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In ómnibus - Cáritas.*

REBUILD MY CHURCH

Bishop Giles, OFM DD



Saint Bonaventure relates in the Life of St. Francis of Assisi: “Francis left the town one day to meditate out-of-doors and as he was passing by the church of San Damiano which was threatening to collapse with age, he felt urged to go in and pray. (The church of St. Damian was about a half-mile outside of Assisi.) There as he knelt in prayer before a painted image of the Crucified, he felt greatly comforted in spirit and his eyes were full of tears as he gazed at the cross. (This image was painted in Byzantine style and it is still preserved in the church of St. Clare where it was placed in 1260.) Then all of a sudden, he heard a voice coming from the cross and telling him three times, ‘Francis, go and repair my house. You see it is all falling down.’ Francis was alone in the church and he was terrified at the sound of

the voice, but the power of its message penetrated his heart and he went into an ecstasy. Eventually, he came back to himself and prepared to obey the command he had received. He was quite willing to devote himself entirely to repairing the ruined church of San Damiano, although the message really referred to the universal Church which Christ ‘won for Himself at the price of His own blood’ (Acts 20, 28), as the Holy Ghost afterward made him realize and he himself explained to the friars.”

We frequently hear the observations of many telling of the modern changes that have taken place in some churches. The statues and Holy Communion rails have been removed. Altars have been replaced with tables. These sacred places of worship have been turned into

places of assembly for the comfort of man.

Hearing these things, we are naturally inclined to respond as St. Francis first did by trying to save these objects from the landfills. If we cannot return them to their proper places in the churches they came out of, we strive to preserve them in our homes or build new churches to house these relics.

Many Catholics have worked and continue to work in this manner. Their primary concern is the preservation of the externals of the Catholic Church. They want to preserve the statues, stained glass windows, the altars, altar rails, as well as the use of Latin and sacred hymns.

St. Francis soon discovered his misunderstanding and realized that the Catholic Church is only repaired or built up with souls receiving the sacraments and believing the dogmas of the True Church. It is not enough for us to build buildings or to paint statues. The faith and dogmas symbolized by these physical things are what needs to be saved and rebuilt.

With the changes brought about by Modernism within the walls of once Catholic

churches came also changes in the practices, worship, and beliefs of the members of the Church. Many have worked very hard to preserve and hold onto these things and they celebrate every apparent success. In some churches, they were able to preserve much of the ornamentation. Sadly, these places have become more like museums recalling historical art and practice rather than houses of worship. The Latin Mass codified by Pope St Pius V was strongly insisted upon even in the face of open resistance from many in the hierarchy and clergy.

What many Catholics failed to understand is that we not only need to preserve the language, ceremonies, customs, rituals, and outward trappings of the Faith of Our Holy Mother the Church, but even more importantly we need to preserve the validity of the sacraments and the Faith manifested by these traditions. We need to build up the true Faith that was lost through the workings of Modernism. We need valid priests and sacraments if the use of Latin and the ceremonies handed to us through tradition is to have any benefit to souls. What good is a beautiful Latin

ceremony and ornamentation if the “priests” are not true (valid) priests? What many people are preserving is history through shows or stage productions. These may be wonderful historical reenactments, but they are of no use supernaturally. For them to be of value to our souls we must insist upon valid and licit priests and sacraments, otherwise, we have nothing but an empty shell – or even worse, when people are exposed to the worship of mere bread that is not the Body of Jesus because there was no true priest to confect the miracle of Transubstantiation, they commit idolatry.

A remnant of Franciscans have been laboring for decades now to resist the tsunami of Modernism, as well as resisting the “religious Materialism” of so many “Traditionalist Catholics.” The Church is falling down on all sides around us as the extreme right fights against and resists the extreme left. Each extremity claims to be fighting to preserve the Catholic Church, but both are tearing down the True Church of Jesus Christ.

Virtue is in the middle. We cannot preserve the Church

by modernizing and changing true and certain sacraments and doctrines to accommodate modern men; nor can we preserve or build up the Church by holding onto ancient rites and ceremonies but having no regard for validity or legitimacy. To rebuild the Church we must with St. Francis of Assisi, look beyond the physical structure and appearances. We must look to the heart and soul of the Church – the True Faith, True Worship, and True Sacrifice which is only made possible by true priests and true sacraments.

The externals are useful and even necessary to draw souls to God, but without the truth the externals point to, they are empty and hollow. We are composed of body and soul. We need both physical and spiritual things to truly complete our purpose in this life of knowing, loving, and serving God so that we may one day enter into eternal bliss with Him in Heaven.

Modernism is wrong in overemphasizing the spiritual as they remove and destroy the many physical aids our Holy Mother the Church has given us. They pretend to greater spirituality and a closer union with the Holy

Ghost, but they have lost everything when they gave up the true Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist – the Divine Sacrifice of the Mass was substituted by a human memorial meal.

Traditionalism is wrong in overemphasizing the material and physical structure of buildings, rites, and ceremonies without any concern for the validity and liceity of sacraments, for truth in belief and doctrine. The rites and ceremonies of the sacraments are empty shows without a valid priesthood.

We ask our dear readers to join St. Francis and us in striving to fulfill the

command he received from Jesus through the San Damiano crucifix. “Rebuild My Church.” May we learn from St. Francis and history that the major destruction is not in the external things, but in the very soul of the Church. It is in preserving the Faith, Doctrine, Sacraments, and priesthood that we should direct our greatest labors. Let us work and pray for the true conversion of so many misguided souls. Beg God to send us true vocations to the priesthood and the religious life so that Jesus’ command to St. Francis may find fulfillment in our days as it was found in the time of St. Francis.



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THE LITURGICAL YEAR WITH ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Father Anthony Lentz, OFM

THE SANCTORAL CYCLE

In the last article, we discussed the “so-called” anomaly that occurs each year when the two cycles, *temporal* and *sanctoral*, crossover. As we discussed this mainly centers around feasts pertaining to Our Lord, and in which case the *temporal cycle* is dominant. The *sanctoral cycle* is dominant when a feast of the *first* or *second* class falls on a Sunday after Pentecost and is celebrated in its place with a commemoration of the Sunday. This article will not be dealing with anomalies, but rather with the *sanctoral* cycle as it is.

The very name *sanctoral* is derived from the Latin adjective *sanctus -a -um*, meaning “holy”. The name or term “saint” has the same derivation so, therefore, referring to a “holy person”. Of course, we must not forget that the angels in heaven, who also conformed themselves to the Divine Will, should be referred to as saints. Simply then, this cycle honors the holy men and women, who conformed themselves to Christ and to the holy

angels who adore both His Divinity and Sacred Humanity. Now anyone who is a friend and servant of Christ is a friend of St. Francis. Before we get into examples of St. Francis’ devotion to the saints and angels, it would be to our benefit to review briefly, the history of this devotion.

The *cultus of the saints* is one of the most ancient dogmas of the Catholic Church. To ridicule and condemn their veneration and that of their relics, therefore, would be tantamount to accusing the Primitive Church of idolatry. The Council of Trent defended the true Catholic teaching when it proclaimed: “*The honor which is given them [images] is referred to the originals which they represent; in such wise that, by the images which we kiss, and before which we uncover our heads, or kneel, we adore Christ and venerate His Saints, whose likeness they bear.*” From as early as the third century St. Cyprian says: “*We celebrate the sufferings of the martyrs and their days by annual commemorations.*” In

general, we know that in the early centuries of the Church many festivals and liturgies, the songs and hymns, the homilies and sermons dedicated to saints, and the churches and chapels were erected in their honor from the earliest times both in the Eastern and in the Western Church.

The denial of this veneration was at least indirectly promoted during the *Iconoclasm Heresy*, the rejection and destruction of religious images, that infected the Byzantine Empire, and the Church, during the 8th and 9th centuries. Although it was not until the Protestant Revolution of the 16th century that the veneration of saints and angels was directly denied and considered non-scriptural. This article is not intended to be a retort against this Protestant falsehood, but I suppose it would be beneficial to explain a Scriptural basis for this devotion. We have opened this door, so naturally, we should walk through it.

I will get into only one of the Church's arguments and it is the one I find most interesting and logical. *According to the Sacred Scripture God frequently heeded the intercession of just and holy men while they were still living on earth. Now,*

the intercession of the angels and Saints, who have reached their final goal, is more powerful and effective than that of men, no matter how holy, who are still in danger of committing sin. If these can be effectively asked for their intercession, the same must be true of the angels and saints, who are friends of God in a higher sense because of their righteousness and glory. (This argument is taken from a Dogmatic Theology book titled: Mariology by Poehl and Pruess.)

Examples for the *indirect argument* come from St. Jerome, the Doctor of Scripture, from his work entitled *Contra Vigilantius*. He uses Moses' intercession for six-hundred men, St. Stephen's intercession for his persecutors, and St. Paul's intercession to save 276 souls from the ship. He then argues for Moses and St. Stephen, "*Will they be less powerful now that they are with Christ?*" Then with St. Paul, "*Can we assume that after his death, when he began to be with Christ, his mouth was sealed and he was unable to utter a word in behalf of those who throughout the world accepted his Gospel?*"

Fortunately for us, and himself, St. Francis was completely

Catholic and Apostolic. He would never have followed such a heresy as Iconoclasm and certainly would never have denied Scripture. He held completely to the Church's ancient teaching of veneration of the saints and angels. We are going to separate this devotion into three categories: 1) saints, 2) angels, and 3) the Blessed Virgin Mary in particular.

SAINTS

Probably the best example of his devotion to saints was that which he showed toward Ss. Peter and Paul, which is clearly expressed at the end of the *Rule*: "*To no one, therefore, be it allowed to infringe on this page of our confirmation or to oppose it with rash temerity. But if any one shall have presumed to attempt this, be it known to him that he will incur the indignation of Almighty God and of His holy Apostles Peter and Paul.*"

The obvious question would be, with the plethora of saints to choose from why did he choose Ss. Peter and Paul? Both an obvious and good question. The answer is explained to us by Fr. Hilarion Felder O.F.M. Cap. in his book *The Ideals of St. Francis of Assisi*: "*Of the saints, he honored with deepest devotion the Princes of the Apostles,*

Peter and Paul, because they excelled in glowing love for Christ, and were to him splendid examples in the exercise of the apostolate. He prepared himself yearly for their feast with a forty-day fast." St. Francis wanted to be truly an apostolic man, so who else would he have devotion towards? St. Peter, being the First Vicar of Christ, represented the Papal Authority to which St. Francis was loyal. St. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, represented the unquenchable desire to save the souls of infidels. This desire that was buried deep in the heart of St. Francis, it is what inspired him to undertake his missionary journey to the Holy Land.

ANGELS

St. Francis looked at the Angels as the heavenly champions in our battle with the forces of evil. They are heavenly sentinels, who watch and guard over mankind. They are the unceasing choir that chants before the most Holy Trinity in Heaven, who chants before Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. This is why St. Francis instructed the brothers that when they chant Divine Office, they should unite themselves with these Heavenly Hosts! This is how St. Francis honored all the angels in heaven, but apart from that

he had a particular devotion to St. Michael the Archangel, their general! This special devotion is derived mainly from his before-mentioned desire for the salvation of souls, the task which has been assigned to St. Michael. He honored St. Michael, in the same way, he honored Ss. Peter and Paul, by fasting for forty days from the Feast of the Assumption (August 15) to the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel (September 29).

BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

After the Sacred humanity of Christ and before all the saints and angels, St. Francis had a most amorous devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The reason why Catholics have a devotion to Mary is because of her Divine Motherhood, which is the source of all her other prerogatives. While St. Francis shared this common devotion, he also loved Mary because she *“shared in the poverty of her divine Son, and thus had become the model of the Friars Minor”* (*The Ideals of St. Francis of Assisi*, page 396). He often returned to this idea, whenever he saw a beggar he would see “a reflection of the Lord and of His poor Mother.” Father Felder writes about this devotion: *“Once at dinner, a Friar mentioned how poor the*

Blessed Virgin had been on Christmas Day when she gave birth to the Savior. This was enough to affect Francis most strongly. He rose instantly from the table, seated himself on the bare floor, and thus finished his frugal meal amid bitter tears.” (*The Ideals of St Francis of Assisi*, page 397).

HONORING ST. FRANCIS WITHIN THE LITURGY

Let us now honor him, who never sought honor.

On October 4th, we celebrate the Feast of Our Holy Father. On this day we remember with great fondness his life and ideals. Together with the Impression of the Sacred Stigmata (September 17), we may regard this as the high feast of the Order. It was on this day in the year 1226 that St. Francis embraced Sister Death and entered his heavenly reward while remaining in poverty. On July 6, 1228, a little under two years after his death, his friend and benefactor Pope Gregory IX enrolled him in the catalog of the saints.

This year-long series of articles has been an attempt to learn from St. Francis’ example how we can best keep the Liturgical Year. He constantly lived in its spirit and had a great love for all the ceremonies contained in

the Roman Liturgy – the Mass, Benediction, Divine Office, etc. It seems only fitting that after his death that he too would be honored within the Liturgy itself. In the year 1235, Brother Julian of Speyer, accomplished composer, poet, historian, and Franciscan, composed the rhymed Office in Honor of St. Francis of Assisi. What he composed was truly a masterwork, designed to recount the important events in the life of St. Francis. Here is an example:

*“A child of heaven to
mankind / Is sent, adorned with
wonders new;/ He opens
heaven to the blind, / The sea,
dry-shod, he passes through.
Laden/with spoils from Egypt’s
plains / He goes forth rich –
and yet no less/ In name and
deed still poor remains, / To
bring the wretches happiness.
Assumed with the Apostles
three/ Unto the mount of
heavenly light, / In the high
land of poverty / Francis
beholds Christ’s vision bright.
‘Three tabernacles let us
make!’/ Cried he, as Peter did
of yore, / Taught by him nobly
to forsake / All earthly things
for evermore. And while he
honored gratefully / The law,
the prophets, grace withal, /
Unto the Holy Trinity/ He kept
a solemn festival. While he
with all his might repairs /
Three dwellings for the*

*Threefold Guest;/ To Christ a
temple he prepares, / Built up
of chosen souls and blest. O
Father Francis! visit now /
Our house, our threshold, and
our grave, / And from the sleep
of death do thou/ Eve’s hapless
children wake and save.
Amen.”*

*(Hymn from First Vespers for
the Feast of St. Francis of
Assisi).*

There is beauty like this contained throughout the entire Liturgy. How well do you appreciate it? Have you ever just listened to Gregorian Chant, allowing its tones to elevate you to heavenly things? Do you join in the chanting of the *Tantum Ergo* and the *O Salutaris* during Benediction? Do you follow the Mass with due thought and devotion? Seriously ask yourself these questions because you should want to do your absolute best, in honoring our “Threefold Guest.” (Hmm....that rhymed!)

Next month, we will conclude this series with how St. Francis and his children honor the faithfully departed.

Pax et Bonum!

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THE FEAST OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Brother Charles, TOSF

If I were to ask you what the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary commemorates, the obvious answer would be: The Feast commemorates the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is, of course, correct, but also painfully obvious.

The Rosary, as we know it today, has its roots in early Christianity. The practice of using a string of knots or beads to count prayer repetitions, however, is older still. Also, the use of “prayer beads” is not confined to our Faith, only. Both Buddhists and Muslims have been known to use beads for similar purposes. So, what is it that sets the Rosary apart from simple prayer beads? In answer, let us consider the following:

First, the subject of the Rosary is the Life of Christ and His Mother. The fifteen decades of the Dominican Rosary help us meditate on these two lives, perfectly lived. They open our souls to the lessons they have for each of us. These lessons are for the whole Church militant, for each of us. And they are applicable to every age and state of life.

Second, the fifteen decades of the Rosary each consist of ten Hail Marys, for a total of one hundred fifty. From the Middle Ages, the Divine Office has been in part comprised of King David’s one hundred fifty Psalms. Since it was only literate monks who chanted the Office, the illiterate lay brothers needed a substitution which fit their level of ability. So, the one hundred fifty Psalms became one hundred fifty Hail Marys. This method of participation in the prayer life of the Church was also found to be well suited for the laity. It is no secret that the ability to read Latin is no longer common, even among the highly educated. The beautiful simplicity of the Rosary, so simple as to be extraordinarily profound, remains one of the ways, outside of Holy Mass, in which the laity might participate in the prayer life of the Church.

Third, the Holy Rosary far surpasses any mere prayer beads by the promises made to those who faithfully recite it. For those who recite the Rosary faithfully, Our Lady shall obtain special graces. These graces help to protect them against sin and vice; help turn

their minds away from the world; and make them true children of Mary and brothers to her Son. Of course, we must not forget, grace is only as good as how well we cooperate with it.

Finally, the Holy Rosary has been shown on numerous occasions over the centuries to bring about some great good or help to push back against great evil. This is not only on an individual level, but universally, too. In 1213 A.D., the Albigensian heretics were defeated at Muret. This victory is widely attributed to St. Dominic and his prayers, especially the Rosary. This instance helped him to be known as the “Apostle of the Rosary.” The fifteen decades of the Rosary are known as the Dominican Rosary, and devotion to the Rosary was spread throughout the world by the spiritual children of St. Dominic, even into the modern era.

The Feast of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on October 7th. Why this date? The seventh day of October was chosen in commemoration and thanksgiving for the defeat of the dreaded and powerful Turkish navy off the shores of Lepanto.

In 1571, the Turkish forces of the Ottoman Empire, that is to

say the Muslim forces of Sultan Selim II, dominated the Mediterranean Sea. Effectively, the primary trade ports of Eastern Europe and Western Asia were under Muslim control. Controlling trade was just a beginning step. The ultimate goal was the subjugation of Europe under the green banner of Mohammad. The situation looked very grim. Not only was the economic stability of Europe threatened. As the Ottoman Empire expanded its influence, the Christian Faith, already undermined by the villainous “reformers,” was in danger of being supplanted by Islam. To be sure, the threat was real. The expansion of the Islamic state meant that Europe would end up as either slave or martyr.

If Catholic Europe had not been infected by the spiritual disease of Protestantism, it may have been an unassailable bulwark against the Muslim forces. Sadly, this was not the case. Some wealthy commercial areas, such as the Serene Republic of Venice, were content to suffer the presence and influence of the Ottoman Empire, so long as their trade interests were protected. It was not until the Muslim forces demanded the bustling trade center on the island of Cyprus, that Venice looked for an opportunity to remove them-

selves from under the Islamic thumb.

Following the abdication and death of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, his brother Ferdinand ascended to the Imperial throne. Unlike Charles, however, Ferdinand was not above making a deal with the devil if it meant an increase in his own fortune. To protect interest of his House, the ruling House of Hapsburg, Ferdinand agreed to pay a tribute to the Sultan in exchange for the Hapsburg share of Vienna. Ferdinand was out done by his son, Maximillian II, who proved himself to be an enemy of the faith. He did not pander to the Sultan, but he was strongly influenced by Lutheranism. What made this matter even worse were his deceitful overtures of obedience and loyalty to the Faith and the papacy. And for good measure, this was the age of the city-states who would war against one another for a larger "market share."

All this internal strife in the countries of Catholic Europe left it vulnerable to outside attack. This fact was not lost on Pope Pius V. From 1566 onward, Pius V tried to form a coalition of Catholic Europe to prevent the Mediterranean Sea from becoming the Sultan's personal waterway. As noted

above, the city-states were after their own interests, France and the German territories were under the oppressive weight of the "reformation," and His Catholic Majesty, Philip II of Spain, was dealing with Protestant-inspired revolts in Andalusia and the Netherlands. However, after much diplomacy, and still more prayer and sacrifice, Pius V managed to bring together the Serene Republic of Venice, the Kingdom of Spain, and the Papal fleets for a joint offensive against the Muslim forces.

But who would be in command? The Venetians distrusted the Spaniards, the King of Spain would not commit forces under a foreign commander; the whole enterprise seemed doomed to fail before it even began. Finally, the decision to give command to Don Juan de Austria, the illegitimate son of Charles V and half-brother to Philip II. Although he was just twenty-six years of age, Don Juan had shown his ability and aptitude by putting down the Morisco rebellion and battling pirates that threatened Spain's commercial interests.

There are many further details: the number of ships, the training and experiences of the men, the genius of the commander, and even the weather. It is enough to know that the Christian fleet was out-

numbered two to one but was better equipped. The Muslim fleet had talented commanders, who had their backs against the proverbial wall; the Christians had them cornered just off the coast of Greece near the present-day town of Navpaktos. The fighting was fierce and lasted four hours. The victory of the Christians was cemented in when two of the three Ottoman commanders were killed. Against insurmountable odds, the Catholics won the day and broke the hold that the Ottoman Empire had over the Mediterranean Sea. So complete was this victory that Europe was saved from Muslim domination.

And how does the Rosary fit in to all this? Pius V, a faithful son of St. Dominic before ascending to the papacy, entreated Catholic Europe to beseech the Mother of God for her intercession and aid. To this end, the Pope gave the example to his flock by praying the Rosary during the hours of the battle. The word had spread and Catholics in and around Rome joined the Holy Father and prayed the Rosary with great fervor and devotion. When news of the victory at Lepanto reached Rome, the Holy Father declared this victory to be won for us by the Holy Virgin, herself. He proclaimed October 7th to be the Feast of Our Lady of Victory. In 1573, the next

pope, Gregory XIII, changed the name of the feast to that of the Most Holy Rosary. This was done to remind the faithful of the role that fervent prayer plays, even in affairs of the world.

In our modern era of “go along to get along” and compromise with the idolatry of Islam, we would do well to remember the lesson Lepanto has to teach us. If Our Lord, through the intercession of His Holy Mother, should grant us victory over such an enemy, can we really afford to compromise?

To quote Robert Bolt, from his play about St. Thomas More, “A Man for All Seasons:” Sir Thomas (in response to a friend wanting him to capitulate to Henry VIII for the sake of “fellowship”) *“And when we die, and you are sent to heaven for doing your conscience, and I am sent to hell for not doing mine, will you come with me, for fellowship?”* Remember, the humble and repentant may pass through the Gates of Heaven, but a traitor never shall.



THE LORD'S PRAYER

A Franciscan Brother's Meditation

Our Father

God is my Father because He has created me. I owe Him all love and obedience. No! More than this, I owe Him my very being. God is the Father of me, my family, friends, neighbors, and even my enemies. He is the Father of all the Angels – both the good and the bad. We are all one family because we have the same Father, our Creator. In the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, I see that God is the Father of all of creation. The world, all the planets, the sun, the moon and stars, the soil, water, air and all that live in them, the birds, fishes, crawling and walking creatures, the days and nights, weeks, months, years, and time itself. All of these are my brothers and sisters because we have the same Father Creator. To me, God has given a voice along with the responsibility of speaking for or in the name of all His creatures that were made to serve me as I am made to serve Him. For this part of creation, I must call upon Our Father. They depend on me. We are one family, or one body and men have been placed at the head to understand and speak for the rest of the body of which he has been made the head. In the name of all the unreasoning and

unspeaking creatures as well as the unbelieving or rebelling, I call upon God, our Father, in love and obedience. The damned cannot love God and it is beyond my comprehension how much pain this causes Our Father. The physical loss of a child causes untold sorrow to the hearts of parents. How much more so does the spiritual loss of His children cause God!/? May my cooperation and love of the Father ease some of the pain my fallen brothers and sisters are causing Him. May the loving word "Father" coming from my heart as well as from others make up for the loss of our fallen brethren.

Who art in Heaven

God is everywhere, but His throne is in Heaven. In Heaven, He sits and rules His creation. Heaven also is His creation. Good and loving angels joined by all the saints, worship and adore Him, they obey His every desire, they sing His praises and glory unceasingly. Heaven, it seems, is too glorious for human words to ever convey, or for my mind to fully grasp. Just a brief glimpse of heaven would fill me with the greatest delights and make my life here on earth an unspeakable burden. Every

moment separated from God and Heaven is insufferable pain to those that have even the faintest vision of Heaven where Our Father forever resides in all His glory and majesty. Lord, give me only a taste of Heaven that it may whet my appetite all the days of my life here on earth, and fill me with an ever-increasing desire to be eternally united with you there.

Hallowed be Thy Name

As a son of God and placed as a spokesperson of the earth and all material creation, I hold the Father's Name in all honor and glory. I praise His Name. I must avoid all profane use of this Name and abhor any evil or unworthy use of the Holy Name of God. The Name of God is beyond our understanding. In the Old Testament, He told Moses that He is "I am Who Am" or "He Who Is." In the New Testament, the Son of God reveals more of God and His Holy Name. God is a Trinity and Jesus Christ is the Son (The Messiah, the Redeemer) Who tells us of the Father as well as of the Holy Ghost. In the Name of this Trinity, we bless His creatures and we call upon Him in our needs. In this Name, we drive forth the demons from us.

THY KINGDOM COME

I beg that the Kingdom of Heaven should be brought to this world and at this time. May I see the hand of God in and around

me in everything. May I find His Holy Will (either His express Will or His permissive Will) in all that happens, and conform myself to It, knowing that all things work for the good of those who love God. His Kingdom has its foundation in this world in the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church that Jesus founded when He came to this earth. The Church is The Bride of Christ. She is His Mystical Body. In Her, we find glimpses of the Kingdom of Heaven. With tears, I think of the sad situation this Bride has been reduced to, and how far removed we have become in our day from bringing forth the Kingdom of Heaven to this world. The devils have put forth their accomplices to take on the titles and possessions of the Church even in the highest places. Many souls are being led astray by this false Church as well as the many others that have come before her. Only in the Remnant of the True Church do we find the true reflection of the Kingdom of Heaven. In the Modernist, Protestant, and other sects we find false reflections and deceptions. In these evil societies guided by devils, we see that God's Kingdom, His Laws, and God Himself is falsified and/or rejected. God's demand for Sacrifice on this earth has been rejected and the devils give us a banquet instead. God's demand for chastity is demonically turned into promiscuity, fornication, adultery,

divorce, and remarriage. God's gift of Life is rejected with contraceptives and abortion. Lord, Help us! We are lost! We need Your Kingdom here now. We need the help of Your Church. Send us true religious and clerical vocations to rebuild Your Church that is decaying and falling down. May these vocations learn from Your command to St. Francis of Assisi to rebuild Your Church. Restore the papacy and true successors to the Apostles with good and holy bishops. Give to the Church good and holy priests and clerics as well as religious.

Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven

In Heaven, the Angels and Saints are One with God and His Holy Will. They think and act immediately to God's Will. There is no need for command or even speech. The Heavenly Angels and the Saints are One with God. They respond to Him as our hands and feet respond to our own wills. I ask that I and all my brother and sister creatures should likewise become united and correspond to the Will of God. Teach us to deny our own wills so that we will only have Your Will. That we may give our own Fiat with the Blessed Mother of God. Give us not only sufficient grace but truly efficacious grace to respond in thought, word, and deed to Your Holy Will as the Angels and Saints in Heaven already do. We

are dense because of our transgressions and do not know Your Holy Will very clearly at all. Not knowing It we do not do It. We are disconnected from You and as such we find ourselves disconnected from everything and everyone. If I could only know and love You, then I would truly and correctly know and love all of Your Creation. Our free will is a precious gift, but it has become our downfall. Help us (make us) renounce our fallen and faulty wills so that we may only have Your Will. This sacrifice of our wills on the altar makes room for Your Holy Will to enter us so that we no longer will, but it is You who Wills within us.

Give us this day our daily bread

We ask not just for our food, shelter, and clothing – the needs of our bodies, but we especially ask for the daily needs of our souls. If it is Your Holy Will, please restore to us the True Church and the True Sacrifice of the Mass along with true understanding and worship of You in the Holy Eucharist. We need this Heavenly Food to purify us and lift us from the mire the devils and their human accomplices have made in this world. We beg of You true repentance for our sins, true and humble penance in reparation for our transgressions, and Your Sacred Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity to heal our souls and restore them to healthy spiritual

life. Teach us to know, love, and serve You in all humility, wisdom, and patience. Let this be our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us

We do not deserve to be forgiven. We humbly and shamefully acknowledge this. However, we make bold to ask this grace by the merits of Your Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ. His love for us and His Sacrifice for us gives us hope and even assurance that we can obtain this forgiveness. We see that you have conditioned this for us so that we are to obtain in the same measure and means as we have forgiven. I am to be forgiven in the same measure that I have forgiven others (my brothers and sisters) Lord help me to forgive them so that I may be forgiven. Give me the grace to let go of all hurt that anyone may have caused me. Help me to love those who have injured me even more than they have hurt me. Remind me constantly to pray with Jesus, "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing." Then may I humbly, but confidently, pray: "Father forgive me for I truly do not know what I have done." Do not hide from me the ugliness and wickedness of my sins. Help me to detest them (if it is possible) as much as You detest them. Then, with true hatred of sin and love for You may I ask for

forgiveness for myself and all my siblings who are capable of receiving your forgiveness.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

Yes, Lord, I know that temptations are necessary. I know Jesus was led by Your Spirit into the desert to be tempted. It is with temptation that we are made strong. In falling into temptation, we are humbled and corrected, or we are confirmed and emboldened in sin. It is this later that I fear and dread and beg You to preserve me from. With every temptation that you send or allow, I know that Your grace is sufficient for me, but I beg more than sufficient grace, though I am most unworthy. Please make me cooperate with Your Grace. Make Your grace in me efficacious. Seeking this efficacious grace, I speak with St. Augustine: "give me what You ask of me, then ask of me whatever You Will." With this confidence in Your grace, I hope to face every temptation or challenge with humble faith, hope, and charity

Amen.

May it be not my will, but Thine be done.



ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

An Autobiography

CHAPTER FOUR

FIRST COMMUNION

While describing this visit to Carmel, my thoughts are carried, back to the first one after you entered. In the course of the morning I had been wondering what name would be given to me later on; I knew there was already a Sister Teresa of Jesus; but I could not bear to lose my beautiful name of Thérèse. Suddenly I thought of the Holy Child to whom I bore such devotion, and I felt how happy I should be if I could be called Teresa of the Child Jesus. I was careful, however, not to tell you of my wish, so what was my surprise and joy at hearing Reverend Mother say: "When you come to us, little one, you will be known as 'Teresa of the Child Jesus.'" This happy coincidence of thought appeared to me as a special mark of favor from the Divine Child.

So far I have said nothing of my predilection for pictures and books, and yet, dearest Mother, I owe some of the best and strongest impressions which have encouraged me in

the practice of all that is good, to the beautiful pictures you used to show me. While I looked at them, the hours passed unheeded. "The Little Flower of the Divine Prisoner," for instance, suggested so many thoughts that the sight of it would cast me into a kind of ecstasy. I would offer myself to Our Lord to be His little flower, and I longed to dwell in the shadow of the Tabernacle, like the flower in the picture, consoling Him, being affectionately cared for by Him, finally to be gathered by His hand.

As I was useless at games, I should have preferred to spend all my time reading. Fortunately, I had visible guardian angels to guide me in the matter. They chose for me books that were suitable to my age, interesting, yet providing food for both mind and heart. The time set apart for this, my favorite recreation, was carefully limited, so that it became an occasion of much self-

sacrifice, as no sooner had the time elapsed, than I made a point of instantly putting the book down, even in the middle of the most absorbing passage.

With regard to the impressions produced on me by these books, I must frankly own that, in reading certain tales of chivalry, I did not always understand the realities of life; and in my admiration for the patriotic deeds of the heroines of France, especially of the Venerable Joan of Arc, I longed to do what they had done. Then I received what I have always considered one of the greatest graces of my life; for at that age I was not favored with lights from Heaven as I am now.

Our Lord made me understand that the only true glory is the glory which lasts forever; and that to attain it there is no necessity to do brilliant deeds; rather should we hide our good works from the eyes of others, and even from ourselves, so that *“the left hand knows not what the right hand does.”*¹ Then, as I reflected that I was born for great things, and sought the

means to attain them, it was made known to me interiorly that my personal glory would never reveal itself before the eyes of men, but would consist in becoming a Saint.

This aspiration may very well appear rash, seeing how imperfect I was, and am even now, after so many years of religious life; yet I still feel the same daring confidence that one day I shall become a great Saint. I am not trusting in my own merits, for I have none; but I trust in Him who is Virtue and Holiness itself. It is He alone who, pleased with my poor efforts, will raise me to Himself, and by clothing me with His merits make me a Saint. At that time, I did not realize that to become one it is necessary to suffer a great deal; but God soon disclosed this secret to me through the trials I have already related.

To return to my narrative. Three months after my cure, Papa took me away for a change. It was a thoroughly enjoyable time and I began to see something of the world. All around me was joy and gladness; I was petted, made much of, admired—in fact, for a whole fortnight, my path was strewn with flowers. True indeed are these words

¹Cf. *Matt. vi. 3*

contained in the Book of Wisdom: "*The bewitching of vanity overturneth the innocent mind.*"²

At ten years of age, the heart is easily fascinated, and I admit that in my case this kind of life had its charms.

The world knows well how to combine its pleasures with the service of God. How little it thinks of death! And yet death has come to many I knew then—young, rich, and happy. I recall to mind their luxurious homes, and ask myself where they themselves are, and what profit they now derive from the mansions and estates where I saw them enjoying the good things of life. Then I reflect that "*All is vanity*"³ except loving God and serving Him alone."⁴ Perhaps Our Lord, before paying His first visit to my soul, wished me to know something of the world, that I might choose with greater deliberation the way in which I should follow Him.

I shall always remember my First Communion Day as one of unclouded happiness. It seems to me that I could not

have been better prepared. You remember, dear Mother, the delightful little book⁵ you gave me three months before the great event? I found in the much-prized manuscript an attractive method which prepared me gradually and thoroughly. It taught me also that, even though I had been long thinking of my First Communion, I must stir up in my heart fresh transports of love and fill it anew with flowers. Every day, therefore, I made a number of little sacrifices and acts of love which were to be transformed into so many flowers: violets or roses, cornflowers, daisies, or forget-me-nots — in a word, all nature's blossoms were to form within me a cradle for the Holy Child.

⁵*This manuscript of Mother Agnes of Jesus has since been published under the title "Two Months of Preparation for First Communion." The method adopted, which Sœur Therese goes on to explain, is still of value, though, the age for First Communion has been considerably lowered. (Reverend Thomas N. Taylor, Editor)*

² *Wisdom iv. 12.*

³ *Eccles. i. 2.*

⁴ *Imit. I, ch. i. 3.*

Marie had taken your place as my guide, and every evening I spent a long time with her, eager to hear all she had to say. She was so eloquent that her noble and generous spirit seemed to pass into mine. As the warriors of old trained their children in the profession of arms, so she trained me for the battle of life, and roused my ardor by pointing to the victor's glorious palm. She spoke, too, of the imperishable riches which are within our daily reach, and of the folly of trampling treasures under foot, when one need but stoop to gather them.

Often, indeed, I felt sorry that I alone was listening to her wonderful teaching, for in my simplicity I imagined her torrent of eloquence would convert even the most obstinate sinners, with the result that, forsaking the perishable riches of this world, they would seek none but the riches of Heaven.

At this time, I should have liked to practice mental prayer, but Marie thought it better I should keep to vocal prayer only, as she considered my piety sufficient for my years. While I was at school at the Abbey, one of the mistresses asked me what I

did on holidays when I stayed at home. I answered timidly: "I often hide in a corner of my room, where I can shut myself in with the bed-curtains, and then I think." "But what do you think about?" she said, laughing. "I think about God, about the shortness of life, about eternity — in a word, I think." This was not forgotten, and later on my mistress liked to remind me of the time when I thought, and used to ask me if I still continued to do so. . . . It is clear to me now that I was then really engaged in mental prayer under the gentle guidance of my Divine Master.



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 THREE

*The Practice of
Self-Abandonment
in Crisis*



Article 5

Self-surrender in time of sickness

Jesus tries and purifies souls in a thousand different ways. Contradictions, persecutions, aridities, scruples, interior desolation, business anxieties, failures, loss of wealth, all are instruments in His Hands for the perfection of souls. Some persons understand this loving conduct of God and let themselves be formed as He wills. Others are astonished; they murmur and shrink from the divine operations.

This is a distinction between heroic souls and commonplace souls. The trial is the same, the occasion is the same; the only difference is the interior disposition. The former class

have the will to belong to God and to abandon themselves peacefully to His action, accepting whatever the Master gives them, whether sweet or bitter; the latter class lack this absolute and universal docility. They give themselves with reserve and withdraw the gift when the Divine Will contradicts their desires or thwarts their whims.

The former keeps their eyes fixed upon God, the First Cause of all things, the Ruler of all events, the Sovereign Sanctifier of souls. The latter allow their thoughts to dwell upon secondary causes and hold creatures responsible for the evils which befall them.

The distinction between interior souls and others never appears so clearly as at the

time of corporal indisposition and infirmity. Sickness is the touchstone of sanctity. It often happens that souls that were believed to possess solid virtue, and that were edifying in their exactness and regularity, have become negligent and lax in time of infirmity.

One has seen natures that appeared strong as a rock, seemingly settled upon granite principles, becoming, in days of illness, the prey of caprice, the playthings of moods. One has seen courage that has been tempered by difficulties suddenly become weak and yield like clay under the pressure of corporal suffering and the incommodities which it brings.

Poor invalids! Doubly infirm, they develop astonishing needs; they wish for certain doctors and certain remedies, for assiduous care, for constant attention. They complain when they lack something, or something is justly refused them. They show impatience when the illness is prolonged. Have they not a thousand important affairs to bring to a successful issue, a thousand urgent occupations to undertake? "This sickness," they say, "is a most annoying mischance. At any other time, it might have been welcome; but now, when

I am engaged in this affair, it is altogether inopportune."

These souls are not only impatient but disturbed. "Who knows how this illness is going to end, what complications may develop, what bad effects it will leave in the system?" Agitated by these fears, they have hardly leisure or inclination for their spiritual exercises and are quite incapable of uniting themselves to God by an act of perfect self-surrender. The soul that is completely given up to the Divine Will acts very differently.

In the first place, she does not dread illness; she does not resort to excessive precautions to save herself from it. She observes the rules of ordinary prudence, and for the rest she trusts herself to Providence.

When illness attacks her, she offers her life in sacrifice to God, begging Him to dispose of her body and all its members for His greater glory. Then she remains at rest, takes the prescribed remedies, follows the orders of the doctors, and conforms to the desire of those who are taking care of her. She asks nothing more, all her perfection having been attained for the present moment. She aspires neither to life nor death. She does not

anxiously inquire about the opinion of the doctors, the progress of the malady, the efficacy of the remedies; above all, she does not express a desire for better attention, nor for more experienced physicians.

Her invariable interior disposition is the most perfect abandonment to the Will of God, not only as to what concerns the illness itself, but also as to the circumstances which caused it and the consequences it entails.

God, Who wills her infirmity, wills also the interruption of her occupations, the postponement of her affairs, the failure of her enterprises,

perhaps the ruin of her fortune. He wills the inconvenience, the irksomeness, the expense, which the malady causes to her family or her community.

Thus, in all imaginable circumstances, the simple soul finds her path traced out for her. She is satisfied to be as God wills, not over-anxious to be cured nor to resume her work, to secure remedies nor to lighten, in favor of others, the burden she involuntarily imposes upon them. Her part is to love God, to Whom she is surrendered. It belongs to God to provide for all, to give her health or sickness, life or death.



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FRANCISCAN SAINTS

OCTOBER 13TH

The Servant of God

Robert of Malatesta

Confessor, Third Order

This devout Tertiary was a powerful prince in Italy. He died at a very early age, but in such consummate perfection that in the eyes of God he had achieved a more mature age. He was the son of the prince of Rimini, Pandolph of Malatesta.

At a very tender age, he denied himself dainties, and took only the less appetizing portion of the food given him, so that the better part might be given to the sick poor. He also practiced all kinds of mortification with regard to clothing and rest at night. He was so devoted to prayer, that even in sleep he was often found with his hands crossed on his breast and his lips moving as if in prayer. When his uncle asked him on occasion what he wished to be, the little lad said: "I wish to be a poor man like Jesus."

His uncle was much pleased with Robert, and so when Robert's parents died, he

adopted him as his heir. Although he did all in his power to oppose it, Robert was obliged to accede to his uncle's wishes and married the Princess Margaret of Este. His young wife, however, was also a devout person and they lived together in a very holy union. A year after their marriage, Robert's uncle died, and he became the independent prince of the domains of Rimini, Cesano, and Fano. He governed with justice and charity. He was a father to the poor, he often visited the sick in the hospitals, and some-times even waited on them personally.

It was about this time that he was interiorly instructed by St. Francis, to whom he was tenderly devoted, to take the habit of the Third Order and consecrate himself in a special way to the service of God. On the feast of St. Francis, he was clothed in the holy habit, and from then on practiced the rule

of the Third Order very strictly. He prayed the Divine Office of the priests every day, observed fasts besides those prescribed, and received the holy sacraments often and with the greatest devotion.

Although externally living up to his rank, he always wore the Third Order scapular and beneath it a heart that was humble and detached from the world. Once when he was engaged in prayer, our Holy Father St. Francis appeared to him and showed him his five wounds. Robert at once sensed the full pain of the wounds, and for a long time he remained kneeling with his arms outstretched in the form of a cross.

After a very painful illness, yet happy in anticipation of the joys of heaven, he died when he was but twenty-two years old. According to his express wishes, he was buried very simply and in the garb of the Tertiaries. God glorified his tomb with many miracles.

ON WEARING THE SCAPULAR

1.) Consider how the servant of God Robert was instructed by our Holy Father St. Francis, whom he dearly loved, to wear the scapular of the Third Order, thus acknowledging himself as a son of St. Francis. The scapular of the Third

Order, as well as the scapular of our Blessed Lady, is an external badge or uniform with which we profess publicly to whom we belong and in whose service, we are engaged. With the scapular of Our Lady we profess ourselves children of Mary, with the Third Order scapular we profess ourselves sons or daughters of St. Francis. The saints recognize us by these signs as their clients, and consequently protect and watch over us. Be faithful in wearing the scapular — without it you cannot share the indulgences involved. But it should also remind you to live so that you may do honor to the holy garment. — Are you faithful in wearing it? Do you ever reflect on the kind of life you should lead in order to correspond with it?

2.) The scapular is a shoulder garment, hence its name. Religious wear a large scapular over their shoulders, so as to protect their religious habit while at work, and, therefore, the scapular may also be called a working garb. This should remind the persons who wear it, that lazy piety does not fit with the scapular. As the girdle should remind the Tertiaries to refrain from sensual pleasure, so the scapular should remind them

to engage in good works, in faithful compliance with the prescriptions of the rule as well as in fulfilling the duties incumbent on a good Christian, and the obligations of his state of life. Here the words of the Apostle can be applied: "Labor as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 2:3). — Think of this every morning when you look at your scapular.

3.) Consider that the scapular with its dark color and common material is a garment of humility and penance. St. Francis gave his order the name of penance. The servant of God Robert practiced penance even in his princely life at court; he ate only

common food, fasted often, and sometimes slept on a bare board. Is there not many an act of penance that you could perform? Could you not at least accept in the spirit of penance the difficulties of your state of life, and the sufferings God permits to befall you? God grant that your scapular may give you that strength. You will then be able to take comfort in the thought of death before it approaches. You can say with the Prophet: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, for He hath clothed me with the, garments of salvation and with the robe of justice" (Is. 61:10).



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

(Palm Sunday)

Almighty and eternal God, who didst cause Our Savior to take upon Him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross that all mankind might imitate the example of His humility, mercifully grant, that, treasuring the lessons of His patience, we may deserve to have fellowship in His resurrection. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

THE GREATEST TREASURE

Reverend L. Chiavarino



CHAPTER XIX

HOW WE SHOULD HEAR MASS

If we wish to fulfill our duty when we attend Mass and be enabled to enjoy all the precious advantages and fruits which the Mass makes available to us, we must assist at it in the manner taught us by our Catechism, that is, with great interior recollection and piety and with every outward mark of respect and devotion.

From this we can realize that those who whisper, laugh, talk, and look around during Mass do not adore Jesus. On the contrary it looks as though they went to church for the purpose of insulting the Lord. If Christ ejected the money-changers from the Temple of Jerusalem with so great a display of anger, what

punishment will He reserve for those who profane His church during the most sacred moments?

Father Segneri relates that Philip II of Spain saw two of his courtiers misbehaving one morning at Mass. After they had left the church, he called them to him and scolded them with such severity that one of them was so affected by the reprimand that he fell to the ground deprived of his senses and a short while later passed away.

We read of a Japanese ruler who had been converted to Christianity, and upon learning that one of his pages had laughed and jested while at Mass, assembled his entire

court and called the page into his presence. Then he condemned him to death. His family and counsellors endeavored to dissuade him from his purpose and they begged him for the unfortunate page.

The Emperor, however, was inflexible and resolutely cried: "He must be executed." He went on to say: "If the law condemns him who insults me, must not I condemn him who insults God?" In this way he gave an example of how careful we should be in our conduct while we are in the Holy Place, especially during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

We have, too, reason to know how severely God will punish those who are guilty of disrespect toward the Holy Sacrifice. In 1846 Our Lady was seen at La Salette, in France, weeping for men doomed to terrible punishment because they had profaned holy things and had shown lack of respect for the church edifice and, especially, for the Mass.

Blame-worthy, also, are those church-goers who behave improperly, even sleep, when they are not awake to distractions, instead of praying and humbling themselves before God.

We may contrast their languid and disrespectful positions with the erect and dignified bearing of soldiers in the presence of earthly monarchs to whom they desire to show their loyalty.

The great Napoleon saw one of his courtiers standing during the Elevation. He struck him on the shoulder and exclaimed: "Kneel, ill-bred-one, kneel before your God as your Emperor is kneeling. In the sight of God, you and I are but dust."

So, it is that a man, great in the eyes of the world, teaches us fitting respect for Holy Mass. Let us foster our faith, nourishing it on the outward respect we show to Jesus our God and our King, really present in the Mass.

According to St. John Chrysostom, thousands of angels surround the Altar while Mass is being celebrated. He testifies that he often saw these heavenly ministers, bowed in reverent silence, their eyes fixed on the most adorable Sacrament. Our behavior should be similar to theirs.

Let us always remember that it is during the Mass that we have at hand the very best time in which to ask of God

the graces we need. St. Thomas Aquinas says that during the Mass our Guardian Angel presents our prayers to Jesus, and that it is then that He hears them and grants graces to us.

One day, St. Thomas saw a procession of these blessed spirits coming and going from the Sanctuary into the body of the church, and then from the church back to the Sanctuary. The sight filled him with wonder, and he so wished to know its meaning that he interrupted his prayers and asked what they were doing. In answer he heard these words: "Why do you wonder? We are the guardian angels of the faithful who attend Mass. We carry their prayers to God and He transforms them into blessings."

When we are in church, dear readers, let us not remain silent spectators. Let us pray for ourselves and for those who ask our prayers. Let us pray for the Pope, for our Bishop, for priests, for all the faithful. Let parents pray for their children, their families;

let children in turn pray for their parents and superiors. And, especially, all ought to pray for poor sinners. Let us ask and keep asking with lively faith; the more we ask and the greater our faith and devotion, the more abundant will be the graces, even temporal favors, which we will receive. And let us not forget the Souls in Purgatory.

What prayers, you may ask, what prayers shall we use at Mass? We may read the prayers in our Missals or other Prayer Books; we may recite the Rosary, meditating on its mysteries; we may repeat our daily prayers; we may recite any other prayer for ourselves or for the faithful departed. As long as we pray, any prayer will be acceptable to God.

We may also follow Mass most excellently by meditating on the Passion and death of Christ, by reading the prayers of the Way of the Cross, by making acts of faith, hope, love, and of contrition for our sins, as well as making resolutions to amend our lives.



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