

THE SERAPH

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The Children's Annual Retreat



St. Joseph's Mission in Union, KY
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Contents

| | |
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| The Gift of a Retreat | 1 |
| The Inner Voice | 2 |
| Simply Answered | 5 |
| The Birth of the Holy Roman Empire | 8 |
| The Communist Threat | 13 |
| The Catholic Mother to Her Children | 18 |
| The Little Catechism of the Cure of Ars | 22 |
| The Sunday Sermon: The Nativity of the B.V.M. | 24 |
| St. Therese of Lisieux | 27 |
| Franciscan Saints | 30 |

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In ómnibus - Caritas.*

THE GIFT OF A RETREAT

Sister Catherine, TOR

St. Joseph's Mission in Union, Kentucky, held its 8th Annual Children's Retreat this past summer. There were close to forty children in attendance, plus parents and grandparents. We even had children returning from Wisconsin, Ohio, and New York.

The purpose of these retreats is to cultivate the souls of Catholics – especially our youth - today. It is a time to leave all of our daily distractions behind and be a part of something far more significant. A children's retreat is a chance for the children to learn about God outside their Sunday Mass routine and catechism lessons. It is a chance to be with others of the same faith and discover that we can love God in everything we do – even when we play. Needless to say, the opportunity to participate in a retreat is truly a gift.

This year's retreat focused on the Season of Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. Each day started with Holy Mass, including a short sermon by Father Anthony, OFM. After Mass, the children played outdoors while breakfast was being prepared. Following breakfast, Father Anthony told a story with the help of his new friend, Chesterton, the Catechism Dragon. Then the children were split into groups to work on various activities tied to the theme. Some of the activities were:

- ◆ Learning how to sing the Litany of the Saints.
- ◆ Making pretzels - a popular food item for the Season of Lent.
- ◆ There were several arts, crafts and games, such as making a Holy Week Wreath, Easter Garland Banner, and an Easter Egg Hunt. Each craft had a lesson for the children to make it a truly educational experience.
- ◆ Attended Benediction followed by a procession outdoors which ended with everyone gathering around the Blessed Mother statue singing Jesus Christ is Risen Today.

If you would like more information about future retreats, please email: sistercatherine.tor@gmail.com

THE INNER VOICE

Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD

Silent prayer is more challenging than it sounds, but it is necessary for everyone to learn. At the children's retreat this year in Kentucky, we placed these ideas before the children. Being still and quiet in Church is quite difficult when we don't understand and are bored. It does not help when adults tell us to sit still and be quiet. In this case, coming to God's House seems like a punishment. This is the last idea we want children to form in their minds. One of the many things we practiced was various ways of greeting Jesus. We practiced making proper genuflections to Jesus in the Tabernacle. We also practiced saying "hello" to Jesus – using our inner voices in Church, inside voices in the vestibule or sacristy, and outside voices outside.

In God's House, Jesus is really and truly present in the Holy Eucharist in the Tabernacle. He is God. He is the King of kings. The Church is not a morgue. It is not the dead Body of Jesus in the Tabernacle, but rather, the Living God -- True God and

True Man. The somberness can be unsettling to those without faith or those whose faith is in development. If this is what Heaven will be like, very few are genuinely interested.

The solution is not to change the Mass into a festive party but instruct and cultivate true faith and devotion. We encourage people to follow along in their Missals with the Sacrifice of the Mass. But, the Mass is also for the illiterate and children. There is usually artwork in the Church to offer instruction or inspiration to those who cannot read. We are all encouraged to look at the artwork and find inspiration and guidance for our lives. The difficult part is to be quiet and still.

God has given us life and energy, which is super-abundant in children. Adults should strive to remember that this energy is good; it only needs to be guided and directed, not crushed. Parents often speak to children about using their "inside voices." When we are out of doors, we may raise our voices as loud

as we like; we can run, play, and burn up a lot of energy. When inside, we need to quiet our voices and activities just a little so we do not disturb the household. In this way, we show respect, consideration, and love for those around us. Sometimes we need frequent reminders until controlling our auditory volume becomes a habit. We then learn to whisper when the baby is sleeping or when we are in a library.

The next step is learning to keep our voices and bodies still in God's House. Just because our bodies and our tongues are supposed to be still does not mean that we are doing nothing. Quite the contrary, the less physical movement, the greater should be the spiritual movements. Most people do not realize that spiritual work is much harder than physical work. Praying with our hearts and minds is much harder than simply praying with our lips and tongues. That is why so many suffer distractions in their prayers and often deserve the rebuke of worshiping God with their lips while their hearts are far from Him. True prayer happens when we control our thoughts and desires.

To truly pray, we direct our thoughts or inner voice to speak with God. This inner prayer is seen and heard by God but not by others. This is good because it helps us to steer clear of pride and vanity, which we easily fall into when we pray before others. Our merits and prayers are not measured compared to others, but with the love and effort we bring individually to God. One person's best prayer is as worthy as another person's best prayer. Our capabilities are different, and we have various capacities to love, but they are all acceptable to God when each gives his all. A drum can hold more than a thimble, but neither a full drum nor a full thimble can hold even a drop more. They are both equally full.

Prayer is not just speaking to God. It is also listening to Him. He speaks to us through our conscience or our Guardian Angels. Children must often be reminded to stop, pay attention, and listen. In the Spiritual Life, we are all children; in our prayers, we sometimes need to remind ourselves to be quiet and listen. Our petitions are good and necessary, but sometimes it is better to listen and quietly adore God.

It appears that many are unable to control their thoughts or desires. We are easily directed by the whims of others in advertisements, music, videos, fashions, etc. Our waking hours are often filled to the last minute with constant noise. We cannot leave all the electronics off and set aside books, papers, and magazines for even a few moments. We may be afraid of our own thoughts, and we cannot stand to be left alone with ourselves. The silence of solitary confinement is considered torture. In silence, we begin to look inwardly and listen to the voice of our consciences. Most cannot live with their own consciences, so they turn to any means possible to silence or drown out their own consciences with noise or distractions of any kind.

Most addictions and depressions originate in trying to silence our consciences rather than correct or conform our lives with right reason, truth,

and faith. Our inner voice was created and given to us by God. He wants us to learn to use it to speak and worship Him in mental prayer, along with using our voices as well from time to time. Occasionally, He also wants us to still ourselves entirely so that we can hear Him. In these times, we must still and quiet our bodies, lips, and tongues, as well as our souls, thoughts, and desires.

This is a lot to ask, but it is never too much to ask when speaking of loving and serving God. We must strive to do our best and then seek to do better the next time. If we can first still our bodies in Church, then we can strive not to talk or whisper in Church either. When we have accomplished this, or simultaneously with achieving this, we can learn to speak with God in mental prayer. Next, we can strive to quiet our inner voices to listen to God, our consciences, and our Guardian Angels.



SIMPLY ANSWERED

Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD

We are often presented with the question of whether we are with “the Pope.” The simple answer is “Yes. We are with the Pope.” We are with all the genuine and legitimate popes throughout history.

Difficulties arise when we are presented with questions such as: “Are you with Pope Francis?” The simple answer to that question is: “No, we are not in union with the person who is known throughout the world as ‘Pope Francis.’” “Pope Francis” (Jorge Bergoglio) is considered a non-Catholic and anti-Pope.

This position is frequently called “Sede Vacante” (Empty Chair). It means that the See of St. Peter is vacant. It does not mean we reject popes or are not in union with popes.

The New Church created at the “Vatican II Council” is a false Church that is more in conformity with Protestantism and Freemasonry than with the true One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church established by Jesus Christ. A new non-Catholic religion was formed by creating a new rite of “Mass” and “Sacraments” that

are less objectionable to non-Catholics. This new religion retained the use of some Catholic terminology and physical properties but rejected some of the Faith, Doctrine, and morals of the true Catholic Church, which was offensive to non-Catholics. The desire for unity is good, but the Truth cannot be compromised. True unity can only come when everyone believes *all* that Jesus Christ has taught us through the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. There cannot be Protestant freedom to pick and choose what we want and what we reject. To be truly Catholic, we must believe *all* (everything) that the true Church teaches and believes because it is God, Himself Who teaches us through the true Church.

With the establishment of a new church and a new religion came the betrayal of most of the once-Catholic Hierarchy. When they ceased to be genuinely Catholic or became Catholic in name only, they ceased to have any authority in the true Church. Non-Catholic Cardinals or bishops cannot elect a Catholic Pope; they can

only elect and elevate a non-Catholic hierarchy in their new non-Catholic religion and church. Possession of once-Catholic property and real estate does not make people Catholic. The Catholic Church is determined by faith, doctrines, and morals, not worldly possessions or control. Freemasons possessing and ruling the Vatican are not, thereby, Catholic.

We have a historical precedent of this on a more limited scale in the loss of the Catholic Faith in England under King Henry VIII. All of England, including once-Catholic priests, bishops, and cardinals, became non-Catholics almost overnight. A new religion was established – The Church of England (Anglican). This new Church held onto many Catholic ideas and practices as well as Catholic terminology. The only problem is that they were no longer truly Catholic. With the change in the rites of the Sacraments came about the invalidity of their priesthood. It was not long afterward (historically speaking) that there were no true Catholic priests in the Anglican religion. All the sacraments that require true priests became invalid because there are no true priests in the Anglican Church. The loss of the priest-

hood brought about the subsequent loss of true bishops. They no doubt controlled and used once-Catholic property and real estate, but they were not Catholic. It is not the usurpation, use, or possession of once-Catholic properties that makes someone Catholic.

The same can be said of many “Traditionalists” who “saved” religious articles (books, altars, tabernacles, chalices, ciborium, vestments, statues, etc.) from the “Vatican II renewal” (revolution) of the once-Catholic Churches, convents, seminaries, libraries, etc. Saving these material things does not save the Church or the faith. It seems that Materialism found its way into the new Modern Church and into the hearts of many “Traditionalists” striving to “save” the Church. It is not the material things we have or use that make us Catholic. We are genuinely Catholic by embracing the true Catholic Faith, Doctrine, and morals.

Pope Pius XII was the last pope before the “Vatican II Council.” We hold him to be the last true Roman Catholic Pope. Our intention and goal is to be faithful to what He has left us as the latest in the succession of true popes. We accept the papacy and consider ourselves defenders of the true

popes. The Modernists Materialists usurping the property and titles of the papacy are the real deniers of the popes.

It is not the possessions and riches of this world that make us true followers of Jesus Christ. It is not the possessions and riches of this world that make us true Catholics. Only by believing and following all

that Jesus Christ has taught us can we become genuine followers of Jesus Christ or true Catholics. In the face of the Modernist Materialists and the Traditionalist Materialists, we say with Jesus Christ, “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven” (Saint Matthew 5: 3).



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THE BIRTH OF THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

Father Anthony Lentz, OFM

Christian Doctrine vs. Pagan Misconception

I apologize because it has been a while since I have written an article for this series. Truly, one of the hardest things about writing a historical work is trying to decide which things to leave out. That is why there are historical biographies so that we can have a more in-depth look into the life, accomplishments, failures, and beliefs of an individual person, an era in history, or a civilization. Within the article format, a topic such as this requires more of an outlined approach. This will help us reach our final conclusion without getting bogged down by superfluous information. Historical analysis is a lot like a novel in this way; you have to keep it moving. If I miss anything a critic may have found to be important, he should take the task upon himself and write about it. Please do not take me for being rude. I only write this for my benefit because I am that critic. I will never get anything written if I do not check my criticism occasionally.

Let us now return to this historical unraveling.

You can imagine that the Roman pagan's opinion of the early Christians was not a flattering one, and, in fact, it was calumnious. The hatred that swelled throughout the Roman Empire touched the heart of the average pagan. Of course, Christianity was not the only foreign religion the Romans had encountered. While the Roman legions were conquering the known world, they were exposed to various beliefs and practices. These differences influenced Roman culture and its pseudo-spirituality. For example, the Roman pageantry of gods was merely, in truth, the Greek gods with different names. The issue that made Christianity stand out was its intolerance of all false religions, which declared that adoration to false idols and gods was a sin. This sort of view would certainly have aroused the anger and hatred of those who made these statues or idols,

those who bred and sold animals for sacrifices, and those pagan priests who would have shared in the profits. In short, it was detrimental to their business. Such open persecution forced the Christians to pray and worship God in secret. They would have to come together in secluded places, like the catacombs, and they would have to conduct their worship either in the early or late-night hours. Having to adopt this clandestine method also produced greater calumnies. In the pagan mind, if the Christians had to worship secretly, they must be performing illicit practices. There were horrible rumors that the Christians were sorcerers and magicians who performed black magic. They were accused of eating children and drinking their blood, a perversion of the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist.

Found in the extent work titled *Octavius* by Marcus Minucius Felix, a Roman lawyer, and Christian, there is recorded a dialogue between the pagan Caecilius Natalis and the Christian Octavius Januarius, a friend of the author. In the course of this dialogue, Caecilius gives the following description of the Christians and, thus, sums up the pagan attitude towards the Church of Christ:

“The Christians are men of a desperate, lawless, reckless, faction, who collect together out of the lowest rabble the thoughtless portions, and credulous women seduced by the weakness of their sex, and form a mob of impure conspirators, whose bond of union is nocturnal assemblies and solemn fastings and unnatural food. A tribe lurking and light-hating, dumb for the public, talkative in corners, they despise our temples as if graves, spit at our gods, deride our religious forms; pitiable themselves, they pity, forsooth, our priests; half-naked themselves, they despise our honors and purple; monstrous folly and incredible impudence! Day after day their abandoned morals wind their serpentine course; over the whole world are those most hideous rights of an impious association growing in shape. They recognize each other by marks and signs, and love each other almost before they recognize each other; promiscuous lust is their religion. Thus does their vain and mad superstition glory in crimes. Why their mighty effort to hide and shroud whatever it is they worship, since things honest ever like the open day, and crimes are secret? Why have they not altars, no temples, no image known to us, never

“speak in public, never assemble freely, were it not that what they worship and suppress is subject either of punishment or of shame?”

It is interesting to note Caecilius's “holier than thou” attitude. He speaks of good morals and right order and professes that Christians have none of these things. He obviously was never exposed to the Epistles of St. Paul, a Roman citizen. In his letter to the Romans (rather ironic!), St. Paul teaches: *“Let us walk honestly, as in the day: not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ: and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscence.”* (Romans 13:14)

A skeptic could argue that it is all “very well and good” for me, as a Catholic, to criticize pagan Rome’s opinion of the Church without explaining the Church’s position during this era. I suppose they would be correct, and it would be beneficial for the reader to see how, in essence, the Catholics have always held certain core beliefs.

There were many great defenders of the Faith during this era. Those men used their lively faith and erudite intellect to

defend the Church’s position. One of these men who stands out in history and who will vindicate me from my imaginary opponent is St. Justin Martyr.

St. Justin was a *“Christian apologist, born at Flavia Neapolis, about A.D. 100, converted to Christianity about A.D. 130, taught and defended the Christian religion in Asia Minor, and at Rome, where he suffered martyrdom about the year 165.”* (taken from *The Catholic Encyclopedia* 1917)

St. Justin wrote numerous works about the Faith, many of which still exist. His masterwork, his “*pièce de résistance*,” in defense of the Church of Christ, was his *First Apology*. It was addressed to Emperor Antonius Pius. Within it, St. Justin first addresses all of the accusations slurred against the Church, then gives an exposé upon various points of Sacred Scripture and Catholic doctrine and practices.

Here is an excerpt concerning the Catholic doctrine concerning the Eucharist:

“And this food is called among us Εὐχαριστία [the Eucharist], of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been

washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration, and who is so living as Christ has enjoined. For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Savior, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His Word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus Who was made flesh. For the apostles, in the memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them; that Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, said, This do in remembrance of Me, (St. Luke 22:19) this is My body; and that, after the same manner, having taken the cup and given thanks, He said, This is My

blood; and gave it to them alone. Which the wicked devils have imitated in the mysteries of Mithras, commanding the same thing to be done. For, that bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated, you either know or can learn.”

St. Justin dreamed of a day when the Catholic Church could practice freely. It would be 148 years after his death that this would occur. It was not God’s Will that the Church should merely be allowed to exist, but that it would overcome paganism and become the religion of the Roman Empire. This was to be the great task of the Roman Emperor Constantine. During this time, it would also be the task of the popes, bishops, and Church fathers to defend the Church against the Arian heresy. A heresy that almost destroyed the Church and the possibility of the Holy Roman Empire.

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THE COMMUNIST THREAT

Father Joseph Noonan, OFM

Part Twenty-One: The Undermining of Education

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

1976

Childhood in China, a book edited by William Kessen (Yale University Press: New Haven, Connecticut, 1976), was reviewed by Kent Garland Burit of *The Christian Science Monitor*. The following excerpts from Burit's review provide insight into the similarities of education in Communist China in 1973 and Skinnerian Effective School Research used in American restructuring in the 1980s and 1990s:

They were well-behaved, non aggressive with peers....

The immediate yielding to a teacher's request seemed remarkable to the Americans....

The strategies and communication style of the teachers is also described. They initiate, supervise closely, and terminate all activities. They teach

by repetition and by formula. Their verbal and nonverbal indications of approval are in a high ratio to indications of disapproval. They discipline through persuasion and moralistic reasoning rather than punishment. They exude a confident expectation of their pupils' compliance and cooperation....

The curriculum is saturated with ideological goals, the team reported. The child is exposed to repeated exhortations to serve the society.

Charlotte Iserbyt's Note: The foregoing quote with its behavioral terminology could come from an issue of *The Effective School Report*, from which this writer has repeatedly quoted throughout this book. Education in non-violence, tolerance, peer resolution, cooperative learning, and politically-correct curriculum — all of which will modify the behavior of American children so that they will be like the above Communist Chinese children — is taking place in American schools in 1999. (See April 21, 1982

Spady quote calling for the above “compliance.”)

The Los Angeles Times of May 21, 1976 (PART 1-B) carried an article entitled “Cuban Children Combine Studies, Work” which clearly explained the communist work-study system and the impact of community service, both of which are being implemented in the United States in the 1990s. Important excerpts follow:

HAVANA (AP) —The door to the side room of an old cigar factory had been left ajar, and a small knot of children could be seen preparing boxes of cigars for export. “It’s part of our education system,” a Cuban tobacco official explained. “They are helping and learning.” The children, elementary school pupils about 9 to 11 years old, were examples of the unique Cuban educational system of combining studies with physical work. The system, started in 1967, applies to all schools, including the island’s four universities....

The Cubans say the idea is to produce well-rounded citizens capable of manual labor. But the system also provides extra hands for an economy that urgently needs more production.... Says Prime Minister Fidel Castro, “This helps to

temper them from early childhood in the habits of creative work, without running the risk of possible deformation through the exclusive exercise of intellectual activity.”...

One example of the system is found at Havana’s 1,639 pupil U.S.S.R.- Cuba technical school, so named because the Soviet Union equipped the school and trained the instructors. The students, mainly boys 14 to 17, learn how to melt metal and to mold it into machine parts. They are taught how to cast, weld, grind and operate a lathe. Girls work in laboratories, learning to operate testing equipment for metals and machine parts. The parts, produced while learning, are sent to factories that make machinery. The students themselves spend part of their time working inside the factories. The school also teaches language, culture, sports, political philosophy and ordinary school subjects....

Those who study for two years become what are called general workers for the factories, while four-year students become skilled technicians. All are guaranteed factory jobs upon graduation....

At the University of Havana, there are 54,000 students this year. Full-time students study four hours a day, six days a

week and work another four hours daily in fields, factories or at jobs related to their future careers.... Many older students fill their work requirement by teaching, to offset the teacher shortage created when hundreds of thousands of Cubans emigrated after Castro's 1959 revolution.... This commitment to working for the good of the country remains after graduation. Graduates must serve anywhere in Cuba for three years, then are allowed to return home to continue their careers.

Lawrence C. Pierce delivered a paper in 1976 entitled "*School Site Management*" to a meeting of the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies in which he referred to site-based management as an "intermediate structure between centralized school management and education vouchers." An excerpt follows:

On January 6, 1976, San Francisco School Superintendent Robert F. Alioto proposed an organizational redesign of the district that included a shift from school district to school site management. He said, in part:

I recommend that we move toward a school site management model that values staff

and a community involvement and stresses accountability. We must recognize the principal as the instructional leader of the school. We must expand the budgeting and fiscal control at each school site.... We must establish at each school site one active advisory committee which includes parents, students, and staff representatives of the school's ethnic population....

Further support for proposals to decentralize school management arises from the desire to increase public participation in school governance policies. Local control of the schools, originally instituted to make them responsive to the people, nevertheless proved to be cumbersome, and it frequently obscured the state's responsibility for providing every child with a basic education. In pursuit of greater accountability and higher professional standards, the pendulum of school government, which in the early days of this country swung toward representativeness and local control, later swung back toward greater professional autonomy and stronger executive control....

...School site management is an intermediate structure between centralized school management and educational vouchers.

Charlotte Iserbyt's Note: Read that last statement again. Twenty-one years later the carefully laid plans of the internationalist Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies are being implemented under the guise of unaccountable choice/charter schools, funded by the taxpayers. School-site management is an early term for site-based or school-based management promoted by the National Education Association in the 1980s and 1990s. Of extreme importance is the unambiguous call for the use of (need for) vouchers, which will supplant "choice," essential for the implementation of the international school-to-work agenda. The dollar amount of the voucher will depend on the school council's determination of how much it will cost to train your child to be a janitor (very little) or doctor (a lot).

Lawrence P. Grayson of the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Education, wrote "*Education, Technology, and Individual Privacy*" (ECTJ, Vol. 28, No. 3, pp. 195–208) in 1976. The following are some excerpts from this important paper which serves as a clear warning regarding the indiscriminate use of behaviorist methods and technology:

The right to privacy is based on a belief in the essential dignity and worth of the individual. Modern technological devices, along with advances in the behavioral sciences, can threaten the privacy of students. Fortunately, invasions of privacy in education have not been widespread. However, sufficient violations have been noted to warrant specific legislation and to promote a sharp increase in attention to procedures that will ensure protection of individual privacy. Technology that can reveal innermost thoughts and motives or can change basic values and behaviors, must be used judiciously and only by qualified professionals under strictly controlled conditions. Education includes individuals and educational experimentation is human experimentation. The educator must safeguard the privacy of students and their families....

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)

To Be Continued



THE MAKING OF A GOOD WILL OR TRUST:

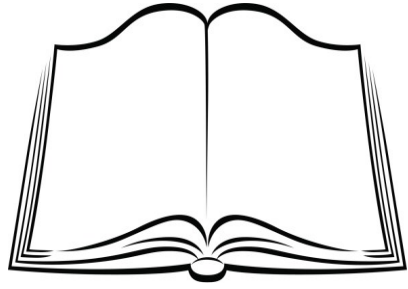
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FIRST LESSON

ON TIME: THE MOTIVES AND THE MEANS OF EMPLOYING IT WELL.

“Whatsoever thy hand is able to do, do it earnestly; for neither work no, wisdom shall be in hell, whither thou art hastening.” (Eccles. IX)

Among the many motives which should induce us to employ time well, the first is its inestimable value. For, it is a most our precious gift of God — a gift upon which we cannot set too high a value, and the loss of which is irreparable. That time, which we are apt to esteem so little, and to squander away so lavishly in vain, unprofitable, and even sinful pursuits, is far more valuable than all the treasures of gold and silver, and rich estates — than all the kingdoms of this world. For, by the good management of time, we can lay up treasures

for eternity — we can purchase a kingdom, which shall never have an end.

If we had a true idea of time — if we knew how to estimate its value, as justly as those unhappy souls do, who are now suffering in the flames of Hell, we should not need to be admonished of its value, nor exhorted to employ it well. They see now the real worth of time but it is too late! They neglected to profit by it while they had the means and the opportunity of doing so; but they lament the sad consequence of their folly, now that they are overtaken by that dismal night of eternity, *“wherein no man can work.” (John ix. 4.)*

Time is still left in our hands; yet we know not how soon

that awful moment will arrive, which is to deprive us forever of this precious treasure; and which, unless we are careful to husband well our time, will hurry us before our Judge, only to receive from Him the punishment due to our negligence!

Therefore, from the unhappy failure of others, let us learn to set a just value on the time allowed us by Almighty God, and let us learn, moreover, to labor “earnestly,” whilst it is in our power, to lay up, by means of good works, a rich store of merits for eternity; that so, instead of being cast off and punished for our slothfulness, we may deserve the reward which God promises to those who are diligent in His service. Our time is given us that we may employ it in promoting God’s glory and our own salvation, until an account of it shall be demanded from us. Let us take care, then, that we do not, like the slothful servant, bury our talent; for, if we do, we must expect to be “cast (with him) into the exterior darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” But let us be very earnest in imitating the faithful servants who made a good and profitable use of their talents, and were consequently invited to “*enter*

into the joys of their Lord.” (Mt. xxv. 14 to 30.)

Time, which is so precious a gift, remains not long in our possession; for it is exceedingly rapid in its flight: and this is another consideration, which should make us diligent in our endeavors to employ it well.

Its course is more irresistible than that of the raging torrent; its flight more rapid than the lightning’s flash. As soon as we have well begun to tread the path of life, our career is run; and we are hurried into eternity. Our hours pass away, one after another, in rapid succession; and are swallowed up in the boundless ocean of eternity; and as many of these hours, as we suffer to pass unemployed, or misemployed, are so many irrecoverably lost. Let this consideration make us more wary and diligent in the good management of our time.

As a more powerful inducement to do this, let us cast our eyes towards heaven, where the Saints, who have gone before us, are now enjoying the rewards of their good use of time. Oh! with what joy and satisfaction do they now look back on the time which they spent in the service of their Creator, in singing the praises of the Almighty, in preparing for the Sacraments, and in

adoring their Savior, during the celebration of the Sacred Mysteries! They now experience, with David, how *“one day spent in the courts of the Lord, is to be esteemed above thousands passed in the tents of sinners.”* (Ps. lxxxiii. 11.)

Let us regulate our ideas of time according to what theirs are; and let us employ it henceforth in such a manner, as that we may render ourselves worthy to receive that reward for our good use of time, which they are now enjoying.

But this cannot be effected without labor and perseverance. For the distance between us, and the mountain of perfection which we have to ascend, is very great; and the time, which we have for ascending thither is very great. We must not, therefore, loiter; nor squander away our time in such things as are nothing to the purpose. For the day of our life will soon be passed; and that night, wherein no man can work, will come quickly upon us, and prevent us from pursuing our journey. Whilst others, then, sacrifice their time to pleasures, to amusements, to *“treasuring up for themselves wrath against the day of wrath”* (Rom. ii. 5),

let us manage ours with diligence, and the strictest economy.

For, in due time, God will examine our works, and require a strict account of our time; and what shall we be able to say then, if we now squander it away in idle amusements; or if we perform our actions through mere habit, necessity, or inclination, rather than in obedience to the Will of God; or if the faculties of our mind, and the powers of our body, are wasted solely on affairs of the present life, rather than employed in loving and serving our Creator, and saving our immortal soul?

If we now look back upon the past year, can we say that we have employed our time well — that we have discharged the duties of our state of life faithfully — that we have given due time to prayer, meditation, preparing for the Sacraments, and our other spiritual duties, — in fine, that we have given to God all that was due to Him? If not, let us resolve to do so now at least; let us endeavor to redeem the time we have already lost, by being more watchful and diligent in future, by giving ourselves up to the performance of good works, — and by discharging faithfully all our religious duties; — in a

word, by making all the time we have remaining conducive to our eternal welfare, performing our actions with the pure intention of pleasing God.

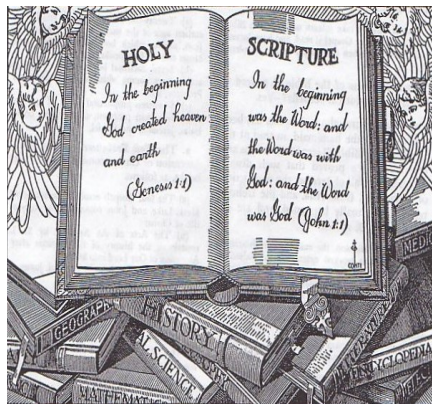
And then, when the angel of death shall proclaim, that time for us shall be no more, we shall be prepared to receive the summons with joy; because our days will then be full days; and we shall be

perfected in virtue, and in every good work.

We may then say with St. Paul: *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Hence forth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, will give me in that day; and not to me only, but to all them that love His appearing.”*

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THE LITTLE CATECHISM OF THE CURÉ OF ARS

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



CHAPTER SIXTEEN CATECHISM ON PURITY

That we may understand how horrible and detestable is this sin, which the demons make us commit, but which they do not commit themselves, we must consider what a Christian is. A Christian, created in the image of God, redeemed by the Blood of a God! a Christian, the child of God, the brother of a God, the heir of a God! a Christian, whose body is the temple of the Holy Ghost; that is what sin dishonors. We are created to reign one day in Heaven, and if we have the misfortune to commit this sin, we become the den of the devils. Our Lord said that nothing impure should enter into His kingdom. Indeed, how could a soul that has rolled itself in this filth go to appear before so pure and so holy a God?

We are all like little mirrors, in which God contemplates Himself. How can you expect that God should recognize His likeness in an impure soul? There are some souls so dead, so rotten, that they lie in their defilement without perceiving it, and can no longer clear themselves from it; everything leads them to evil, everything reminds them of evil, even the most holy things; they always have these abominations before their eyes; like the unclean animal that is accustomed to live in filth, that is happy in it, that rolls itself and goes to sleep in it, that grunts in the mud; these persons are an object of horror in the eyes of God and of the holy angels. See, my children, Our Lord was crowned with thorns to expiate our sins of

pride; but for this accursed sin, He was scourged and torn to pieces, since He said Himself that after his flagellation all His bones might be counted.

O my children, if there were not some pure souls here and there, to make amends to the good God, and disarm His justice, you would see how we should be punished! For now, this crime is so common in the world that it is enough to make one tremble. One may say, my children, that Hell vomits forth its abominations upon the earth, as the chimneys of the steam engine vomit forth smoke. The devil does all he can to defile our soul, and yet our soul is everything. . .our body is only a heap of corruption: go to the cemetery to see what you love, when you love your body.

As I have often told you, there is nothing so vile as the impure soul. There was once a saint, who had asked the good God to show him one; and he saw that poor soul like a dead beast that has been dragged through the streets in the hot sun for a week. By only looking at a person, we know if he is pure. His eyes have an air of candor and modesty which leads you to the good God. Some people, on the contrary, look quite inflamed with passion. . .Satan places himself in their eyes to make others fall and to lead them to evil. Those who have lost their purity are like a piece of cloth stained with oil; you may wash it and dry it, and the stain always appears again: so it requires a miracle to cleanse the impure soul.



THE NATIVITY OF BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

From the Sunday Sermon Archives, 2019

Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD

“The Church in keeping a solemn festival for the birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary celebrates the dawning of redemption over the world when, after a long period of waiting, there was born she who was to be the Mother of our Savior. In memory of all that this birth implied the Church rejoices and asks God for an increase of the graces of peace bestowed on man by the mystery of the Incarnation.

This feast, which is older in the East than in the West, appears to have been introduced into the Roman liturgy at the end of the seventh century by Pope Sergius I. The date of September 8, fixed by Sergius, served last century to fix that of the Immaculate Conception on December 8.” (Introduction to today's Mass, Saint Andrew Daily Missal 1958)

All who love Jesus are not content to revere only what He said and did. We see that all that He touched and all that touched Him are made holy.

The veil that Saint Veronica used to wipe the bloody Face of Jesus became a treasured holy relic. The tassel or hem of Jesus' garment was made holy and had the power to heal the woman troubled with the issue of blood, just because He wore it. Those who heard Jesus were motivated to cry out that the breasts that nursed Jesus and the womb that bore Him are truly blessed.

All that is in any way connected to Jesus is precious to those who love Him. Hence we see that the Church honors Mary as the Mother of God. This magnificent privilege of hers did not destroy her virginity but rather sanctified it — rendering her the Virgin Mother of God. The love of the Church for Mary inspires us to seek out the date of her birth, and honor the day on which she first saw the light of day and breathed fresh air. In honoring Jesus we naturally are led to honor His Holy Mother. Pope Sergius I in the

early days of the Church gave us this date for a celebration of Mary's birth to satisfy our yearning and need to honor Jesus through her whom He loved most.

Love knows no bounds or limits. So we see that the Church sought to honor Mary from the very moment of her creation in her mother's womb, and gave us the corresponding feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8. We continue onward finding that the mother and father of Mary (Saint Ann and Saint Joachim) are likewise holy and worthy of praise. The genealogy in today's Gospel takes us back to King David and Abraham. If we continue in this line we ultimately return to God who created man. In this manner, God is praised and loved in all whom we praise, honor, and love.

Before the birth of Jesus, men looked forward to the coming of the Redeemer. Since the birth of Jesus, we look back to the day on which He came to us. We celebrate His birth, and then we look back further to celebrate His Incarnation (The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, March 25). The belief of the Church is clear that life on this earth begins at conception.

We are all made in the image and likeness of God. Our lives are meant to be holy and even sacred from the very moment of our conception. God gives life not with our births, but rather with our conception. Our birth is just one stage of our lives here on earth. The mother's womb is a sanctuary or temple where God creates life. It is in the dark recesses of the womb that miracles happen. The demons have been at work since the beginning of time trying to desecrate the sacredness of this life, the womb in which it is created by God, and of marriage which forms the best home for new life to begin and develop.

We should frequently remind ourselves and others of the holiness of life. Our lives are not our own — they belong to God. He created them, He has given rules by which they are to be lived, He will call us to an account of our lives on the Day of Judgment. Our lives need to be seen as something that is sacred, and holy. We must not only respect life but love and cherish it as a precious gift from God. We need to re-frame our perceptions of sexual reproduction. It is the work of demons that has made sexual relations dirty, crude, vulgar and base. They have

done all that they can to desecrate the holy work of God through pornography, self-abuse, promiscuous lives, prostitution, fornication, adultery, and the murder of the pre-born. The sacredness of marriage has all but been lost in our world today with divorce and re-marriage, and the scourge of anti-life “birth control”.

On this feast day of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mother,

let us renew our appreciation for the sacredness of her life that God has made. From this, let us understand that all that God has made, especially every human life is precious and sacred — other’s lives, our own lives, and all the lives that God may ever entrust to us. May we recognize the demonic assaults against the holiness of life, and wage an unrelenting war against them.



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

*From the Second Vespers for the
Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

Thy Nativity, O Virgin Mother of God, was the herald of joy to the whole world; since from thee arose the Sun of Justice, Christ Our God, Who destroying the curse, bestowed the blessing, and confounding death, rewarded us with life everlasting.

ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

An Autobiography

CHAPTER TEN A NEW COMMANDMENT

Among the numberless graces I have received this year, not the least is a deeper insight into the precept of charity. I had never before fathomed the words of Our Lord: “The second commandment is like to the first: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” I had labored above all to love God, and it was in loving Him that I discovered the hidden meaning of these other words: “Not everyone that saith to me: Lord, Lord! Shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of My Father.” This will Our Lord revealed to me through the words of His new Commandment addressed to His Apostles at the Last Supper, when He told them “to love one another as He had loved them” I set myself to find out how He had loved His Apostles, and I saw that it was not for their natural qualities, seeing they were but ignorant men, whose minds dwelt chiefly on earthly things. Yet He calls them His friends, His brethren; He desires to see them near Him in the Kingdom of His Father;

and to open this Kingdom to them He wills to die on the cross, saying: “Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

As I meditated on these divine words, I understood how imperfect was the love I bore my Sisters in religion, and that I did not love them as Our Lord does. Now I know that true charity consists in bearing all my neighbor’s defects, in not being surprised at mistakes, but in being edified at the smallest virtues. Above all else I have learnt that charity must not remain shut up in the heart, for “No man lighteth a candle and putteth it in a hidden place, nor under a bushel; but upon a candlestick, that they who come in may see the light” This candle, it seems to me, Mother, represents that charity which enlightens and gladdens, not only those who are dearest to us, but likewise all those who are of the household. In the Old Law, when God told His people to love their neighbor as themselves, He had not yet come down

upon earth; and knowing full well man's strong love of self, He could not ask anything greater. But when Our Lord gave His Apostles a new Commandment — "His own Commandment" — He not only required of us to love our neighbor as ourselves, but would have us love even as He does, and as He will do until the end of time.

O my Jesus! Thou dost never ask what is impossible; Thou knowest better than I how frail and imperfect I am; Thou knowest that I shall never love my Sisters as Thou hast loved them, unless Thou lovest them Thyself within me, my dearest Master. It is because Thou dost desire to grant me this grace, that Thou hast given a new Commandment, and dearly do I cherish it, since it proves to me that it is Thy Will to love in me all those Thou dost bid me love. When I show charity towards others I know that it is Jesus who is acting within me, and the more closely I am united to Him, the more dearly I love my Sisters.

Should I wish to increase this love, and should the devil bring before me the defects of a Sister, I hasten to look for her virtues and good motives. I call to mind that though I may have seen her fall once,

she may have gained many victories over herself which in her humility she conceals, and also that what appears to be a fault may very well, owing to the good intention that prompted it, be an act of virtue. I have all the less difficulty in persuading myself that this is so, because of my own experience.

One day, during recreation, the portress came to ask for a Sister to help her in some particular task which she mentioned. Now I had the eager desire of a child to do this very thing, and as it happened, the choice fell upon me. I began immediately to fold up our needlework, slowly enough, however, to allow my neighbor to fold hers before me, for I knew it would please her to take my place. Noticing how deliberate I was, the portress said laughingly: "Ah I thought you would not add this pearl to your crown, you were too slow." And all the community were left under the impression that I had acted according to nature.

I cannot tell you what profit I derived from this incident, and how indulgent it has made me towards others. It still keeps in check any feeling of vanity when I receive praise, for I reflect that since my small acts of virtue can be mistaken for

imperfections, why should not an imperfection be mistaken for virtue?

And I repeat with St. Paul: “To me it is a very small thing to be judged by you or by man's day. But neither do I judge myself. He that judgeth me is the Lord.” Since, therefore, the Lord is my Judge, I will try always to think leniently of others, that He may judge me leniently — or not at all, since He says: “Judge not and ye shall not be judged.”

Returning to the Holy Gospels where Our Lord explains to me clearly in what His new Commandment consists, I read in St. Matthew: “Thou have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you.”

There are, of course, no enemies in Carmel; but, after all, we have our natural likes and dislikes. We may feel drawn towards one Sister and may be tempted to go a long way round to avoid meeting another. Well, Our Lord tells me that this last is the Sister I must love and pray for, even though her manners might lead me to believe that she does not care for me. “If you love them that love you, what thanks are to you? For sinners

also love those that love them.” Nor is it enough to love; we must prove our love.

We take a natural delight in pleasing friends, but that is not charity; even sinners do the same.

Elsewhere Our Lord teaches me: “Give to everyone that asketh thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again.” To give to everyone who asks is less pleasant than to give spontaneously and of one's own accord. Again, if a thing be asked in a courteous way consent is easy, but if, unhappily, tactless words have been used, there is an inward rebellion unless we are perfect in charity. We discover no end of excuses for refusing, and it is only after having made clear to the guilty Sister how rude was her behavior, that we grant as a favor what she requires, or render a slight service which takes perhaps, one-half of the time we have lost in setting forth the difficulties and our own imaginary rights.



To Be Continued



FRANCISCAN SAINTS

SEPTEMBER 18TH

St. Joseph of Copertino

Confessor, First Order

St. Augustine says: "Do you wish to become great, then begin by being small." God often deals that way with His saints. He often permits the most glorious saints to begin in the deepest lowliness. St. Joseph of Copertino in the old kingdom of Naples is an example in point. His father was a humble carpenter, who had contracted very heavy debts and was in very straitened circumstances at the time Joseph was born. His mother was very strict with him; he used to say in later life that he made his novitiate while still a child. Nevertheless, Joseph performed additional penances and appeared to have been given a body merely for the purpose of mortifying it. Even as a child he lived in close union with God, so that he dwelt in heaven rather than on earth.

In time he was sent to learn a trade, but it was soon noticed that that was not his vocation. He was eventually invested with the habit among the Capuchins, but was soon dismissed because

of his awkwardness. The result was that his own relatives turned him out as a useless creature and a disgrace to his family. Finally, the Conventuals took pity on the young man who so humbly pleaded for admission and employed him to take care of the convent mule.

In this lowly service his virtues, especially his humility, obedience, and piety, shone forth with such brilliance that his superiors received him among the clerics, and within three years he was ordained a priest. Joseph's natural knowledge was of small account, for, his efforts at study never succeeded. But it was soon perceived that he possessed much infused knowledge, so that even great theologians marveled at it. His life was one uninterrupted union with God.

Everything in nature lifted him up to heaven and to the supernatural. Not only his spirit but also his body was so frequently raised above the earth in holy rapture and remained in that

position for so long a time, that his biographer declares he spent more than half of his religious life above the earth. Sometimes he flew to the objects of his devotion in swiftest flight. On an elevation near the convent three crosses had been erected. Repeatedly when he looked at them, he would rise in the air with a cry and fly to the cross in the center, embracing it and remaining in that position until the end of the ecstasy. On another occasion, when he visited the Basilica of St. Francis, he saw a painting of the Mother of God high up in the vault of the church; at once his body rose into the air, and he kissed the image with tender devotion.

At Holy Mass he was usually lifted in the air and remained there swaying over the altar for hours at a time. For that reason, he usually said Mass in the convent chapel rather than in the church. What impression these ecstasies made on witnesses may be deduced from the story of Duke John Frederick of Brunswick. In 1649 he once attended the Mass said by Father Joseph. He was so impressed by the ecstasy that he was convinced of the truth of Catholicity and two years later made his profession of Faith before Father Joseph himself.

Because these visions were so extraordinary, strict tests were inaugurated. God Himself permitted Joseph to be severely

tempted by the devil. Added to this, he suffered for years from dryness of heart, so that he felt completely forsaken by God. But all this bitterness could not embitter his heart; he placed it within the wound of our Savior's side and preserved peace of mind. He had no other wish but to do the Will of God.

After he had stood the test of many storms, he was again overwhelmed with sweet graces and died, in holy desire for Christ, in the convent of Osimo on September 18, 1663. Numerous miracles occurred at his grave and Pope Clement XIII canonized him in 1753.

ON THE WOUND IN THE SIDE OF CHRIST

1.) Just as St. Francis in his ardent love attracted Christ crucified to himself in the form of a seraph, so his son St. Joseph was attracted to the cross. He soared to it in marvelous flight as though his body were already possessed of the lightness of glorified bodies, and there he rested at the open wound in the side of his Lord, at the Sacred Heart Itself. Christ said: "If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all things to myself." (*John 12:32*) How is it that we are not more attracted to Him, at least in the depths of our heart? We lack the proper interior sentiments. "By two wings," says Thomas a Kempis (2:4) "is man lifted up above

earthly things, viz., by simplicity and purity. Simplicity must be in the intention, purity in the affection.” – Examine yourself, in what are you wanting?

2.) Consider what sentiments we should acquire from the wound in the side of Christ. We should draw forth the sentiments of His own Heart. “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (*Phil. 2:5*). From this Sacred Heart we should above all learn meekness and humility, that marvelous compassion which He previously explained: “Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him” (*Matthew 12:32*), and in which He hung upon the cross praying for His executioners and blasphemers. In this Sacred Heart St. Joseph placed all the bitterness that overwhelmed him before it could touch his

own heart. Act likewise, place your trials and temptations there, so that the meekness of Christ may flow out on you.

3.) Consider with what spirit we should be imbued after contemplating the wound in the side of Christ. We should bring with us zeal for the cause of Christ, to promote the honor and glory of God and to gain souls for Him. It was this zeal that burnt in the heart of the saint, to this end he directed all his prayers and works of penance. What is our zeal for the cause of God, for the salvation of our own soul and the souls of our fellowmen? How lukewarm, how indifferent we are in these matters! Go frequently to the wound in the side of Christ, and beg Him to draw you to Himself, so that the zeal of His Sacred Heart be kindled in you.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

O GOD, WHO DIDST ORDAIN ALL MEN TO BE ATTRACTED TO THY ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON, WHO WAS RAISED ABOVE THE EARTH, MERCIFULLY GRANT THAT, BY THE MERITS AND INTERCESSION OF THY SERAPHIC CONFESSOR JOSEPH, WE MAY BE RAISED BY ABOVE EARTHLY DESIRES AND DESERVE TO BE ADMITTED INTO HIS COMPANY. WHO LIVEST AND REIGNEST FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN.

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