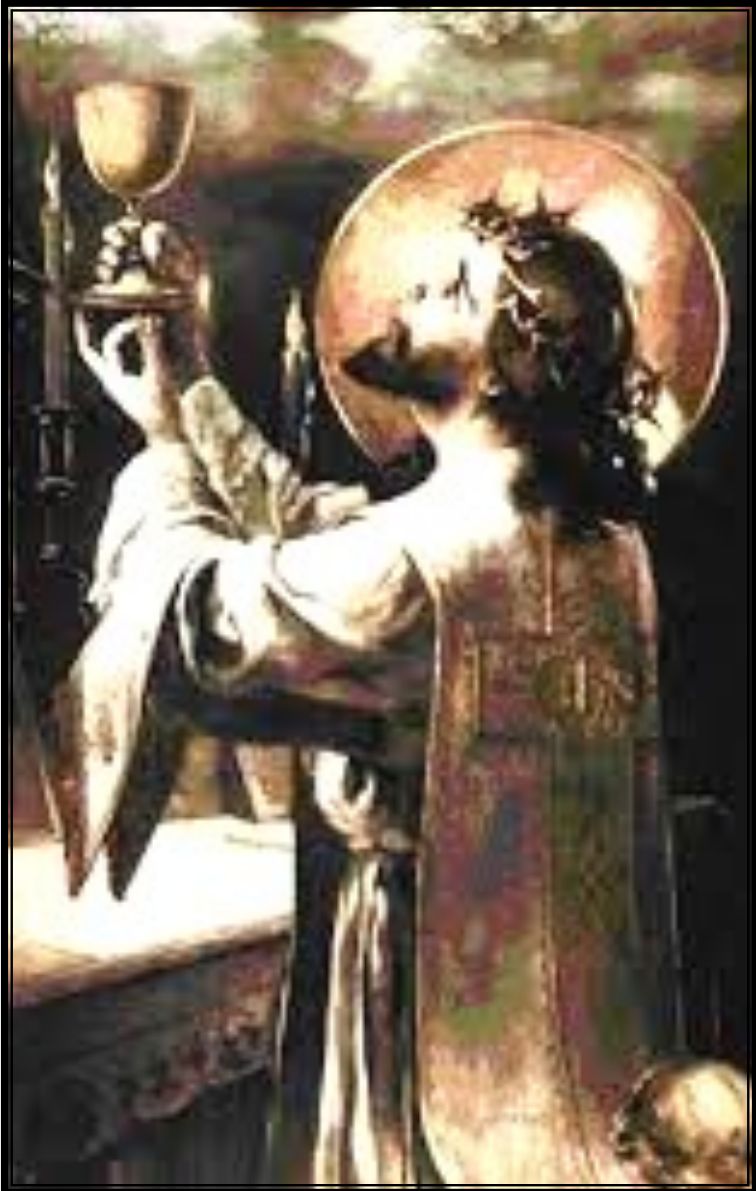


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THE SERAPH

HOLY ORDERS

Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD

The Sacrament of Holy Orders is a sacrament that transforms men into priests of God. It is like Baptism and Confirmation because it marks our souls for eternity. Baptism is necessary for everyone who desires to enter Heaven. Confirmation adds grace to the graces received in Baptism, which is optional but should always be accepted when we are allowed to receive it. The Sacrament of Holy Orders is reserved for a few but is for the benefit of everyone.

The priest is the connection between God and men – between things spiritual and material. The priest is often called an “alter-Christus” (another Christ). Jesus administers the sacraments to us through the hands of the priest. The priest’s words bring Jesus down to our altars in Holy Mass in transubstantiation. Christ speaking through the priest, forgives us our sins through the sacrament of Confession (Penance).

Some of the requirements for the priesthood are: 1.) He must be of good character (This implies goodwill and virtuous conduct, as well as good

sense.) 2.) He must have finished a seminary course successfully and must have completed his twenty-fourth year. The minor seminary (high school level) usually consists of four or five years of Latin and Greek, together with secondary school subjects. In the major seminary, the course includes philosophy and other collegiate subjects for two or three years, then four years of theology, with Holy Scripture, Church History, Canon Law, Liturgy, Sociology, etc. 3.) He must be sincere in the intention to devote his entire life to the sacred ministry. This includes a willingness to bear whatever burdens and difficulties the priesthood may bring for the love of God. It presupposes a right intention for entering the priestly state. 4.) Holy Orders is a Sacrament of the Living, so he must be in the state of grace to receive it correctly.

In general, if a boy has good will, good health, a sound mind, good sense, and a desire to dedicate himself to the service of God, he has the qualifications necessary for the priesthood.

Holy Orders are plural because there are stages or degrees within the priesthood. The Sacrament consists of three principal degrees -- deacon, priest, and bishop. The bishop has the fullness of the priesthood with the power and authority to administer all the Sacraments. The priest has the power to offer Holy Mass, to administer solemn Baptism, and Extreme Unction, but needs jurisdiction for Penance and the administration of Matrimony. The deacon assists the priests at Holy Mass, reads or sings the Gospel, and preaches; at High Mass, he incenses the celebrant and the choir, gives the altar bread, pours wine into the chalice, takes off the pall and puts it on, receives the kiss of peace, etc.

The usual progression for a young man to become a priest consists of major and minor orders. Tonsure is the first sign that he intends to dedicate his life to serving God in the priesthood. By the tonsure, a man becomes a cleric and is incardinated or assigned to the diocese to which he will belong upon his ordination. He may not change to another diocese without the consent of his bishop and the bishop to whom he wishes to transfer. (All priests, like all Catholics, must be subject to a bishop.)

At various intervals, the cleric receives the minor orders of 1.) Porter – is given a key with the right to guard the church doors. 2.) Lector – receives a book with the right to read specific passages of Holy Scripture when ordered by a priest or bishop. 3.) Exorcists - - receive the book of exorcisms, with the right to exorcise evil spirits. 4) Acolyte – receives a candlestick, with the right to carry lights and give wine and water at Holy Mass.

Following Tonsure and the four minor orders, the cleric receives the Major Orders. 1.) Subdeaconate – This is still a preparation for the Sacrament of Holy Orders and is of ecclesiastical institution. A subdeacon is pledged to perpetual celibacy and the daily recitation of the Divine Office. He presents the water at High Mass, sings the epistle, brings the vessels to the altar, holds the paten during the canon, and gives the kiss of peace to the choir. 2.) Diaconate – This is the lowest degree in the Sacrament of Holy Orders. The Deacon receives Sacramental Grace. He assists the priests at Holy Mass, reads or sings the Gospel, preaches; at High Mass, he incenses the celebrant and the choir, gives the altar bread, pours wine into the chalice, takes off the pall, and

puts it on. Receives the kiss of peace, etc. 3.) Priesthood – This is the second degree in the Sacrament of Holy Orders. The episcopate, the highest degree in the Sacrament, is the fullness of the priesthood.

There are two classes of priests: Secular (or diocesan) priests belong to a diocese. They are bound to obey the bishop and may not change from one diocese to another without the consent of the bishops of both dioceses. Religious (or regular) priests are members of religious orders or congregations, such as the Augustinians, Benedictines, Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits, Redemptorists, Salesians, etc. Religious are bound by the three evangelical vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They vow obedience to their superiors and live in the community with their brethren. Not all members of religious communities are priests. Many take the religious vows but do not receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders; that is, they are not ordained. These we call Brothers.

All Priests vow celibacy when they first receive the order of Subdeaconate. Catholic priests do not marry in imitation of Christ Himself. After they were called to the ministry, the Apostles left all they had. Eli-

as, Eliseus, Jeremias, and St. John the Baptist, lived in celibacy. The priest is bound to read the Divine Office. This is a series of prayers in the Breviary; for this, approximately one hour is needed every day. The Office is prescribed and fixed, including psalms, canticles, writings of the Old Testament prophets and Apostles and Fathers of the Church, passages from the Gospels, hymns, and special prayers in honor of the Blessed Mother and the Saints.

Regular or Religious priests generally devote themselves to prayer and the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. They have charge of schools, hospitals, orphanages, and other charitable institutions. They organize missions and retreats and engage in press work and religious propaganda.

Priests who are Pastors must be ready to visit the dying at any hour of the day or night, even though the patient may be suffering from a contagious disease. He must instruct his people and guard them against harm. A pastor is the shepherd of his flock.

There is a great need for priests everywhere. Christianity is not possible without them. This is truer today than ever before. We frequently

receive calls from all over the world begging us to send them priests.

While many strongly encourage us to dispense with most of the requirements in administering the sacrament of Holy Orders because of the evils of our day, it seems that the wickedness of our day is more reason to hold firmly to the order God has established in the Church. Great evils demand great sacrifice. Where sin abounds, grace must abound even more. The answer to increasing evils is not lessening study, work, and prayer but increasing love and sacrifice.

This scarcity is greater today than ever because of the “new rite of ordination” that was brought forth universally in 1968. We believe the modern “Vatican II” rite of ordination is invalid. Hence the many men ordained in this “new rite” are not truly priests and bishops. (Is there any cause for wonder about our modern “priestly scandals?” Since they

do not have the grace of the priesthood, they certainly cannot live a priestly life.) Even when these “priests” and “bishops” follow the proper rites of the Sacraments, they cannot do so validly because they are not priests. Baptism is the only Sacrament they may validly confer because anyone can validly baptize. Men who are not true or valid priests are not okay simply because they become “conservative” or “pious.”

Let us pray fervently to God to send us the priestly vocations necessary as we encourage worthy young men to follow or at least honestly consider this vocation. It is the highest and the noblest vocation offering many spiritual rewards, but it also demands great – even heroic – sacrifice. Young men need not fear the sacrifices because God is faithful – His grace is sufficient for us to overcome every obstacle. We simply need to love and cooperate with Him and His Grace.

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THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD

The religious life is a life that is dedicated to God in poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Jesus counseled voluntary poverty: “If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor” (St. Matt. 19:21). Jesus could have lived in all the wealth of this world, but, He chose to live in extreme poverty. He was born in a stable; His mother was a poor woman; His foster father was a poor carpenter; He had nowhere to lay His head.

Everyone is obliged to give alms according to their means. But voluntary poverty means giving up, for the love of God, of not only part but of all our earthly property and suffering the hardships of poverty.

Jesus counseled perfect chastity: “Let him accept it who can” (St. Matt. 19:12). Christ Himself was perfectly chaste and virginal. His mother was a virgin. He loved virginal children. St. Paul instructs us concerning chastity: “Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give an opinion ... He who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please God. Whereas he

who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and he is divided. And the unmarried woman, and the virgin, think about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in body and in spirit. Whereas she who is married thinks about the things of the world, how she may please her husband” (1 Cor. 7:25, 32-34). God’s sixth and ninth commandments oblige us to live chaste lives and avoid impurity. Lifelong and perfect chastity means something more than this. It is the sacrifice of something lawful – the right to marriage, a life-long spouse, and children.

Priests and members of religious communities, both men and women, are bound to celibacy and perfect chastity. Celibacy is the state of being unmarried. St. Paul commended the state of celibacy: “I say to the unmarried, and to widows, it is good for them if they so remain, even as I” (1 Cor. 7:8). He said, “He who gives his virgin in marriage does well, and he who does not give her does better” (1 Cor. 7:38).

Perfect obedience is the complete subjection of one’s

will to that of a superior. Jesus counseled perfect obedience. He said to His Apostles: "Follow Me." He said to the rich young man: "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor ... and come, follow Me" (*St. Matt. 19:21*). Jesus was perfectly obedient to His heavenly Father. He never sought His own Will but always the Will of the Father Who sent Him. He was obedient to His Mother and St. Joseph. Everyone is bound to obedience to their superiors according to their state. Children must obey their parents; citizens must obey the civil authorities; all must obey their spiritual superiors. But this obligation leaves us free in many things; it does not bind all our actions. On the other hand, perfect obedience requires us to obey in everything. It is the greatest sacrifice we can give to God.

The Religious state is the permanent way of community life by which the faithful bind themselves to observe the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. It is called the "state of perfection" because those who embrace it have an obligation to aim at evangelical perfection through faithfulness to their vows. It is God who calls certain men and women to the Religious life. This is not

something that we choose for ourselves. Religious have answered the call or invitation of God to give themselves in this manner to Him.

Some impediments often stand in the way of men or women who wish to become Religious. Some impediments are existing marriage, lack of age (being less than 15 years old), debts that must be paid, and parents who need one's support.

The requirements of a religious vocation are relatively simple. Simply stated, goodwill, good health, and good sense are all that is necessary. We need not be strongly attracted to the religious state before embracing it. Feelings generally have nothing to do with the matter; "will" is most needed. Emotions pass, but day after day, one needs a strong will to remain faithful to the vows taken in a religious congregation.

Parents should pray for the honor of giving one or more of their children to God in the Religious life. However, no one should ever be forced. It is just as wrong to force a child to enter religious life as it is to prevent a child from serving God. Parents who oppose or prevent their child's religious vocation are stealing him or her from the service of God, Who has called them.

Religious engage in many different and various activities. Some orders are active in performing the corporal works of mercy. They often work in hospitals, orphanages, schools, missions, etc. Some religious communities are contemplative and focus their attention on the spiritual works of mercy. They are often cloistered and spend their days in prayer and penance for the greater honor and glory of God and the well-being and growth of the Church. All religious unite with priests daily in the recitation of the Divine Office. The Divine Office principally consists of the psalms in praising and worshipping God.

The Franciscan Order has a mix of active and contemplative. In imitation of Jesus, Franciscans spend some time in the corporal works of mercy and then return to the contemplation of God in prayer.

The Franciscan Order is made up of three general categories. In the First Order are the men who give themselves entirely to the service of God. These are called “Brothers”; some may even become priests. The Second Order (Poor Clares) consists of women who give themselves entirely to God in the contemplative life. Then we have the Third Order for others who seek to give themselves to the service of God in Religious

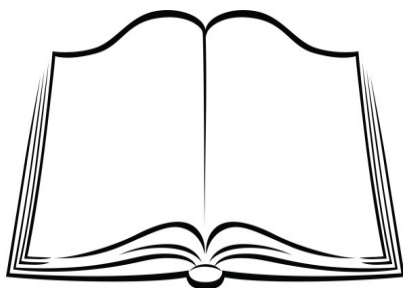
life. The Third Order can be “Third Order Seculars” (those still living in the world but partaking in the works and rewards of the Franciscan Order); these may be married or single. And “Third Order Regulars” (those who live in a community somewhat separated from the world).

There would be many more vocations to the priestly or religious life if young people would pay less attention to their worldly amusements, pleasures, and ease and more to God and their salvation. If they would only ponder the fact that they have just one life to live and that all their eternity depends upon how they spend that life, they would surely try to make the most of it. How many are willing to make sacrifices for wealth or honor! Yet these will need to be left behind at death; the only lasting riches come from the loyal service to God.

For more information about the First Order & Third Order Secular, please contact Father Joseph:
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For more information about the Third Order Regular, please contact Sister Catherine, TOR:
sistercatherine.tor@gmail.com

Tell Us Another



Winfried Herbst, SDS

I HAVE DECEIVED MYSELF!

Isn't it strange, sadly so, to see how little people outside the Church worry about personal sin? They try to live up to the conventionalities of life and are rather careful to avoid all that might, externally at least, interfere with their pursuit of life, health and happiness, but that is all. How sad!

But Henry was a Catholic lad, in name at least. And he should have known that the scoffing world around him was blind, willfully blind, and was not to be listened to, nor to be followed. That he did not want to know it is just the reason why he got on the fatal path that leads right down to hell, the path of impure pleasures.

"Oh," he would say, when the priest and others who had his welfare at heart would warn him to leave his wicked ways and turn back to God, "these things are not as bad as you try to make me believe. Why,

everybody's doing it! It's only natural; and you can't tell me God forbids it as you say He does. Don't be trying to fool me with that grandma talk."

One day there was a hurried sick call. It was to Henry's home. Father Meriss hastened thither. Too late! When he arrived, Henry was dead. He knelt with the family to pray for the repose of the departed soul. Suddenly, to the horror of all, the head of the lifeless boy moved, his eyes opened, he raised himself slightly; and in a fearful voice that thrilled the kneeling group with fear, he exclaimed, "I have deceived myself." Then he fell back upon the bed, lifeless again.

"I have deceived myself!" The priest knew only too well what that meant. Before the judgment seat of God Henry's eyes had been opened. But it was too late!

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO THE DOOR?

When did it happen, and where? I do not know just when, but it really did happen. It was over forty years ago, and it took place right here in our own country. Let me tell you about it.

One day Father X was suddenly sent on an urgent sick call. It was in a missionary district, so the good priest took the Blessed Sacrament, mounted his horse, and started out at once. But the roads were unusually bad, and a dreadful storm was raging. Yet he pushed bravely on. Night came and found him still far from his destination. He was forced to put up at a wayside inn. The host and his household were infidels.

Now, while he was there a messenger arrived saying that the sick person was feeling much better, that there was no danger, and that he need not hurry. So, being all worn out by the hard ride, the priest resolved to stay there for the night. Reverently he placed the burse containing the Blessed Sacrament on the table and, having prayed before it, retired for a much-needed rest.

Refreshed and full of new energy, he arose early in the morning and took his departure. But imagine his confusion and dismay when, after having gone some distance, he found that he had forgotten the Blessed Sacrament! Jesus alone in the home of infidels! With all speed he raced back to the wayside inn, sorrow, self-reproach, anxiety filling his heart. Leaping from his horse, he quickly found the host and asked him whether anyone had been in the room he had occupied the night before.

“Oh, sir, what have you done to the door?”, cried the innkeeper in an awed voice. “We cannot open it, though the key is in the lock from the outside. We cannot budge it an inch, no matter how hard we try. We took out the key and looked through the keyhole, and it seems you left a light in there.”

Quickly the priest hastened up the stairs, followed by the whole family. At his first touch the door opened quietly. He entered. He fell upon his knees and gratefully adored

the Blessed Sacrament. Then turning towards the household, who were infidels and knew nothing of God, he told them about the Eucharistic King Who had deigned to dwell beneath their roof and Who had even confirmed His presence by a miracle.

And what happened then? The whole assembled company, praising God, fell upon their knees and begged to be

instructed in the Catholic religion. The priest accordingly remained a few days, instructing them and baptizing the converts.

And thus, Jesus made captive some more seeking souls, binding them with the chains of His love — chains as soft as the petals of the rose.



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FREEDOM TO FAIL

Father Anthony Lentz, OFM

Good parents want what is best for their children. They desire that they succeed in life, and, though it may sound cliché, they want them to have opportunities that they did not have. Therefore, parents will see to it that their children get a good education. Or, if the child shows a talent for a sport, a musical instrument, or something of that nature, they will spare no means to see to it that it is adequately developed. Playing a sport and learning an instrument are good things in themselves; if both are done correctly, they can play a big part in *character development*. When raising a child, the parents must seek to help the child become a moral person, or better yet, a person of good morals. This is what is meant by *character*. Children must be taught to treat other people with good manners and respect. Patience, honesty, and charity are essential virtues for a child to develop when dealing with others. Therefore, being part of a team setting such as a football team or an orchestra is very important for the development of social skills. It does not matter if they are the first chair violinist

or the team's M.V.P. What matters is that they develop these necessary social skills and an appreciation for the art or sport. The child should learn to enjoy what they are doing.

Unfortunately, there are parents out there who do not understand this and demand from their children absolute perfection in everything they do; anything less would be considered a failure. What could make a parent think this way? Perhaps, that is how they were raised, or that they perceived themselves as being the absolute best. This is an act of undiluted pride! There is a third possibility with parents trying to live vicariously through their children and wanting nothing short of perfection. The attitude they stress upon their children is, "*Failure is not an option.*"

What is often the outcome of such overbearing parents? The child, or children, becomes overly obsessed with the idea that he cannot fail and will more than likely develop some sort of psychosis. They will become socially incapable of

dealing with any kind of pressure or criticism. A serious outcome may be them trying to find relief in drugs, alcohol, or even suicide.

To ensure your children a normal adulthood, they must have a normal childhood. One of the ways to accomplish this is to allow them the *freedom to fail*. The *freedom to fail* does not mean that you are allowing them to be lazy, but rather to try wholesome hobbies and grow. Remember the old saying, “If *at first, you don’t succeed, try, try again.*” People learn as much, if not more, from their failures as they do their successes. Thomas Edison tried and failed over 2000 times to develop the carbonized cotton thread filament for the incandescent light bulb; when asked about it, he said, “I didn’t fail; I simply found 2000 ways how not to make a light bulb.” This is an excellent quote because even though he did fail, he demonstrates to us the amount of tenacity and determination

that is necessary for success. Learning from our mistakes and allowing them to help make us better is all a part of learning and growing. This is one of the ways we develop a good moral and lasting character.

The only time a child actually fails something is if they quit, simply because something is too hard, or if they waste their God-given talents. How do we waste our talents? Let’s take the child who learns to play the piano and practices daily. One would say that unless the child plays for people or in a concert hall, then it is a waste. Perhaps, a child stops practicing, and his skills become dull. Well, in a worldly sense, this would be a waste, but talent is genuinely wasted when the child does not offer it up to God. You should make sure they realize that God gave them the talent in the first place. Teach them this simple axiom: *Our talents are God’s gift to us and how we use them is our gift to Him.*



THE COMMUNIST THREAT

Father Joseph Noonan, OFM

Part Seventeen: The Undermining of Education

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

Privacy has been defined as “the right to be let alone” (Cooley, 1888) and as the “right to the immunity of the person—the right to one’s personality” (Warren and Brandeis, 1890). Individuals have the right to determine when, how, and to what extent they will share themselves with others. It is their right to be free from unwarranted or undesired revelation of personal information to others, to participate or withdraw as they see fit, and to be free of unwarranted surveillance through physical, psychological, or technological means.

Justice William O. Douglas expressed the concerns of many people when he stated:

“We are rapidly entering the age of no privacy; when everyone is open to surveillance at all times; when there are no secrets from the government.... [There is] an alarming trend

whereby the privacy and dignity of our citizens is being whittled away by sometimes imperceptible steps. Taken individually, each step may be of little consequence. But when viewed as a whole, there begins to emerge a society quite unlike any we have seen—a society in which government may intrude into the secret regions of a man’s life at will.” (Osborn v. U.S., 1966, pp. 341–343)

Behavioral science, which is assuming an increasing role in educational technology, promises to make educational techniques more effective by recognizing individual differences among students and by patterning instruction to meet individual needs. However, behavioral science is more than an unbiased means to an end. It has a basic value position (Skinner, 1971) based on the premise that such “values as freedom and democracy, which imply that the individual ultimately has free will and is responsible for his own actions, are not only cultural inventions, but illusions” (Harman, 1970).

This position is contradictory to the basic premise of freedom and is demeaning to the dignity of the individual. Behavioral science inappropriately applied can impinge on individual values without allowing for personal differences and in education can violate the privacy of the student....

Reflecting on the ethical values of our civilization in 1958, Pope Pius XII commented:

“There is a large portion of his inner world which the person discloses to a few confidential friends and shields against the intrusion of others. Certain [other] matters are kept secret at any price and in regard to anyone. Finally, there are other matters which the person is unable to consider.... And just as it is illicit to appropriate another’s goods or to make an attempt on his bodily integrity without his consent, so it is not permissible to enter into his inner domain against his will, whatever is the technique or method used....”

Whatever the motivations of the teacher or researcher, an individual’s privacy must take precedence over effective teaching, unless good cause can be shown to do otherwise. Good cause, however, does not relieve the teacher or school administrator from the

responsibility of safeguarding the privacy of the student and the family. Yet, many teachers and administrators remain insensitive to the privacy implications of behavioral science and modern technology in education....

Intent on improving education, educators, scientists, and others concerned with the development and application of technology are often insensitive to the issues of privacy raised by the use of their techniques. For example, many psychological and behavioral practices have been introduced on the ground that they will make education more efficient or effective. However, improvements in efficiency through technological applications can reinforce these practices without regard to their effects. What is now being done in education could be wrong, especially if carried out on a massive scale. As the use of technology becomes more widespread, we may reach the point where errors cannot be detected or corrected. This is especially important because technology interacts with society and culture to change established goals and virtues. Propagating an error on a national level could change the original goals to fit the erroneous situa-

tion. The error then becomes acceptable by default.

In developing and applying technology to education, potential effects must be analyzed, so that negative possibilities can be identified and overcome before major resources are committed to projects that could produce undesirable long-term social consequences.

In matters affecting privacy it is better to err on the side of the individual, than on that of research or improved educational practice. Violations of privacy can never be fully redressed.

Footnote. No. 14. Privacy is a constitutionally protected right; education is not. The Supreme Court ruled in *Griswold v. Connecticut* (decided in 1965) that the right of privacy is guaranteed by the Constitution. In *Rodriguez v. San Antonio Independent School District* (decided in 1973), the Court ruled that education is not a protected right under the Constitution.

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris, France published *The International Standard Classification of Education* (ISCED-COM.75/WS/ 27) in 1976. This publication revealed ef-

forts at the highest international level to set up a classification system which will be available for use by planners assigned to the management of the global economy. Some quotes from the introduction to this 396-page document follow:

The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) has been designed as an instrument suitable for assembling, compiling, and presenting statistics of education both within individual countries and internationally. It is expected to facilitate international compilation and comparison of education statistics as such, and also their use in conjunction with manpower and other economic statistics....

ISCED should facilitate the use of education statistics in manpower planning and encourage the use of manpower statistics in educational planning. For this purpose, the most closely associated classification system in the manpower field is the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), prepared by the International Labour Office.

To Be Continued

BEGINNING EDUCATION

Father Anthony Lentz, OFM

There are three vocations to which all men are called: the married life, the single life, and the religious or priestly life. In a child's formative years, the primary vocation that parents need to be concerned with is the one that is universal, that is, being a child of God. If this is neglected, it may not only cost the child's particular vocation, but it could ultimately cost his salvation. Catholic parents must ensure their children are well-grounded in the faith. That is why this solemn duty should be properly performed.

The first thing that children should learn to develop is a constant prayer life. Prayer is the child's chance to talk to God. It should be explained that God is their Creator and that He is everywhere. His love for all His creatures should be presented, and the fact that He wants us to pray to Him should be recognized. If these things are explained, then talking to God will not seem strange or be compared to talking to an imaginary friend. Children should learn how to say the "Our Father," the "Hail Mary," the "Glory

Be," and the "Guardian Angel Prayer" as early as possible because these are the foundation that all other prayers are built upon. The good habit of faithfully saying the Morning Prayers with acts of faith, hope, and charity; and Night Prayers with a simple examination of conscience should also be formed.

Spiritual reading, especially the lives of the saints, should be encouraged. There should be a time set aside for spiritual reading each night or at least a few nights a week. The saints are the children's friends and role models. They give children an ideal to strive for – pleasing and loving God. They should then pray to their patron saints, always asking for their help.

We have learned in our catechism that there are three things we must do to get to Heaven: to *know*, to *love*, and to *serve* God. There is a reason why they are given in this order. It is simply that you cannot serve (faithfully) someone whom you do not love, and you cannot love someone whom you do not know. You need to make sure

that your children learn their Catechism and that you go over it with them. This should not be a taxing ordeal but an enjoyable experience that all of you delight in. The material covered should be familiar to you; take the time and learn it yourself. Refreshing yourself on the fundamentals of the faith will be beneficial for you as well.

When is the proper time to begin teaching children their catechism? When this question is asked, most people understand catechism in the formal sense: going over text in a catechism book. Although taken in the informal sense, it refers to those lessons in prayer, self-discipline, piety, and love of Christ. This should begin as soon as the children are capable of understanding them to a certain degree. Most importantly, they should learn to love the Faith. A prominent American bishop, Bishop Moriarty, once observed: "Place a well-catechized Christian in the backwoods of America, or in the frozen regions of the North, and without the sacraments or sacrifice (the Sacrifice of the Mass), or any of the external helps of religion, he can save his soul. Place a man in the very capital of Christianity (Rome), let him live in the

very house of God ...without knowledge of the Christian doctrine, everything else that religion offers will be useless." (*Allocutions*, pp. 12 and 110) There is an old saying in pedagogy (the science of child education): "The best guarantee of normal maturity is normal childhood." (*The Normal Mind: The Wholesome Personality* by William H. Burnham) This is also true in the spiritual sense, for the best guarantee of having a faithful and devout Catholic adult is for the child to have a normal Catholic childhood.

This leads us to another special point – **the importance of establishing religious customs in the home.** Adding customs to children's catechism and prayer will help them to understand that there is so much more to the Catholic Faith than simply going to Mass on Sunday morning. Many Catholic customs that are adopted depend upon a family's ethnic background, but some general customs have flourished worldwide throughout the entire Church. Here are a few examples of such customs:

The Blessing of Children – This custom may seem strange and possibly uncalled for by

some, who believe that only the priest or bishop may bless. While the priest blesses various things officially in the name of the Church, the father (or mother) of a family may and should bless his children. We have examples of this in the Old Testament when Isaac blessed his son, Jacob (*Gen. 27: 23*) and when Jacob, before his death, blessed the sons of Joseph (*Gen. 48*). It is also related in the life of the Little Flower that her father would bless her and her sisters often by making a simple sign of the cross with his thumb on their foreheads. This is only one form. The father may choose different ways, such as simply saying a prayer (such as the Our Father) while the children stand before him. Or, he may put his hand on their heads while they kneel before him. There is also no specific time when this has to be done, but it may be a good practice to do this whenever the children leave the house. This not only confers God's blessings but also helps to keep fresh in the children's minds that God is always present and always watching over them.

The Sign of the Cross – This is so common among Catholics that most might not be aware that it is, in fact, a custom. The

Sign of the Cross before and after our prayers is a powerful profession of our faith in the Triune God and our Redemption through Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. Children should learn early on that they should not make it hurriedly but at a reasonable pace and with much thought and attention. They should also learn not to be afraid to make the Sign of the Cross in public. Our Lord wants them to be a light on top of a mountain shining forth His love and mercy to the whole world.

Giving children a saint's name when they are baptized is a very ancient custom within the Church, and it should not be overlooked. Consider that a person's name is his most valuable possession in this world because this is how he is identified to the world and to himself. The day a child is baptized is the most important day in his life because this is the day when he becomes a child of God. To name the child after a saint creates a special bond, or a connection, between him and his patron. Children should be taught to emulate their patron saint's virtues, considering them as role models. They should pray to them daily for their help and intercession with God.

Finally, you should often pray that your children embrace that specific vocation to which God has called them. Coupled with forming good praying habits, diligently learning the Catechism, and performing the various customs, parents must talk to their children about the different vocations. The seriousness of this cannot be overstressed, especially if their children have a calling to a religious vocation. Remember, you cannot love what you do not know! If your children do not know anything about religious life, you must begin to inform them. You should not try to pressure the children into a vocation, that would be

wrong, but you should gently explain to them the various ways by which a person may please God. You do not have to talk about it all the time, but perhaps a few times a year, keeping the possibility in the children's minds. Perhaps when you come together to say your family Rosary, make a special intention for religious vocations. The only way that your children will be truly happy in this life is if they do God's Will. Giving your children as complete of an education in the faith as possible will help them to become true imitators of Christ.



*Available on our YouTube Channel: Order of St. Francis of Assisi,
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*If you have any questions, please contact us
at aimhigher.podcast@gmail.com*

THE LITTLE CATECHISM OF THE CURÉ OF ARS

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



CHAPTER ELEVEN CATECHISM ON THE REAL PRESENCE

Our Lord is hidden there, waiting for us to come and visit Him, and make our request to Him. See how good He is! He accommodates Himself to our weakness. In Heaven, where we shall be glorious and triumphant, we shall see Him in all His glory. If He had presented Himself before us in that glory now, we should not have dared to approach Him; but He hides Himself, like a person in a prison, who might say to us, "You do not see me, but that is no matter; ask of me all you wish and I will grant it." He is there in the Sacrament of His love, sighing and interceding incessantly with His Father for sinners. To what outrages does He not expose Himself, that He may remain in the midst of us! He is there to console us; and therefore, we ought often to

visit Him. How pleasing to Him is the short quarter of an hour that we steal from our occupations, from something of no use, to come and pray to Him, to visit Him, to console Him for all the outrages He receives! When He sees pure souls coming eagerly to Him, He smiles upon them. They come with that simplicity which pleases Him so much, to ask His pardon for all sinners, for the outrages of so many ungrateful men. What happiness do we not feel in the presence of God, when we find ourselves alone at His feet before the holy tabernacles! "Come, my soul, redouble thy fervor; thou art alone adoring thy God. His eyes rest upon thee alone." This good Savior is so full of love for us that He seeks us out everywhere.

Ah! if we had the eyes of angels with which to see Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is here present on this altar, and who is looking at us, how we should love Him! We should never more wish to part from Him. We should wish to remain always at His feet; it would be a foretaste of Heaven: all else would become insipid to us. But see, it is faith we want. We are poor blind people; we have a mist before our eyes. Faith alone can dispel this mist. Presently, my children, when I shall hold Our Lord in my hands, when the good God blesses you, ask Him then to open the eyes of your heart; say to Him like the blind man of Jericho, "O Lord, make me to see!" If you say to Him sincerely, "Make me to see!" you will certainly obtain what you desire, because He wishes nothing but your happiness. He has His hands full of graces, seeking to whom to distribute them; alas! and no one will have them. . . . Oh, indifference! Oh, ingratitude! My children, we are most unhappy that we do not understand these things! We shall understand them well one day; but it will then be too late!

Our Lord is there as a Victim; and a prayer that is very pleasing to God is to ask the Blessed Virgin to offer to the Eternal Father her Divine Son, all bleeding, all torn, for the

conversion of sinners; it is the best prayer we can make, since, indeed, all prayers are made in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ. We must also thank God for all those indulgences that purify us from our sins. . . but we pay no attention to them. We tread upon indulgences, one might say, as we tread upon the sheaves of corn after the harvest. See, there are seven years and seven quarantines for hearing the catechism, three hundred days for reciting the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, the Salve Regina, the Angelus. In short, the good God multiplies His graces upon us; and how sorry we shall be at the end of our lives that we did not profit by them!

When we are before the Blessed Sacrament, instead of looking about, let us shut our eyes and our mouth; let us open our heart: our good God will open His; we shall go to Him, He will come to us, the one to ask, the other to receive; it will be like a breath from one to the other. What sweetness do we not find in forgetting ourselves in order to seek God! The saints lost sight of themselves that they might see nothing but God, and labor for Him alone; they forgot all created objects in order to find Him alone. This is the way to reach Heaven.

ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

An Autobiography

CHAPTER EIGHT

PROFESSION OF SÆR THÉRÈSE

In my helplessness, the Holy Scriptures and the Imitation are of the greatest assistance; I find in them a hidden manna, pure and genuine. It is from the Gospels, however, that I derive most help in the time of prayer; I find in their pages all that my poor soul needs, and I am always discovering there new lights and hidden mysterious meanings. I know and I have experienced that “The Kingdom of God is within us,”¹ that Our Master has no need of book or teacher to instruct a soul. The Teacher of teachers instructs without sound of words, and though I have never heard Him speak, yet I know He is within me, always guiding and inspiring me; and just when I need them, lights, hitherto unseen, break in upon me. As a rule, it is not during prayer that this happens, but in the midst of my daily duties.

Dear Mother, after so many graces may I not sing with the Psalmist that “the Lord is good, that His Mercy endureth forever”?² It seems to me that if every soul were to receive such favors God would be loved to excess and feared by none; I believe that every least willful fault would be avoided out of love, without thought of fear.

Yet all souls cannot be alike. They must differ, so that each divine perfection may receive special honor. To me He has manifested His INFINITE MERCY and in this resplendent mirror I contemplate His other attributes. There, each appears radiant with love — His Justice perhaps more than the rest. What a sweet joy to think that Our Lord is just — that He takes into account our weakness and knows so well the frailty of our nature. What then need I fear? Will not the God of infinite justice, who deigns to pardon lovingly the sins of the Prodigal Son, be also just to me “who am always with Him”.

In the year 1895, I received the grace to understand better than ever how much Jesus desires to be loved. While thinking one day of those who offer themselves as victims to the Justice of God, and who turn aside the punishment due to sinners, taking it upon themselves,³ I felt such an offering to be both noble and gener-

1 Luke 17:21

2 Psalms 103:1

3 This is the chief aim of the great Arch-Confraternity of the Sacred Heart Established in the Sacred Heart Basilica, Montemarte, Paris (*Rev. Thomas Taylor, Editor*)

ous. I was very far, nevertheless, from feeling myself drawn to make it, and from the depths of my heart I cried : “O my Divine Master, shall Thy Justice alone find atoning victims? Has not Thy Merciful Love need of them also? On every side it is ignored and rejected . . . those hearts on which Thou wouldst lavish it turn to creatures and seek their happiness in the miserable satisfaction of a moment, rather than cast themselves into Thy arms — into the ecstatic fires of Thy infinite Love.

“O my God, must that Love which is disdained lie hidden in Thy Heart? It seems to me that if Thou shouldst find souls offering themselves as a holocaust to Thy Love, Thou wouldst consume them rapidly and wouldst be pleased to set free those flames of infinite tenderness now imprisoned in Thy Heart. If Thy Justice which avenges itself upon earth must needs be satisfied, how much more must Thy Merciful Love desire to inflame souls, since Thy Mercy reaches even to the Heavens! O Jesus, permit that I may be that happy victim — consume Thy holocaust with the fire of Divine Love!”

Dear Mother, you who allowed me to offer myself thus to God — you know the flames of love, or rather the oceans of grace, which filled my soul when I made that Act of Oblation on June 9, 1895. Since that day love surrounds and penetrates me; at every moment God’s Merciful

Love renews and purifies me, cleansing my soul from all trace of sin. I do not fear Purgatory, for though I know I do not deserve even to enter with the Holy Souls into that place of expiation, I also know that the fire of Love is more sanctifying than the fire of Purgatory, that Jesus could not will useless suffering for us, and that He would not inspire me with the desires I feel were He not willing to fulfil them.

This is all I can tell you, my beloved Mother, of the story of your little Thérèse. You know what she is, and what Jesus has done for her, far better than she herself does, so you will forgive her for having greatly abridged the account of her religious life.

How will it end, this “History of a Little White Flower”?...

Will she be gathered in all her freshness, or will she be transplanted to other shores? ... I cannot say; but this I know, that the Mercy of God will everywhere follow her, and that she will forever bless the Mother who gave her to God. She will rejoice through eternity at being one of the flowers in that dear Mother’s crown and will sing together with her the ever-new canticle of thanksgiving and of love.

To Be Continued



FRANCISCAN SAINTS

FEBRUARY 10TH

**Venerable Juniper Vega &
Humilis Martinez**

Martyrs, First Order

In spite of the fact that for more than a century Mexico was a prey to Freemasonry and to laicism, the worst offspring of Freemasonry, it was reserved for this unfortunate country to be the first with which we associate the kingship of Christ in the sense of the new feast of Christ the King. To Mexico may also be attributed the first martyrs to Christ the King. Prominent among these are thirteen secular priests, one Augustinian, one priest of the Society of the Heart of Mary, two Jesuits, three Franciscans, and several Tertiaries.

Today we commemorate Father Juniper de la Vega and his faithful companion, Brother Humilis Martinez. Both received the habit of St. Francis in the same convent in 1901, remained together later on, suffered together for Christ, and were awarded the crown of martyrdom at the same time.

Father Juniper and Brother Humilis were both born in Mexico, the former in 1874, the latter in 1873. Juniper was another Nathaniel, a man in whom there was no guile, with a pronounced tendency towards the interior life. Humilis was impetuous by nature and possessed a tireless impulse for work.

During the persecution under the notorious Calles, both were twice cast into prison for the cause of Jesus Christ. In February, 1928, Brother Humilis wrote to his provincial: "I am in a prison which held a martyr captive before me. One can still see the traces of his blood. I am sending you a bit of ground that is saturated with his blood." On February eighth. Father Juniper was questioned in court. "How many Masses have you read?" an officer demanded. In all simplicity the Father answered: "Figure it out for yourself, for I was ordained to

the holy priesthood in 1905.” “I did not ask that,” the officer replied, “but how many Masses have you read since the prohibition was issued that no Masses be said at all?” The confessor asserted in his simple, upright manner: “If I am to tell the truth, as many Masses as I could.” That was a crime punishable with death. Both the father and the brother were again led back to prison and were fully aware of what was awaiting them.

Brother Humilis again wrote to his provincial: “I spent the entire night in humbly asking God to forgive me my sins and in recommending my soul to the ever Blessed Virgin Mary, for it is clear that we must die. You need not, however, reply to this letter, for without doubt I shall not receive the answer any more.”

During the night Father Juniper heard the confessions of his fellow prisoners. Early the next morning he cast himself upon the ground and prayed. When Brother Humilis begged him to take a little rest, since he had spent the night without any sleep, Juniper answered: “There is no longer any time to sleep; the hour has arrived to prepare for death.” And so, it happened.

The executioners soon arrived. Both confessors were forced

to board a military train. At Ecuandureo, Father Juniper was forced to alight and run. A rain of bullets followed him. Meanwhile, the rude soldiery were making sport of Brother Humilis. At Zamora he, too, was forced to alight, and was shot down in his tracks.

The funeral of the two martyrs was like a triumphal march. Father Juniper was solemnly interred at Ecuandureo, Brother Humilis at Zamora. Over the graves of both martyrs the jubilant cry of many thousands of voices could be heard repeating: “Live, Christ the King!”

ON LAICISM

1.) What are we to understand by laicism? This pestilence of our modern era consists in the determination no longer to recognize a place for God, religion, and the Church, and to eliminate them from the lives of the people and of the state. Laicism has been most unhappily successful in Mexico and in other countries. The name of God is purposely disregarded at state, political, and business sessions. It has been forgotten that God is “the blessed and only mighty, the King of kings and Lord of lords” (*1 Tim. 6:15*).

2.) How did laicism arise? At first the authority of God was

denied, as also that of His Anointed One over the nations, then the right of the Church of Christ to teach and guide the people. After that the religion of Christ was assigned to a place alongside the false creeds, and grossly subjected to civil authority. Finally, every Christian conviction was rejected. And yet, the God-man has solemnly commanded the representatives of the Church: “Going therefore, teach ye all nations” (*Matth. 28:19*). — Let us, then, be the more faithful to Christ and His Church, the more others attack them.

3.) What results are bound up with laicism? Pope Pius XI gives the answer in his encyclical of the year 1925:

“Dissension has been sown everywhere, the flame of envy and jealousy is kindled among the nations. Human society, which has rebelled against God and Christ, has been shaken, brought to the verge of perdition, and is threatened with unavoidable dissolution.” The representatives of laicism are “blind and leaders of the blind” (*Matthew 15:14*). And matters must come to a still worse turn before they will recognize the real state of things. Pray for these deluded souls, and, following in the glorious footsteps of the Mexican martyrs, take your stand unflinchingly for the rights of Christ and of His Church. Do this particularly at the same time of elections.



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Almighty and eternal God, Who didst make Thy glory known to the whole Christendom; protect the work of Thy mercy, so that Thy Church, which is spread over the world, may remain firm in its confession of Thy Name. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

HERESY

THE CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA:1910

Imprimatur +John Cardinal Farley — Archbishop of New York

V. ORIGIN, SPREAD, AND PERSISTENCE OF HERESY.

— (a) Origin of Heresy. — The origin, the spread, and the persistence of heresy are due to different causes and influenced by many external circumstances. The undoing of faith infused and fostered by God Himself is possible on account of the human element in it, namely, man's free will. The will determines the act of faith freely because its moral dispositions move it to obey God, whilst the non-cogency of the motives of credibility allows it to withhold its consent and leaves room for doubt and even denial. The non-cogency of the motives of credibility may arise from three causes: the obscurity of the Divine testimony (*inevidentia attestantis*); the obscurity of the contents of Revelation; the opposition between the obligations imposed on us by faith and the evil inclinations of our corrupt nature. To find out how a man's free will is led to withdraw from the faith once professed, the best way is observation of historical cases. Pius X, scrutinizing the causes of Modernism, says: "The proximate cause is, without any doubt, an error of the mind. The remoter causes are two: curiosity and

pride. Curiosity, unless wisely held in bounds, is of itself sufficient to account for all errors. . . . But far more effective in obscuring the mind and leading it into error is pride, which has, as it were, its home in Modernist doctrines. Through pride the Modernists overestimate themselves. . . . We are not like other men . . . they reject all submission to authority . . . they pose as reformers. If from moral causes we pass to the intellectual, the first and most powerful is ignorance They extol modern philosophy completely ignoring the philosophy of the Schools and thus depriving themselves of the means of clearing away the confusion of their ideas and of meeting sophisms. Their system, replete with so many errors, hail its origin in the wedding of false philosophy with faith" (Encycl. "Pascendi", 8 September, 1907).

So far the pope. If now we turn to the Modernist leaders for an account of their defections, we find none attributing it to pride or arrogance, but they are almost unanimous in allowing that curiosity — the desire to know how the old faith stands in relation to the new science — has been the motive power behind them. In the last instance, they appeal to

the sacred voice of their individual conscience which forbids them outwardly to profess what inwardly they honestly hold to be untrue. Loisy, to whose case the Decree "Lamentabili" applies, tells his readers that he was brought to his present position "by his studies chiefly devoted to the history of the Bible, of Christian origins and of comparative religion". Tyrrell says in self-defence: "It is the irresistible facts concerning the origin and composition of the Old and New Testaments; concerning the origin of the Christian Church, of its hierarchy, its institutions, its dogmas; concerning the gradual development of the papacy; concerning the history of religion in general — that create a difficulty against which the synthesis of scholastic theology must be and is already shattered to pieces." "I am able to put my finger on the exact point or moment in my experience from which my 'immanentism' took its rise. In his 'Rules for the Discernment of Spirits' . . . Ignatius of Loyola says . . . etc." It is psychologically interesting to note the turning-point or rather the breaking-point of faith in the autobiographies of seceders from the Church. A study of the personal narratives in "Roads to Rome" and "Roads from Rome" leaves one with the impression that the heart of man is a sanctuary impenetrable to all but to God and, in a certain measure, to its owner. It is, therefore, advisable to leave individuals to themselves and to study

the spread of heresy, or the origin of heretical societies.

(b) Spread of Heresy. — The growth of heresy, like the growth of plants, depends on surrounding influences, even more than on its vital force. Philosophies, religious ideals and aspirations, social and economic conditions, are brought into contact with revealed truth, and from the impact result both new affirmations and new negations of the traditional doctrine. The first requisite for success is a forceful man, not necessarily of great intellect and learning, but of strong will and daring action. Such were the men who in all ages have given their names to new sects. The second requisite is accommodation of the new doctrine to the contemporary mentality, to social and political conditions. The last, but by no means the least, is the support of secular rulers. A strong man in touch with his time, and supported by material force, may deform the existing religion and build up a new heretical sect. Modernism fails to combine into a body separate from the Church because it lacks an acknowledged leader, because it appeals to only a small minority of contemporary minds, namely, to a small number who are dissatisfied with the Church as she now is, and because no secular power lends it support. For the same reason, and proportionately, a thousand small sects have failed, whose names still encumber the pages of Church History, but whose tenets interest only a few

students, and whose adherents are nowhere. Such were, in the Apostolic Age, the Judeo-Christians, Judeo-Gnostics, Nicolaites, Docetæ, Cerinthians, Ebionites, Nazarenes, followed, in the next two centuries, by a variety of Syrian and Alexandrian Gnostics, by Ophites, Marcionites, Encratites, Montanists, Manichæans, and others. All the early Eastern sects fed on the fanciful speculations so dear to the Eastern mind, but, lacking the support of temporal power, they disappeared under the anathemas of the guardians of the *depositum fidei*.

Arianism (q. v.) is the first heresy that gained a strong footing in the Church and seriously endangered its very nature and existence. Arius appeared on the scene when theologians were endeavoring to harmonize the apparently contradictory doctrines of the unity of God and the Divinity of Christ. Instead of unravelling the knot, he simply cut it by bluntly asserting that Christ was not God like the Father, but a creature made in time. The simplicity of the solution, the ostentatious zeal of Arius for the defense of the "one God", his mode of life, his learning and dialectic ability won many to his side. "In particular he was supported by the famous Eusebius of Nicomedia who had great influence on the Emperor Constantine. He had friends among the other bishops of Asia and even among the bishops, priests, and

nuns of the Alexandrian province. He gained the favor of Constantia, the emperor's sister, and he disseminated his doctrine among the people by means of his notorious book which he called 'Entertainment' and by songs adapted for sailors, millers, and travelers." (Addis and Arnold, "A Catholic Dictionary", 7th ed., 1905, 54.) The Council of Niciæa anathematized the heresiarch, but its anathemas, like all the efforts of the Catholic bishops, were nullified by interference of the civil power. Constantine and his sister protected Arius and the Arians, and the next emperor, Constantius, assured the triumph of the heresy: the Catholics were reduced to silence by dire persecution. At once an internecine conflict began within the Arian pale, for heresy, lacking the internal cohesive element of authority, can only be held together by coercion either from friend or foe. Sects sprang up rapidly: they are known as Eunomians, Anomœans, Exucontians, Semi-Arians, Acacians. The Emperor Valens (364-378) lent his powerful support to the Arians, and the peace of the Church was only secured when the orthodox Emperor Theodosius reversed the policy of his predecessors and sided with Rome. Within the boundaries of the Roman empire the faith of Niciæa, enforced again by the General Council of Constantinople (381), prevailed, but Arianism held its own for over two hundred years longer wherever

the Arian Goths held sway: in Thrace, Italy, Africa, Spain, Gaul. The conversion of King Recared of Spain, who began to reign in 586, marked the end of Arianism in his dominions, and the triumph of the Catholic Franks sealed the doom of Arianism everywhere.

Pelagianism, not being backed by political power, was without much difficulty removed from the Church. Eutychianism, Nestorianism, and other Christological heresies which followed one upon another as the links of a chain, flourished only so long and so far as the temporal power of Byzantine and Persian rulers gave them countenance. Internal dissensions, stagnation, and decay became their fate when left to themselves. Passing over the great schism that rent East from West, and the many smaller heresies which sprang up in the Middle Ages without leaving a deep impression on the Church, we arrive at the modern sects which date from Luther and go by the collective name of Protestantism (q. v.). The three elements of success possessed by Arianism reappear in Lutheranism and cause these two great religious upheavals to move on almost parallel lines. Luther was eminently a man of his people: the rough-hewn; but withal sterling, qualities of the Saxon peasant lived forth under his religious habit and doctor's gown; his winning voice, his piety, his learning raised him above his fellows yet

did not estrange him from the people: his conviviality, the crudities in his conversation and preaching, his many human weaknesses only increased his popularity. When the Dominican John Tetzel began to preach in Germany the indulgences proclaimed by Pope Leo X for those who contributed to the completion of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, opposition arose on the part of the people and of both civil and ecclesiastical authorities. Luther set the match to the fuel of widespread discontent. He at once gained a number of adherents powerful both in Church and State; the Bishop of Würzburg recommended him to the protection of the Elector Frederick of Saxony. In all probability Luther started on his crusade with the laudable intention of reforming undoubted abuses. But his unexpected success, his impetuous temper, perhaps some ambition, soon carried him beyond all bounds set by the Church. By 1521, that is within four years from his attack on abuse of indulgences, he had propagated a new doctrine; the Bible was the only source of faith; human nature was wholly corrupted by original sin, man was not free, God was responsible for all human actions good and bad; faith alone saved; the Christian priesthood was not confined to the hierarchy but included all the faithful. The masses of the people were not slow in drawing from these doctrines the practical conclusion that sin was

sin no longer, was, in fact, equal to a good work.

With his appeal to the lower instincts of human nature went an equally strong appeal to the spirit of nationality and greed. He endeavored to set the German emperor against the Roman pope and generally the Teuton against the Latin; he invited the secular princes to confiscate the property of the Church. His voice was heard only too well. For the next 130 years the history of the German people is a record of religious strife, moral degradation, artistic retrogression, industrial breakdown; of civil wars, pillage, devastation, and general ruin. The Peace of 1648 established the principle: *Cujus regio illius et religio*; the lord of the land shall be also lord of religion. And accordingly territorial limits became religious limits within which the inhabitant had to profess and practice the faith imposed on him by the ruler. It is worthy of remark that the geographical frontier fixed by the politicians of 1648 is still the dividing line between Catholicism and Protestantism in Germany. The English Reformation, more than any other, was the work of crafty politicians. The soil had been prepared for it by the Lollards or Wycliffites, who at the beginning of the sixteenth century were still numerous in the towns. No English Luther arose, but the unholy work was thoroughly done by kings and parliaments, by means of a series

of penal laws unequalled in severity.

(c) Persistence of Heresy. — We have seen how heresy originates and how it spreads; we must now answer the question why it persists, or why so many persevere in heresy. Once heresy is in possession it tightens its grip by the thousand subtle and often unconscious influences which mould a man's life. A child is born in heretical surroundings: before it is able to think for itself its mind has been filled and fashioned by home, school, and church teachings, the authority of which it never doubted. When, at a riper age, doubts arise, the truth of Catholicism is seldom apprehended as it is. Innate prejudices, educational bias, historical distortions stand in the way and frequently make approach impossible. The state of conscience technically termed *bona fides*, good faith, is thus produced. It implies inculpable belief in error, a mistake morally unavoidable and therefore always excusable, sometimes even laudable. In the absence of good faith worldly interests often bar the way from heresy to truth. When a government, for instance, reserves its favors and functions for adherents of the state religion, the army of civil servants becomes a more powerful body of missionaries than the ordained ministers. Prussia, France, and Russia are cases in point.

To Be Continued

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