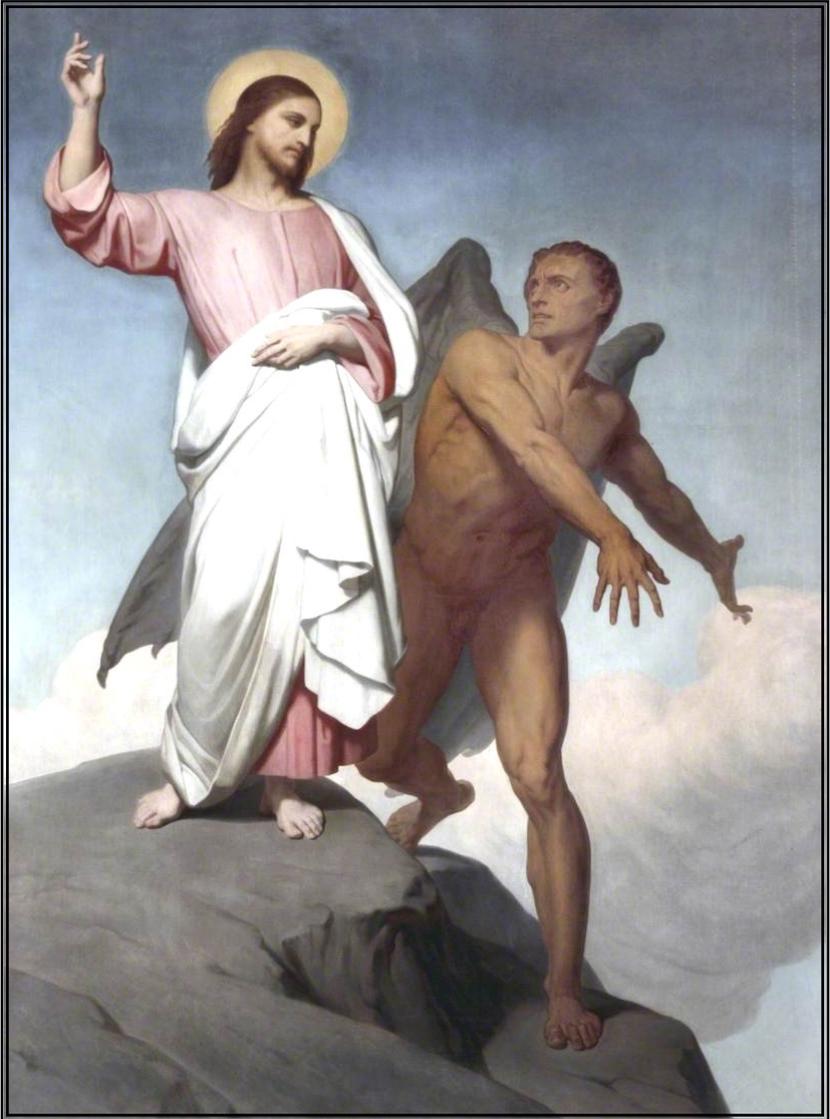


THE SERAPH

March 2022

Vol. XLII No. 7



PUBLISHED WITH EPISCOPAL AUTHORIZATION

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The **SERAPH** is published monthly, except in July and August, by the Franciscans in Rochester, NY.

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Suggested donation - \$20.00.

FOREIGN: Air Mail - \$40.00 per year.

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Publishers:

Order of St. Francis of Assisi, Inc.
Rochester, New York 14616 USA

*In essentia - Únitas. In dúbio - Libertas.
In ómnibus - Cáritas.*

KEEP HOLY THE LORD'S DAY

Bishop Giles, OFM DD

In the Book of Genesis, we learn that God rested on the seventh day. He created in six days and then rested from His labors on the seventh day. In the time of Moses, God gave us the Ten Commandments. The third Commandment demands that we keep the Sabbath Day holy. After Jesus' Ascension, the Church began to mark the first day of the week holy. The early Christians gathered to worship and offer Sacrifice to God on Sunday because this was the day that Jesus rose from the dead and the day on which the Holy Ghost came upon the Apostles. This is how Sunday became The Lord's Day.

Laws tend to bring out extremes. It is no different with the Laws of God and the Church. Jesus had to deal with people and leaders who took the laws of keeping the Sabbath holy to an extreme. Several times they tried to entrap Jesus by enticing Him to heal or cure on the Sabbath so that they could condemn Him for not obeying God's Law. Jesus makes clear that the Sabbath was made for men, not men for the Sabbath. We are never

forbidden to do a good deed. Coming to the aid of those suffering in some manner is never prohibited.

The letter of the Law ensnares many and causes a kind of spiritual paralysis. They even use the Law as an excuse not to do any good. Others take a very liberal approach to the Law, and these find a reason to permit themselves whatever they may want.

Virtue is somewhere in between these two extremes. We must keep holy the Lord's Day by properly honoring and worshiping Him on this day. We should do our best to attend Holy Mass. Our attendance needs to be more than simply being physically present. Going to Church and sitting there for a half-hour to an hour does not constitute worshiping or honoring God. The Law is that we must attend Holy Mass. Our mere physical presence, by itself, is not truly attendance. If we sit in Church like a dumb animal, we cannot say that we have attended Holy Mass. We must strive to give our attention to God when we worship Him. If we fail in this, we deserve the rebuke that we

honor God with our lips while our hearts are far from Him.

Because people are always trying to push the limits, the Church has spelled out for us that the minimum requirements are that we must be present from the Offertory through the Communion of the Mass. If we miss any of this part of the Mass, we have not fulfilled our obligation. We must remember that it is the spirit of the Law that we must strive for. If we intend only to attend enough of the Mass to fulfill our obligations – arriving just before the Offertory and leaving just after Communion – then we cannot say that we have really fulfilled the obligation. Our bodies may have been there, but our hearts were not.

It seems that with all laws, our fallen nature inclines us to push the limits. We are always tempted to draw near the law's limits but always stop short of crossing the line. We want to know how far is too far. There is a saying that if you play with fire, you will get burned. We advance right to the edge of sin and pretend that we have done nothing wrong. The fact is that seeking to go as far as we can without crossing the line is essentially saying that we want to offend God but not so much that He will get really

angry with us. We are okay with pushing the limits because we do not truly love God. If we truly love God, we do not need any laws.

Attending Mass is not all that the Church requires of us on Sundays. Keeping the day holy goes beyond attendance at Holy Mass. We should strive to spend more time in prayer, spiritual reading, or works of mercy.

After these obligations, God reminds us that it is a day of rest. We may legitimately engage in moderate recreation or leisure. We can pursue various entertainments that are not incompatible with rest or relaxation.

Necessity permits us to engage in activities that the Church on Sundays otherwise forbids. Emergencies, preparing meals, working when our livelihood depends upon it, etc., are acceptable when we are in need or honestly in a difficult situation.

Those who live at a great distance from the Mass and Sacraments may be excused from attendance at weekly Sunday Mass, but they are not excused from the obligation to worship God and keep the Sunday Holy. They must find a way to spend some time in prayer or spiritual reading.

What are we to do with our free time? Too often, our free time is taken up with things that prevent us from thinking of God or are even harmful to our souls.

Watching a game seems harmless enough, but it is far from harmless when spectators begin to lose their peace and calm. There is no longer innocent entertainment when there is cursing and swearing, yelling and screaming. Some of the most embarrassing things happen when rational people lose all sense of reason and end up yelling and jumping up and down before inanimate screens or televisions.

Moderate gambling or betting may be considered a legitimate recreation, but it ceases to be so when we lose our peace of mind or conscience. We must not wager what is required of us to sustain ourselves and our family. Nor should we allow the risk, no matter how small, to cause us to become anxious, irritable, etc.

Our children may be permitted to engage in sports and games, but we should always strive to keep these in perspective. When these practices, games, and tournaments become all-consuming and more important than Mass, the Sacra-

ments, and prayer, then we have gone too far. This becomes more like a job for our children rather than a moderate rest and recreation. We often scandalize our children because we teach them that their sport or activity is more important than God and the Church. We complain when the Mass time interferes with their practices, games, or tournaments. We rush out of Mass as soon as possible to make it to some worldly activity. We need to truly consider what is most important – God or games and realize that our actions and words teach our children more than we can imagine. Often, I fear, the message is clear: “The Mass, Church, Catechism, prayer, and God are not nearly as important as a ball game or dance competition.” We have made false gods to worship in the place of the One True God.

“We require alternations of activity and rest. The history of creation has been so arranged in Holy Scripture as to point out the due proportions of the two states, and to give a new sanction to the custom and to the division of time already existing. Our physical need of rest coincides with our spiritual need for a season which we may devote to wor-

ship and religious meditation. These needs are consecrated and secured to mankind by the symbolical rest of the Creator on the seventh day. Thus God, having supreme repose in Himself, becomes the source of repose for men. Labor is necessary that we may enjoy repose. Repose is necessary that we may be able to labor. God must be the rule of both. Without God, the turmoil of life is so absorbing that it exhausts our energies and de-

stroys us before our time. *Without God, repose becomes depravity, and recreation a fierce excitement.* The world requires more restfulness, of mind, of heart, and of body. A dominant sense of religion is the only agent that can impart the repose so necessary for wholesome living. God will give you this at present, and a Sabbath of eternal rest in Him hereafter.” (Meditations On Christian Dogma, Treatise IV, 8, III)



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DEMONIC LIES

Bishop Giles, OFM DD

We have an innate (God-given) desire to know the truth and not be deceived. In the Holy Scriptures, we find that God is Truth. In our pursuit of any truth in any field, we ultimately search for God. Occasionally, when men intently study and examine some particular subject, God opens up their minds, and they perceive some truth. This is not the same as being told some truth and repeating it to others. Faith in our teachers is the basis of much of our education. The teacher taught us that one plus one is the same as or equal to two. We repeat this and even offer some of the examples given to us. This is most often simply faith and trust in what we have been told. As time progresses in our study, we one day just seem to know this is the truth; it becomes self-evident. It is no longer simply faith in others' words but understanding and knowledge of the truth. This is given to us by God. God is the Teacher and the Truth. Human teachers can talk and give examples, and students can memorize and repeat what was said and shown, but it is only when God opens our minds

and reveals the truth to us that we understand and know.

Our world is inundated with falsehoods or lies that many want us to accept or believe simply because it is politically correct. The devil is the father of lies and falsehoods. God is the Father of Truth, proper order, and goodness.

The work of the devils follows an almost predictable progression. We can delve through the chronicles of history to show this, but it is, perhaps, more relevant to focus on the more recent past, which is in the living memories of many of our readers.

Within the United States of America, we can trace an evil progression from the middle of the last century to our present day. The 20th Century brought forth many wars and significant advances in modernization and industrialization. Wars took men away from home and country and brought women into the hired labor forces. Women have always worked, and society has always depended upon their labor. What was different was that the works traditionally

performed were devalued as women were enticed to favor hired labor for monetary or material gain. The time, energies, and labors of women were at one time considered almost sacred. We cannot put a price or value upon birthing and raising children or making a house into a home. These are spiritual things more so than material things and are priceless. The onerous burden of selling our time and energy for material things was borne by men rather than women. Many women did this or helped earn monetary income, but their primary goal was to procure and develop spiritual or non-tangible goods for themselves and their families.

The liberating and freeing of women from these nobler works to enter in and compete with men in the material positions were truly robbing them of freedom and selling them into slavery. It was an exchange of the pursuit for spiritual goods for pursuit of material ones. The degradation of women led the way for the degradation of society.

Without going too far into details, we can simply follow the events and see the progression of evil or lies in our world around us. This “liberalization” of women followed a “sexual revolution.” Women

were set free of the boundaries and safeguards society established to protect us from the degradation of losing our most precious commodity – family and home. Instead of helping guard and protect us from many sins of the flesh, women became the very instruments of dragging society (men and women) into hedonistic pursuits of any manner of pleasure – sexual, drug or alcohol, physical or emotional. Unrestrained sexual pursuits obviously created a problem with the conception of many unwanted bastard children. The devils have inspired, developed, and promoted this problem – but do not worry, the devils have a solution to the problem they designed.

The obvious solution to so many unwanted conceptions of children is our many methods of “birth control” and contraceptives. With these, men and women were now free to abandon themselves to even greater evils. The solutions to the problems are all lies and falsehoods. Lies created the issues, and lies created the solutions. It sounds good to prevent the conception of children that are not wanted, but the lie is in the method of prevention. The truth is simple if you do not wish to conceive a child, do not engage in the

sexual relationship that naturally produces children. The devil's lie is that you should pursue pleasure at any cost and then reject your actions' logical and natural consequences. Evil is made to sound good. What could be more sinister than this?

Have no fear; the devils were not done yet. The physical ability to pursue and engage in unrestrained sexual pleasure, while avoiding the responsibilities of raising children, logically led to the devaluation of marriage. Adultery was not so wrong because it was now possible to not have children (negative consequences to their crimes — sins). Unfaithfulness in marriage led to a distrust of spouses, unhappiness in marriage, etc. Again, the devils have created a problem, but they also have another evil, lying solution.

The devils more sinisterly solved the evil of unhappy marriage by legalizing divorce. What lies we heard then! "God wants us to be happy." "We should be able to divorce and remarry so that we can find a situation that works and will make us happy." But what of these children who will forever remind us of our unhappy previous spouse? What a terrible problem this divorce, adultery, or fornication

has created! Do not worry; the demonic problem has a diabolical solution — simply kill the unwanted child that has somehow slipped through the fiendish obstacles of "birth control" or "contraceptives." Kill sounds harsh; let us call it abortion instead. Instead of a human or a child, let's call them a tissue. After all, we can cut out tissue but cutting out a baby sounds too barbaric.

What is next in this downward spiral? Sexual perversions of all sorts. Fetishes, perversions, and crimes grew, increased, multiplied. Society begins by abhorring these evils, then acknowledging them, accepting them, allowing them, and promoting them. Homosexuality has gone through all these stages. Transgenderism is even more quickly going through these stages. Bestiality and pedophilia are not far behind.

Each evil begets even greater evils. Each sin bears even greater sins. This is the apparent work of devils and men and women accepting and working with demonic spirits. Each evil is a diabolical lie, and it takes society further and further away from Truth — God.

There is another aspect for us to consider. The bulwark that

held back these evils must have fallen or at least have been seriously breached. The bulwark stemming the tide of evil brought forth from Hell against humanity is none other than the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. What has happened to the Church that this tide of evils and lies has been able to sweep over us?

Once more, let us look back to the living memories of the middle of the past century. Again, we find a demonic progression (Regression may be a more appropriate term). Indifferentism or laziness entered the spiritual life of many otherwise “good Catholics.” Did we ever stop to think why the Church needed to command her children to receive Penance and Holy Communion at least once a year?! The devils encouraged Catholics to laziness and indifferentism; this evil created the atmosphere for something physically novel or different to entertain them because they could not or would not see the spiritual truth, riches, and majesty that were right in front of them. What is not treasured is soon lost.

Protestantism offered the demonic solution to boredom and indifferentism. A false spirituality filled with emotion and physical stimulation

solved a demonically inspired evil and an equally wicked inspired solution.

A great falling away from the Church inspired a great false council called “Second Vatican Council.” How do we keep people in the pews? The demonic solution is innovation and experimentation. Throw out Tradition, ceremonies, and rituals. Become like the Protestants; become ecumenical (in a false ecumenism); become “Pentecostal” like so many Protestants with a false spirituality that is filled with emotion and physical “feel goodness” to it.

The devils must break down the distinctions between good and evil, so they misled Catholics to seek what unites rather than separates us from heretic Protestants. It always sounds good if we don’t look too closely. What do Catholics have in common with Protestants? We both have the same bible – at least parts of it. We both believe in Jesus Christ – more or less. The Mass, the priesthood, the Holy Eucharist (Transubstantiation) are the biggest obstacles that divide us. The demonic solution is to change all these at least enough so that they don’t offend as much the demonic sensibilities of our Protestant friends.

“Vatican Council II” set out to do just that. The Sacrifice of the Mass (the unbloody renewal of the Sacrifice of Calvary) became a commemoration of the Last Supper, a memorial meal. This is entirely acceptable to most Protestant sentimentalities. A symbolical presence of Jesus in “Communion” is more pleasing to Protestants than Transubstantiation and the Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. The priesthood had to be redefined and widened to include everyone – the “priesthood of the faithful.” Anything that hinted at the hierarchy and sacredness of one person over others had to be minimized as much as possible.

In short, the demonic solution to Catholics falling away and into Protestantism was to transform all the Catholics into Protestants – to do away with all that makes Catholics Catholic.

The “Conciliar Church” (The church of “Vatican Council

II”) is now a Protestant Church with an apparently Catholic hierarchy that has possession of once Catholic properties and real estate. In line with the demonic materialistic spirit, most people assume that those who possess the buildings, lands, relics, etc., are Catholics. Catholics respond to the materialism of the devils and the world by looking to faithful souls made in the image and likeness of God as the true treasures of the Church. What makes the Church Catholic is her worship, sacrifice, doctrine, morals, and traditions — not her wealth, possessions, or popularity.

Where a true bishop (successor of the Apostles) and even a few faithful people hold on to these spiritual things (Truth), even if they are deprived of all material ones, there is the true Catholic Church. The devils are liars when they suggest anything else.

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THE COMMUNIST THREAT

Father Joseph Noonan, OFM

Part Eleven: The Undermining of Education

*Note: The information in this article comes from **The Deliberate Dumbing Down of America** by Charlotte Thomson Iserbyt.*

1971

CONTROVERSIAL SEXOLOGISTS LESTER A. KIRKENDALL AND RUTH F. OSBORNE developed in 1971 a program entitled “Sex Education — Student Syllabus No: 216786, correlated with M.I.P. 180800” which was one of the first sex education programs to use a mastery learning approach. This program was published by the National Book Company, owned by Carl W. Salser, executive director of Educational Research Associates, a non-profit educational research corporation in Portland, Oregon. Mr. Salser is also the owner of Halcyon Press and is a long-time advocate of individualized instruction and mastery learning.

Carl Salser is the author of a pamphlet entitled “The Carnegie Unit: An Administrative Convenience, but an Educational Catastrophe” and is a

supporter of outcome-based education / mastery learning. Full implementation of OBE/ML calls for the removal of the Carnegie Unit — the “seat time” measure of subject exposure for students which determines graduation and college entry eligibility. Salser was a member during 1981–1982 of the presidentially appointed National Council on Educational Research which had oversight of the activities at the former National Institute of Education of the U.S. Department of Education.

PSYCHOLOGY APPLIED TO TEACHING by Robert F. Bienter (Boston, 1971) was published. This popular psychology text was recommended for use in Introduction to Educational Psychology courses in universities in the early 1970s. Chapter 5, under the subheading of “S-R Associationism and Programmed Learning,” is excerpted here:

Watson [John B.] (who did the most to popularize Pavlovian theory in the United States) based one of his most famous experiments (Watson and

Rayner, 1920) on the observation that young children have a “natural” fear of sudden loud sounds. He set up a situation in which a two-year-old boy named Albert was encouraged to play with a white rat. After this preliminary period, Watson suddenly hit a steel bar with a hammer just as Albert reached for the rat, and the noise frightened the child so much that he came to respond to the rat with fear. He had been conditioned to associate the rat with the loud sound. The success of this experiment led Watson to believe that he could control behavior in almost limitless ways, by arranging sequences of conditioned responses. He trumpeted his claim in this famous statement:

Give me a dozen healthy infants, well formed, and my own special world to bring them up in, and I’ll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select — doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and yes, even beggarman and thief — regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, and race of his ancestry. (pp. 152–3)

THE INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING LETTER (T.I.L.L.): *Administrator’s*

Guide to Improve Learning; Individualized Instruction Methods; Flexible Scheduling; Behavioral Objectives; Study Units; Self-Directed Learning; Accountability, Vol. I (February 22, 1971) was published and circulated. An excerpt follows:

DOWN WITH BOOKS. “Textbooks not only encourage learning at the wrong level (imparting facts rather than telling how to gather facts, etc.), they also violate an important new concern in American education — individualized instruction.... Textbooks produce superficially knowledgeable students... who know virtually nothing in depth about anything.... A good start would be to... declare a moratorium on textbook use in all courses.” Dwight D. Allen, Dean of Education, University of Massachusetts, writing on “The Decline of Textbooks, Change.”

“REVISED REPORT OF POPULATION SUBCOMMITTEE, GOVERNOR’S ADVISORY COUNCIL On Environmental Quality” for the State of Michigan, to be used at the April 6, 1971 meeting of the subcommittee, was filed in the Library, Legislative Service Bureau in Lansing, Michigan. Excerpts from this disturbing report follow:

The summary of this report is quite long. Space allows for only three points to be listed.

Optimum Goal An optimum goal is to be considered in preference to a maximum carrying capacity. As a starting point, zero population growth is the recommended goal for the citizens of Michigan.... That the human population on a finite "space ship" cannot increase indefinitely is obvious. What is not so obvious is what constitutes an "optimum" level of population and the methods by which it is to be limited....

How Does Society Obtain Population Control?

Constraints on population size can be divided into two types, biological and social. Biological constraints include the limitation of those energies and chemicals required to drive human society as a biological system.... Societal constraints are more appropriate since the human population explosion is basically a social problem. There are three classes of social institutions which can be utilized to obtain population control. These are the political, economic and education systems. Each of these represent powerful control systems which help to regulate the behavior of our society.

A wide range of public policies are available by which man can affect population size. Some policies can seek to change man's basic values and attitudes with respect to the issues of population size. Other policies can seek to directly affect man's behaviors which have consequences for population size...

Cultural Changes

Two types of cultural changes are needed in order to reduce the population increase: reduce the desired size of families, and reduce the social pressure to marry and have a family.

Large families can be changed from an economic asset to an economic liability if all members of society can be offered the prospect that through work, saving, and deferred spending they can achieve economic security for themselves and their children. For the already affluent middle class, larger families can be made an economic liability by increasing the incentives for and the costs of advanced education for their children....

Cultural changes to reduce the social pressure to marry and have a family can be pursued by changing educational materials which glorify married life and family life as the only

“normal”life pattern, by granting greater public recognition to non-married and non-family life styles, by facilitating careers for single women....

PERFORMANCE-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION: WHAT IS THE STATE OF THE ART? by Stanley Elam, editor of Phi Delta Kappa Publications (AACTE Committee on Performance-Based Teacher Education, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education: Washington, D.C., 1971), was published. This paper was originally prepared in 1971 pursuant to a contract with the U.S. Office of Education through the Texas Education Agency, Austin, Texas. Excerpts follow:

The Association is pleased to offer to the teacher education community the Committee’s first state of the art paper.... In performance-based programs... he [the teacher] is held accountable, not for passing grades, but for attaining a given level of competency in performing the essential tasks of teaching.... Acceptance of this basic principle has program implications that are truly revolutionary.

The claim that teacher education programs were not producing people equipped to teach minority group children and youth effectively has

pointed directly to the need for reform in teacher education.... Moreover, the claim of minority group youth that there should be alternative routes to professional status has raised serious questions about the suitability of generally recognized teacher education programs.

Charlotte Iserbyt’s Comment: The above paper was one of the first — and perhaps the most influential — professional papers setting the stage for full-blown implementation of Skinnerian outcome-based/performance-based education. The definitions, criteria, assessment, etc., are identical to those found in present professional OBE literature (1999).

CONCERN REGARDING THE DELIBERATE DUMB-ING DOWN OF AMERICA is not confined to this author according to an article entitled “Young People Are Getting Dumber,” by David Hawkins, editorial staff writer, in the August 26, 1971 issue of The Dallas Morning News. Excerpts from this interesting article, which discusses the importance of acquiring a large vocabulary, follow:

John Gaston, who bosses the Fort Worth branch of the Human Engineering Laboratory (half his clients are from Dal-

las), dropped a bomb on me as we discussed aptitude testing.

“Do you know,” he said, “that the present generation knows less than its parents?”

“You mean to say that young people aren’t smarter than we are — that all we’ve heard about this generation being the last and best isn’t so?”

Gaston nodded solemnly: “Young people know fewer words than their fathers. That makes them know less.” He fixed me with a foreboding eye: “Can you imagine what a drop in knowledge of 1 per cent a year for 30 years could do to our civilization?”

The question answered itself. And though I could hardly believe what Gaston was saying, I knew it wasn’t instant sociology.

What he says is based on hundreds of thousands of tests given in several parts of the country since 1922 by what is probably the most prestigious non-profit outfit in the field of vocational research. The Human Engineers don’t even advertise.

But Gaston wasn’t through: “We also believe,” he was saying, “that the recent rise in violence correlates with the drop in vocabulary. Long [range] testing has convinced

us that crime and violence predominate among people who score low in vocabulary. If they can’t express themselves with their tongues, they’ll use their fists.”

“We test many gifted people who are low in vocabulary and we tell them all — we tell the world — to learn the words. Swallow the dictionary. Brilliant aptitudes aren’t worth much without words to give them wings.”

Gaston paused and then dropped another bomb. “The one thing successful people have in common isn’t high aptitudes — it’s high vocabulary, and it’s within everybody’s reach. Success actually correlates more with vocabulary than with the gifts we’re born with.”

“Aptitudes will only show them which road to take. Vocabulary will determine how high they climb. Right now, the present generation is headed downwards.”

SOME IMPORTANT STATE-MENTS by Professor John I. Goodlad, President of Educational Inquiry, Incorporated, appeared in *A Report to the President’s Commission on School Finance (Schooling for the Future: Toward Quality and Equality in American Precollegiate Education)* October 15, 1971. Goodlad

makes the following comments under “Issue #9 — Educational Innovation: What changes in purposes, procedures or institutional arrangements are needed to improve the quality of American elementary and secondary education?”

The literature on how we socialize or develop normative behavior in our children and the populace in general is fairly dismal.... [T]he majority of our youth still hold the same values as their parents....

In the second paradigm... the suggestion is made that there are different targets for the change agent. For example, in a social system such as a school probably five to fifteen percent of the people are open to change. They are the “early majority” and can be counted on to be supportive. A second group, sixty to ninety percent, are the resisters. They need special attention and careful strategies need to be employed with them. Also, there are the leaders, formal and informal, and their support is critical. In his research, for example, Demeter noted some time ago the special role of the school principal in innovation:

Building principals are key figures in the (innovation) process. Where they are both aware of and sympathetic to

an innovation, it tends to prosper. Where they are ignorant of its existence, or apathetic if not hostile, it tends to remain outside the bloodstream of the school.

Few people think in these ways today. Rather, as a people, we tend to rely upon common sense or what might be called conventional wisdom as we make significant decisions which, in turn, seriously affect our lives.... More often than not, school board members, parents and the public make important decisions about what should happen in their schools based upon these past experiences or other conventional wisdom.... The use of conventional wisdom as a basis for decision-making is a major impediment to educational improvement....

The child of suburbia is likely to be a materialist and somewhat of a hypocrite. He tends to be a striver in school, a conformist, and above all a believer in being “nice,” polite, clean and tidy. He divides Humanity into the black and white, the Jew and the Christian, the rich and the poor, the “smart” and the “dumb.” He is often conspicuously self-centered. In all these respects, the suburban child patterns his attitudes after those of his parents.... If we do not alter this

pattern, if we do not resocialize ourselves to accept and plan for change, our society may decay. What may be left in the not too distant future is what other formerly great societies have had, reflections on past glories....

In the social interaction model of change, the assumption is made that the change agent is the decision-maker about the innovation. That is, it is assumed that he decides what the adopter will change to. This is a serious problem for two very good reasons. First, as we have shown, people cannot be forced to change until they are psychologically ready. Thus, at every stage, each individual is, in fact, de-

termining how far he is ready or willing to move, if at all.

Charlotte Iserbyt's Comment: As a former school board member, this writer can relate to the above quote. Principals who resisted innovation eventually ended up being forced out of the system undergoing radical change. Their trials and tribulations were known only to them, and what they underwent during the change agents' activities in their schools could be described as inhumane treatment.

To Be Continued

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A LENTEN MEDITATION: ENTERING INTO THE DESERT

Father Anthony Lentz, OFM

During the first three centuries of the Church's existence, She suffered persecutions. Many of the various tortures inflicted upon Her children would make anyone cringe in fear. This is understandable because pain and suffering are things from which we normally run away due to the instinct of self-preservation. This is why God gave a strong supernatural grace to help aid the Christian Martyrs during their final struggle. The combined effect of all three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity gave them the strength to willingly give up this mortal life and enter into eternity with the confidence that they are entering into eternal life with God in Heaven. The persecutions officially ended in the year 313 with the Edict of Milan, but the desire to leave the world to be more closely united with God remained. Men and women flocked to the deserts of Egypt to retire from the world and live a secluded life of work and prayer. They sought to not only embrace the Commandments of God and His Holy Church, but they al-

so sought to embrace the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Entering into the desert to get away from the world was not a novelty but rather an imitation of Our Lord's ascetic life.

The Gospel for the First Sunday of Lent tells how Our Lord first went into the desert at the beginning of His Sacred Ministry.

"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert, to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward, He was hungry. And the tempter coming said to him: If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. Who answered and said: It is written, Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, and set Him upon the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him: If thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down, for it is written: 'That He hath given His angels charge over Thee, and in their hands shall

they bear Thee up, lest perhaps Thou dash Thy foot against a stone.’ Jesus said to him: It is written again: ‘Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.’ Again the devil took Him up into a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and said to Him: All these will I give Thee, if falling down Thou wilt adore me. Then Jesus saith to him: Begone, Satan: for it is written: The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and Him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil left Him; and behold angels came and ministered to Him.” (Gospel of St. Matthew 4: 1-11)

Throughout the Gospels, we find that Our Lord would leave His Apostles and other disciples to go into the mountains and the deserts to pray. He needed time alone to be with His Father, and so doing, He gave us the example of a true ascetic vocation. God called some to go to the actual desert – St. Anthony of Egypt, St. Paul the Hermit, St. Catherine of Alexandria, etc. Others God called later to establish a religious community or enter the priestly or monastic life – St. Benedict, St. Pachomius, St. Augustine of Hippo, etc. These took oaths to observe the evangelical counsels. Mo-

nasticism in the West grew, and even though these men were cloistered, they still impacted society and Church reform. The greatest and most influential example of this was the Benedictine Monks of Cluny in the 10th and 11th centuries. Besides these obvious examples, another group still cannot enter an actual desert to become a hermit, nor do they have a vocation to become a monk or nun. This group is the laity, that is, most of the Catholic population.

God has called most people to remain living in the world to have a positive supernatural impact upon society. God called most to the vocation of parenthood, a noble calling. Parents have the duty to make sure that their children learn the faith, with love and devotion, and to populate Heaven for God’s greater glory. They are especially called to continue living in the world but not be a part of this world. When the lay Catholic starts to be worn down by the world, it is time to retreat into the desert, that is, the desert of solitude.

The Season of Lent is the most appropriate time to do this. The Church does not command us to fast, abstain, avoid parties and other festivities during Lent to annoy; She does so to inspire us. She de-

sires to encourage a detachment from worldly things and distractions, to have the tools and resolutions necessary to grow in holiness.

Solitude removes worldly distractions and takes the necessary time out of your day to speak to God in mental prayer. Solitude is also taking the right amount of time for spiritual reading. This is a spiritual super-recharge for the battery of your soul. So, when I am talking about prayer and spiritual reading, I am not talking about those things you already do. I am talking about those things you could do for God. To limit yourself to a mere recitation of your morning offering, Angelus, and night prayer is not entering the desert. You are merely at the threshold. You have to want to do more! It would be best if you looked forward to leaving the world behind and meditating on the truths of the Faith. Open up your Catechism and read a lesson! Then take ten or fifteen minutes thinking about what you read and apply its lessons into your own life and conduct. Whenever those worldly thoughts try to distract you throughout your day, put them out of your mind by saying a quick ejaculation, such as, “Lord Jesus crucified, have mercy on me.”

Another practice that may prove helpful, especially during Lent, is taking the Stations of the Cross booklet and saying the prayers and meditations. Each Station is a new source of daily meditation, and the Passion of Christ becomes a regular meditation for you in the future.

After discussing all of this, I have concluded that the desert here is a state of being, more than a physical place. The desert is that soul in the state of sanctifying grace desiring to achieve greater sanctity by seeking God’s Holy Will. Remember Our Lord’s words during His last private meditation in the Garden of Gethsemane: “Father, if this cup cannot pass away unless I drink it, Thy Will be done.” How do you find out God’s Will? It is the same place where you will intimately find God. St. Augustine says that to find God, we must look within our very souls with all sincerity. If you are in the state of sanctifying grace, you will find Christ residing there, waiting to help you achieve that level of sanctity for which He called you. Resolve this Lent to do more for the love of God by entering deeper into the desert of your soul, a soul desirous of solitude.

THE LITTLE CATECHISM OF THE CURÉ OF ARS

*Selected passages from the
writings of
St. John Marie Vianney*



CHAPTER TWO CATECHISM ON THE LOVE OF GOD

Our body is a vessel of corruption; it is meant for death and for the worms, nothing more! And yet we devote ourselves to satisfying it, rather than to enriching our soul, which is so great that we can conceive nothing greater — no, nothing, nothing! For we see that God, urged by the ardor of His charity, would not create us like the animals; He has created us in His own image and likeness, do you see? Oh, how great is man?

Man, being created by love, cannot live without love: either he loves God, or he loves himself and he loves the world. See, my children, it is faith that we want... When we have not faith, we are blind. He who does not see, does not know; he who does not know

does not love; he who does not love God loves himself, and at the same time loves his pleasures. He fixes his heart on things which pass away like smoke. He cannot know the truth, nor any good thing; he can know nothing but falsehood, because he has no light; he is in a mist. If he had light, he would see plainly that all that he loves can give him nothing but eternal death; it is a foretaste of Hell.

Do you see, my children, except God, nothing is solid— nothing, nothing! If it is life, it passes away; if it is a fortune, it crumbles away; if it is health, it is destroyed; if it is reputation, it is attacked. We are scattered like the wind... Everything is passing away full speed, everything is going

to ruin. O God! O God! how much those are to be pitied, then, who set their hearts on all these things! They set their hearts on them because they love themselves too much; but they do not love themselves with a reasonable love — they love themselves with a love that seeks themselves and the world, that seeks creatures more than God. That is the reason why they are never satisfied, never quiet; they are always uneasy, always tormented, always upset. See, my children, the good Christian runs his course in this world mounted on a fine triumphal chariot; this chariot is borne by angels, and conducted by Our Lord Himself, while the poor sinner is harnessed to the chariot of this life, and the devil who drives it forces him to go on with great strokes of the whip.

My children, the three acts of faith, hope and charity contain all the happiness of man upon the earth. By faith, we believe what God has promised us: we believe that we shall one day see Him, that we shall possess Him, that we shall be eternally happy with Him in Heaven. By hope, we expect the fulfillment of these promises: we hope that we shall be rewarded for all our good actions, for all our good

thoughts, for all our good desires; for God considers even our good desires. What more do we want to make us happy?

In Heaven, faith and hope will exist no more, for the mist which obscures our reason will be dispelled; our mind will be able to understand the things that are hidden from it here below. We shall no longer hope for anything, because we shall have everything. We do not hope to acquire a treasure which we already possess. . . . But love; oh, we shall be inebriated with it! we shall be drowned, lost in that ocean of divine love, annihilated in that immense charity of the Heart of Jesus! so that charity is a foretaste of Heaven. Oh, how happy should we be if we knew how to understand it, to feel it, to taste it! What makes us unhappy is that we do not love God.

When we say, “My God, I believe, I believe firmly,” that is, without the least doubt, without the least hesitation. . . . Oh, if we were penetrated with these words: “I firmly believe that Thou art present everywhere, that Thou seest me, that I am under Thine eyes, that one day I myself shall see Thee clearly, that I shall enjoy all the good things

Thou hast promised me! O my God, I hope that Thou wilt reward me for all that I have done to please Thee! O my God, I love Thee; my heart is made to love Thee!" Oh, this act of faith, which is also an act of love, would suffice for everything! If we understood our own happiness in being able to love God, we should remain motionless in ecstasy...

If a prince, an emperor, were to cause one of his subjects to appear before him, and should

say to him, "I wish to make you happy; stay with me, enjoy all my possessions, but be careful not to give me any just cause of displeasure," with what care, with what ardor, would not that subject endeavor to satisfy his prince! Well, God makes the same proposals to us... and we do not care for His friendship, we make no account of His promises... What a pity!



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Started in 2015, THE CHERUB is dedicated to the further enrichment and continuing education of Catholics of all ages.

Please send subscription requests to:

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Post Office Box 382
Lubbock, Texas 79408

The Cherub is published quarterly by the Third Order of St. Francis.

Suggested donation—\$15.00 per year.

ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

An Autobiography

CHAPTER SIX A PILGRIMAGE TO ROME

Shortly after the fateful 20th of November, Papa went to call on Brother Simeon, founder and director of St. Joseph's College. There he met Father Reverony, whom he gently reproached for not having helped me through my difficult undertaking. Papa told the whole story to Brother Simeon, and the kind old man showed considerable interest in the matter, even going so far as to make notes about it. In conclusion, he remarked with emotion: "Such a thing would not happen in Italy."

On the day following that ever-memorable morning of the audience, we started for Naples and Pompeii; Vesuvius did us the honor of emitting from its crater a thick volume of smoke accompanied by numerous loud reports. The traces of devastation over Pompeii are terrifying and furnish a most striking proof of God's power: "*He looketh upon the earth and maketh it tremble; He toucheth the mountains and they smoke.*"¹ I should have liked to wander alone

among its ruins, pondering on the instability of all things human, but such solitude was not to be thought of.

During our stay at Naples, we went for a magnificent drive to the monastery of San Martino, which stands on the crest of a high hill overlooking the whole city. On our way back to the hotel the horses took the bit between their teeth, and it is solely to our Guardian Angels that I attribute our safe arrival at the splendid hotel. The epithet is not too strong. During the pilgrimage we stayed at the grandest hotels, and I, certainly, had never been surrounded by such princely luxury. Yet how true is the saying: Wealth does not make happiness! I should have been a thousand times more contented under a thatched roof with the hope of entering Carmel, than I was amid marble staircases, gilded ceilings, and silken hangings, with my heart full of woe. I thoroughly

¹ Ps. ciii. 32

realized that joy is not found in the things that surround us, but lives only in the soul, and that it may be possessed just as easily in an obscure prison as in the palace of a King. As a proof, I am now happier in Carmel, amid trials within and without, than I was in the world, where I had everything, I needed, even to the sweet joys of an ideal home.

Although my heart was heavy, outwardly I was the same as usual, for I was under the impression that no one had any knowledge of my petition to the Pope; but I was mistaken. On one occasion, when most of the pilgrims had gone to the refreshment-room and Celine and I were alone, Mgr. Legoux came to the door of our carriage. After carefully scrutinizing me, he said with a smile: "Well, how is our little Carmelite?" I understood by this that my secret was known to the pilgrims, which fact was indeed further emphasized by the looks of sympathy I received—but happily no one spoke to me on the subject.

While at Assisi, visiting the place sanctified by St. Francis and St. Clare, I had a little adventure, thanks to having lost the buckle of my belt in the monastery. Some time elapsed before I was able to find it and

put it on again, with the result that, when I reached the door, all the carriages had gone with the exception of one, and that one belonged to the Vicar-General of Bayeux! Should I try to catch one of those already out of sight and risk losing the train, or should I beg for a seat in Father Reverony's carriage? I decided on the latter and wiser plan.

My embarrassment was extreme, but I did my best to hide it and at the same time to explain my dilemma. He was now in a difficulty also, for every seat was already occupied, but the problem was quickly solved by one of the occupants giving me his place and taking a seat beside the driver. I felt like a squirrel caught in a snare and sat ill-at-ease in the midst of these important people, face to face, as it happened, with the most formidable of them all. Father Reverony was extremely kind, however, and every now and then interrupted his conversation to talk with me about Carmel, and to tell me that he would leave nothing undone towards helping me to enter when I was fifteen. This promise was as balm to my wounds, even though it did not put an end to all suffering. Having lost trust in creatures, it was on God alone I could lean.

Yet my distress did not hinder me from taking a deep interest in the holy places we visited. In the choir of the Carmelite church in Florence we saw the shrine of St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi, and all the pilgrims were anxious that their rosaries should touch the Saint's tomb. My hand being the only one small enough to pass through the grating, I was deputed for this important and rather lengthy task, which I accomplished with pride and delight. This was not the first time I had been so favored. At Santa Croce, in Rome, when we venerated the relics of the True Cross, together with two of the Thorns and one of the Sacred Nails, I longed to examine them more closely. For this purpose, I remained behind, and when the monk in charge was going to replace them on the altar, I asked if I might touch the precious treasures. He was quite willing, though doubtful whether I should succeed. I managed, however, to slip my little finger through one of the openings of the reliquary and was able to touch the Sacred Nail once bathed by the Blood of Our Savior. It is easy to see that I behaved towards Our Lord like a child who looks on its Father's treasures as its own, and thinks it may do with them as it pleases.

After passing through Pisa and Genoa, we returned to France by one of the loveliest routes. Along part of the line, we skirted the sea, and one day, as the result of a storm, the waves rose so high that it seemed as if the water might easily reach us. Farther on, we travelled through stretches of plain covered with orange trees, olives, and feathery palms. Then, as night fell, the numerous seaports became ablaze with lights, while the stars crept out and shone tremulously in the dark blue sky. Yet it was without regret that I watched this fairy picture fade from my eyes, for my heart was set elsewhere.

To Be Continued





FRANCISCAN SAINTS

MARCH 17TH

The Servant of God

Paula Malatesta

Widow, Second Order

Paula was the consort of the marquis of Mantua, John Francis Gonzaga. She was a very devout woman. Even during the lifetime of her husband, while she was the ruling marquise, she visited the community hospital three times a week and there ministered to the sick like a Sister of Mercy, dressing their wounds and washing their feet. She also cherished great veneration for the Holy Sacrament of the Altar; with touching devotion she would accompany it in processions, and in the sense of her own nothingness in the presence of the Divine Majesty on such occasions she always went barefoot.

Through her efforts St. Bernardine of Siena came to Mantua in 1420 to preach the Lenten sermons. These discourses produced such blessed results that extraordinary zeal for Christian perfection seized particularly the more distinguished members of society.

The pious marquise founded several convents, among which was the monastery of Poor Clares at Mantua, where twenty young women immediately entered. Following the statutes of St. Bernardine, they were trained to perfect observance of the rule of the order.

After the death of the marquis, Paula herself entered this convent as an ordinary sister in the year 1440. She so completely forgot her former station in life that she performed the most difficult and servile tasks like the lowliest sister, and one would have believed that she had been a servant-girl all the days of her life. At the same time she practiced rigorous penances, and was so intimately united with God in prayer that several miracles are recorded as resulting from the power of her intercession.

Rich in merits and honored as a saint because of her virtues,

she died in the monastery of the Poor Clares at Mantua in the year 1449. She had definitely stated that her grave was to bear no special inscription and that she was to be buried at the door of the sacristy where she would be trampled underfoot, but also where the priests would be made mindful of her as they approached the altar.

ON VISITING THE SICK

1.) In the sight of heaven, Paula must certainly have appeared more glorious than all the splendor of the princely household, when she ministered to the sick in the hospital and washed their feet. In the eyes of the world such service appears lowly and contemptible, but viewed with the eyes of faith, it is so high and sublime that perhaps the pious marquise even considered herself unworthy to perform it, since to her it was nothing less than rendering a service to Christ our Lord Himself. Christ will one day say to those who have acted similarly and with faith: "I was sick and you visited me. Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me" (*Matthew 25:36, 40*). — Oh, how precious it is to visit the sick in Christian fashion!

Do you ever perform this act of charity?

2.) Consider that, aside from the heavenly reward that awaits us, we can derive great benefit here on earth from devoutly visiting the sick. In the sickroom we see what man really is. How weak and miserable he is after he has lain there for months, even if he could boast of his strength in the days of his health! What an object of pity he is if he is obliged to lie there for years, and cannot live and cannot die! Surely then we can forgive the occasional complaints he may make, and endeavor compassionately and sincerely to console him. Try to picture yourself lying there; what then will be your interest in the world and its pleasures? There will be nothing to comfort you then except a good conscience. At a sickbed you also learn to treasure your health, to thank God for it, and never rashly to expose it to danger. — Visit the sick frequently, if your duties permit it; do not only send them things, but take the things there yourself and look on it as paying a visit to our Savior. In that way visiting the sick may often be better than a visit to the church. Tertiaries are encouraged by their rule to do this (2:13).

3.) Consider that you ought to visit the sick in such a manner that it will be beneficial to the sick. Arrange your visit so that it will not be a burden to them; not calling on them too frequently, not unduly prolonging the visit, not speaking too much, not suggesting all

sorts of remedies. Endeavor to put cheer into your visits, to console the sick person in a Christian manner, and if necessary to prepare him for a Christian end. Where it is appropriate, pray with him at times, and pray frequently for him and all the sick.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

*Almighty, everlasting God, the eternal salvation of those who believe, hear us on behalf of Thy servants that are sick, for whom we humbly crave the help of Thy mercy, that, being restored to health, they may render thanks to Thee in Thy Church.
Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.*



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AMONG INFIDELS - BY DIVINE GRACE

Father Louis Vezelis, OFM

Chapter Twelve - Franciscan Apostolate

It is difficult to change ingrained habits. Even if you have a better idea, you are bound to meet with strong resistance. This was true when I observed the need for streamlining the apostolate in our local Franciscan parish.

It did not take long to discover that there were all kinds of societies and organizations in each parish. There was an organization for practically every age group. There was the men's organization, the women's organization, the Legion of Mary, the J.O.C. (Young Christian Workers), and Students' organization. Each organization needed officers, a rule and meetings, certain prayers to be said and dues to be paid. I was not opposed to organizations; I was just opposed to the existing race which seemed to equate activity with the number of organizations listed on the parish roster. It seemed to me that pastors were trying to outdo

each other in a misguided zeal for organizations. Organizations for the sake of organizations is not my idea of apostolic activity.

I discovered that generally the same people belonged to several organizations and were constantly attending meetings which accomplished very little from the point of view of actual apostolic activity. There was a kind of over-kill. When I suggested a program of effective simplification, most of the clergy would not hear of it. Particularly when I suggested the idea to our own Franciscans, I was surprised at the apathy. The suggestion was to implement the concept of the Third Order as an effective instrument for the apostolate. St. Francis had revolutionized the world of his day by means of the Third Order. I felt that what could be done in one century could be done in another. People are the same the world over. Why, then, could not the same concept of personal sanctification and apostolate apply

here and now? My answer was always affirmative.

It was evident that the problem was one of prejudice. This was particularly true when it came to trying to make changes in procedure that had become routine. Besides, most of the missionary and local clergy had little or no idea of what the Third Order of St. Francis was all about. Especially the young missionaries from France knew very little about such things because they represented a mentality ripe for Modernism.

In order to do the things I wished to do, it would be necessary to resign as pastor of the large parish in Taejon city and move to the countryside. This I did. I resigned the pastorate and moved to the little village of Yousong, some eight miles north of Taejon city. There it would be possible to start anew because no one had time to get the wrong things started. This did not guarantee an easy time of it. The people who were in touch with friends in other parishes would talk, would make comparisons and would invariably make their negative comments. Nothing gets started without those 'know-it-all's' who are always negative. Negative thinkers have one positive fault: they always open their mouths.

Determined to give the idea a fair chance, I called a meeting of the outstanding members of the parish and explained my plan and purpose. I could see the skeptics and negators cranking their heads in readiness to disagree. But, they stopped at half-crank when I simply stated that that's how it was going to be. I knew that they could not possibly offer any rational or reasonable objections because they had never even tried the idea. You can't know if a thing will work or not unless you actually try it. As is usual, such people come on strong from a position of solid ignorance.

The plan was simple: there would be no other organizations in the parish for those fervent enough to wish to do something for the church. They would only wish to do something for the church. There would only be the Third Order. And to take in all age groups and both men and women, I appointed one of the more outstanding men as the President, a woman as the Vice-President, and a young man to coordinate the youth.

Everyone became a member of a two-man team. They would go out together once a week on predetermined assignments. Instead of waiting for the monthly meeting, each team

would report to me directly after having completed the assignment. This kept things from bogging down from meeting to meeting. The women were in teams together and the men had their separate teams. It was working quite well and everyone was happy with the results. Even the husbands of those wives who formerly spent more time at church than at home were pleased.

There were some minor problems. But these problems had nothing to do with the concept at all. It was a question of personalities. Wherever you have people working together, you will always find petty clashes of one kind or another. Some were exasperating while others were somewhat comical. I remember when one team of men which was made up of two gentlemen who couldn't pass up a drink began to return from their apostolic rounds quite cheery from the rice wine. The first time they came, I didn't say anything because I thought this may have been just an accident, and I didn't not wish to make a scene for a passing thing. But, then when I noticed that every time they went out to visit someone they would return feeling no pain, I thought it imperative to say something.

I had to say something because they came staggering to the rectory literally smashed out of their minds. They couldn't walk straight and their speech was fuzzy. They had gone to visit a fallen away Catholic. Where did they visit him? Where else if not the local pub! It must have been a very chummy visit. But it did nothing for the faith or virtue of any of them. This was perhaps the only incident we had with our program and it did not take long to solve the problem. I simply separated the men into different teams to lessen the temptation. It worked very well.

The system was working very nicely until the effects of Vatican II began to be felt in our village. The people, who had hitherto been very content and cheerfully went about their works of charity, now found that they were being criticized for not being "with the big program". Until then, our simple and effective program was bearing good fruit. Now, suddenly, there was pressure to send 'delegates' to the Diocesan Pastoral Center for 'retreats' and then for 'orientation'. This seemed quite odd to me because I did not see the need for any 'orientation'. Our people were quite well 'orientated'. Nevertheless, the pressures continued until our leaders began to feel

“left out” of the mainstream of diocesan activity. This was the tactic: collectivization of the entire diocese by means of one central “Pastoral Center”. My observation impressed me with the fact that what was going on was nothing more than the formation of spies for each parish. This was dangerous, I thought, and I would have nothing to do with such a program.

Pressures were building up to destroy or weaken the effectiveness of our solid Third Order program. Finally, not wishing our people to feel foreign in their own Church and in their own Diocese, I consented to send representatives from the parish to ‘seminars’ hatched by the diocesan ‘Pastoral Center’. This was my mistake. For, once our good people started going to that ‘Pastoral Center’ I could tell that they had lost their true Catholic zeal - so simple and gentle. They began to talk and act in a manner which made me feel that

they had now become loyal to someone else other than their pastor. What had happened in my parish was to take place in every other parish. But mine was a bit different because I could see the zeal and piety of our people change. The efforts of the Third Order began to wane as these people were conscripted and committed to projects no longer directly under the supervision of their pastor. It was not long before the entire parish was literally ‘taken over’ by an outside force. In a word, my parish was subverted. There was nothing I could do, because it was all being done “in the Spirit of Vatican II”!

Nevertheless, I had conducted a very valuable experiment of sorts. I discovered that the principles and methods of the Third Order of St. Francis really worked and could work in our modern times.

To Be Continued



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