Thus, recollected in God, she goes to prayer and to work, according to the duties of her state.

During her occupations, she is mistress of herself, acting without slowness and without precipitation, letting herself be ruled neither by a desire to finish as quickly as possible,

nor by a wish to attract the esteem of others, nor by the pleasure she finds in her task.

She does not belong to herself, being quite surrendered to the good Master; neither does she belong to others, being a queen and the spouse of Jesus. Neither is she a slave to her work, for the work is not an end; it is only a means.

She undertakes her task without passion, pursues it in a detached manner, as a pastime which Jesus has allotted to her while she is waiting for His coming. She finishes without haste, knowing that after this duty another will come. She often repeats, to prevent impatient activity: "While I am fulfilling this obligation, I do not need to fulfil another; while I am in this place by the Will of God, I need not be anywhere else."

Thus, in full possession of herself, she carries out her duties successively, with a disengaged heart. This interior liberty permits her to undertake all with open mind and sustained attention, without weariness, precipitation, languor, or slow-ness.

The men who are most active have the least air of being so. Those who are agitated, and bustling do almost nothing. They begin, but do not finish.

After their work, they have troubled hearts, and minds preoccupied and incapable of thinking of God.

The simple soul, on the contrary, imitates God, Who seems always in repose and is always active.

So, the soul goes on through the day, fortified by her act of surrender to God. She repeats it at the beginning of each duty, at each difficulty that arises, at each suffering that presents itself, at each joy or dis-appointment that she experiences.

She has her own way of resisting temptations and of putting aside distractions. When she perceives them, she does not drive them away in a direct manner as one chases away flies by a wave of the hand; she ignores them and is content with repeating: "Jesus, I am wholly Thine. Help me." An ardent act of love is her response to all the suggestions of the demon. Therefore, she is never tempted long. The enemy knows that each temptation causes a new lifting of her heart to Jesus.

Likewise, by a simple act of love, she welcomes the contradictions, the crosses, the sufferings of each day. Pressing upon such a soul, all disappointments succeed only

in drawing forth love.

Recreation does not interrupt her intercourse with God. She goes to it with a free heart, knowing that God wills it. She does not give herself up to vain and uncontrolled joy. In her, all is moderated. She enjoys herself as a child under the eyes of his mother. She takes care to remember that God is present, that He sees and loves her.

In the same manner, she takes her repasts with an entire liberty of spirit, without concerning herself about the quality of the food. Does not all come to her from the Hand of God, her Father? She regards herself as a singularly beloved sheep, which God allows to sleep upon His knees and to eat from His Hand. Her thoughts are directed only to this good Father Who loves her tenderly; and she minds nothing else.

Finally, when darkness comes and day is ended, the soul, in going to rest, murmurs one more act of surrender—an act which is, if possible, still more tender, more profound—to repair the faults she has committed, to supply for the omissions of the day. Then she sleeps in peace, under the Eye of the good Master Who is watching over her.

ARTICLE 4

DIFFICULTIES WHICH THE SOUL ENCOUNTERS IN THE EXERCISE OF SELF-ABANDONMENT

In this exercise of self-surrender, days, months, years pass away, monotonous in appearance, in reality full of variety. The background is the same, the act of self-surrender; but upon this background, God has drawn a picture in infinitely varied colors. Truly, days are not all alike. Sometimes love causes the soul to be alert. All is easy for her; all is delightful. She feels herself, like a light straw, carried in God.

At another time, she drags herself painfully. She feels that she is a burden to herself and to others; she is bound to the earth; her thoughts are lifted up with difficulty, and soon fall again like a heavy mass.

During prayer, it is still relatively easy for her to make the act of self-surrender to God; but during her work, in the succession of daily duties, the soul is a prey to lassitude.

Her great trial proceeds from her inability to recall the presence of God. With Him, all would be sweet and easy. But when prayer is ended, distractions, difficult-ies, multiplied cares, worries,

besiege the soul, take her captive and carry her away.

Poor soul! Nevertheless, let her be comforted. Jesus desires only one thing, that she renew her act when she thinks of it. Memory is not always in our power; it is independent of the will. The soul may pass a considerable time without remembering God, notwithstanding her firm resolution to think of Him. There is no fault in this forgetfulness; it is a sign of human weakness.

Therefore, let the soul go to her work with a detached heart, resolved not to seek her personal satisfaction but to accomplish the Divine Will. This Will of God includes the occupations which obedience, her social condition, necessity, propriety, require of her.

The surrendered soul has a holy ambition to fulfil even the least of her duties exactly. In all, she sees the good pleasure of her Divine Father. She would feel that she committed a sacrilege if, by her own will, she altered even one detail of the Divine dispositions in her regard. She does not inquire curiously what God exacts from others. All her attention is given to her duty. She has only one desire, to fulfil that duty well.

Action is like a sacrament, under which form she receives Our Lord; it is the veil behind which He hides His Real Presence. The simple heart tears away this veil and casts itself into its Master's Arms. Each action thus accomplished is a new giving of oneself to God. The faithful soul advances without interruption on this way of perfection. As she goes on, all within her is transformed and made divine without her perceiving it. Jesus gives Himself in proportion to the degree in which the soul sur-renders herself. He substitutes Himself for the soul, takes away her faults, and adorns her with His own virtues.

O Jesus! I do not wish to be content with only one utterance of the act of perfect surrender to Thee. I wish to make this act the foundation and the occupation of my whole life. This, for me, is perfection.

I shall not let myself be deterred by aridity, nor by the sameness of this exercise, nor by my many infidelities. O Jesus! Thou lovest me too much to let me be discouraged. Thou dost mingle all things so well, making the sweet succeed the bitter, and the agreeable the painful, that I shall not be tempted to look back.



FRANCISCAN SAINTS

JUNE 7TH

Blessed Humiliana

Widow, Third Order

Humiliana was descended of the ancient noble family of the Cerchi, and was born in Florence in 1219. From her earliest childhood she was much given to all works of piety, and those who knew her were convinced that she was called for the service of God rather than for the world.

But her father, who had six daughters and twelve sons, and aimed through their alliances to increase the power and reputation of his house, promised Humiliana in marriage to a nobleman when she was but sixteen years old. The humble daughter submitted to the wish of her father and married the nobleman, who proved to be entirely unworthy of her. He was miserly and avaricious, and dealt harshly with his young wife. But she retaliated only with meekness, patience, and charity, seeking consolation with God and in works of charity towards her neighbor.

Her heroic virtues shone forth when her husband fell dangerously ill after five years of married life. She not only nursed him, in a spirit of sacrifice, until

his death, but she ceded the entire family fortune to her husband's relatives, with the single condition that they make restitution for all the injustices he had committed.

She then withdrew to her father's house. But when he kept urging her to contract a second marriage, she left the house and retired, with a servant, to an old tower which belonged to her family. She now received the habit of the Third Order, becoming the first Tertiary in Florence, and led an unusually austere life in her retirement. She never left her solitude except to visit the churches or to render services of charity to the poor and the sick.

Since her father could not have his way with her so far as his worldly plans were concerned, he strove to deprive her of whatever property rights she still possessed. He succeeded. But, guided by her excellent confessor, Father Michael Alberti, Humiliana was so strengthened in the spirit of Our Holy Father St. Francis that she rejoiced in being able to fulfill to

the letter what our Lord requires when He says: “He that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be my disciple” (*Luke 14:33*). She only deplored the fact that she could no longer assist the poor. But here, too, she knew how to manage. She was not ashamed to go out begging, and then she distributed the alms among the poor.

In her many tribulations God almighty comforted His servant with extraordinary graces. At prayer she was rapt in ecstasy for hours, sometimes even for days. Once she pleaded, out of heroic charity, to take upon herself the severe pains of a sick person. When that person was relieved and she lay on her couch of suffering amid severe pain, Our Divine Lord appeared to her, and with the Sign of the Cross restored her to health again. Her own daughter, who had been reared by her husband's relatives and who had died, she raised to life again. But still more astonishing was the marvelous patience with which she so meekly bore all the reproaches of her relatives no less than the impudence of her own maid.

The ardent longing for God with which her heart was aglow, was soon to be gratified. In her twenty-seventh year she fell seriously ill and felt that her end was near at hand. When her confessor, under whose wise direction she had remained the victor in all her struggles, besought her to be mindful of

him after her death, she told him that that would not long be necessary because he would soon follow her. And so it happened.

With her confessor at her bedside, Humiliana departed blessedly in the Lord on May 19, 1246. Immediately she was honored by the people like a saint. Pope Innocent XII sanctioned this veneration.

CONCERNING SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

1.) Consider how fortunate Blessed Humiliana was to have so dependable a director in the difficult circumstances of her life. Whoever wishes to make progress in the spiritual life, should submit to direction. Thus has God ordained it, so that in everybody the virtue of humility may lay the foundation for the work of sanctification, and ever accompany the work. St. Paul, who as the Apostle of the Gentiles was to be a teacher and leader of thousands, was in his own case sent to another, to Ananias, a disciple of the Lord at Damascus. “And there it shall be told thee what thou must do” (*Acts 9:7*). If, then, you were to think you can guide yourself, that would be dangerous presumption.

2.) Consider how one should choose a spiritual director. As God singled out a director for St. Paul, so should we above all beg God to let us find the right director. If your ecclesiastical

superiors, who are God's representatives, have appointed a director for you, then submit entirely to his guidance. If you are free to choose among several, then select the one that in knowledge, experience, and virtue is the most suitable for you. If, as may be the case, you have no chance to enjoy advice and guidance, then trust in God and He will provide, or Himself direct you. Beware of the temptation to change spiritual directors without serious reasons. Thomas a Kempis (1:9) says: "Run hither or thither, thou wilt find no rest but in humble subjection. A fancy for places and changing residence hath deluded many." — Has it deluded you perhaps too?

3.) Consider how you should conduct yourself towards your director. With childlike candor you should reveal to him the state of your soul. You ought never purposely conceal anything from him. He is the physician of your soul, and he can heal and sanctify it only if he knows it perfectly. But then you must, likewise, follow his suggestions faithfully and in a childlike manner. This does not, however, exclude the privilege of asking others for advice. In instances that may even be obligatory. But you must not place too high an estimate on your own judgment. Rather, as a rule, you should regard the guidance of your director as correct, even though it

may not appear so to your own self-love. "The obedient man shall speak of victory". (*Prov. 21:28*) Then you will also, like Blessed Humiliana, preserve peace of heart in difficult circumstances and make progress in virtue.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Almighty and eternal God, Thou sweetness of hearts and reward of the blessed in heaven, who didst inflame Blessed Humiliana with Thy love and didst fill her with the sweet taste of contemplation, mercifully grant that through her merits and in imitation of her, we may ever follow Thee and deserve to be admitted to the eternal vision of Thy Majesty. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE GREATEST TREASURE

Reverend L. Chiavarino



CHAPTER VII HOLY MASS WARDS OFF CALAMITIES

One of the pages of St. Elizabeth, Queen of Portugal, was particularly dear to her because of his piety, and it was through him that she usually distributed alms to the poor. Another page became envious of him and complained to the King that he had committed some serious crime. The King believed the accusation and planned a punishment. He called the foreman of the lime-kilns and told him that on the day following he would send a page to ask if he had “carried out the King’s orders.” These words were to be a signal for the foreman to seize the youth and to throw him into the hottest furnace. In accordance with this plan, the good page was sent next morning to the lime-kilns. However, chancing to pass a church on the way, he recollected

that he had not yet heard Mass. He therefore determined that he would pause on his journey to do so. He entered the Church and remained for two Masses.

Meanwhile, the impatience of the King did not permit him to wait for a report and he sent the jealous page to inquire about the execution of his orders. The foreman, of course, assumed that this messenger was the guilty page and without further ado he thrust him into the blazing furnace. A little later, the good page arrived and asked:

“Have you carried out the King’s orders?”

“Yes,” answered the foreman. “Tell His Majesty that everything was done as he wished.”

The page brought the answer back to the monarch. The King was astonished to see the one he had expected would be dead; but after learning what had taken place, he was forced to recognize the just judgment of God, and the

good page whose devotion to the Mass had saved him from a terrible death was restored to the King's favor.

St. Anthony tells of two sinful young men who set out for a walk together. One of them had heard Mass that morning, but the other had not. As they walked through the forest, the skies darkened and presently they were in the thick of a furious storm. In the midst of thunder and lightning a voice was heard crying: "Kill! Kill!" As if at a signal, a thunderbolt struck one of the youths and reduced him to ashes. The other, thoroughly frightened, turned to flee; but, to his dismay, he heard the same voice repeating: "Kill! Kill!" Feeling that he was lost, the young man stood, awaiting the flash which would destroy him. Then he heard another voice which said: "I cannot, I cannot. He heard Mass this morning and I am prevented from striking him because of it."

Even at the cost of some sacrifice, let us assist at Mass. It serves as the lightning-rod of the world against the wrath of God Who is made angry by our sins. Oh! how many times has God preserved us from terrible calamities simply because we have heard Mass! St. Leonard remarks that the Holy Sacrifice is like the sun which sheds its rays on good and bad alike. There is no soul on earth so evil that remains unaffected by hearing Mass, or by having a Mass said. Some great grace will come to

that soul even though it should not itself think about it or directly pray for it.

On the morning of May 31, 1906, an attempt was made upon the lives of the King and Queen of Spain. The fatal bomb which was intended to serve for the crime burst with a loud explosion scattering death in all directions, but King Alfonso and his consort were miraculously unharmed. It was later announced that on that very day, and at about the hour of the tragedy, a Mass was being celebrated for the royal couple at the famous shrine of Our Lady of Bavaria, it having been requested by them some time before. In memory of the occurrence the King and Queen ordered one of the fragments of the bomb which had penetrated the carriage encased in gold and sent to the shrine. It was inscribed: "In token of thanksgiving to our well beloved Lady, the Queen of Heaven. Alfonso XIII, King of Spain, and Victoria. May 31, 1906."

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