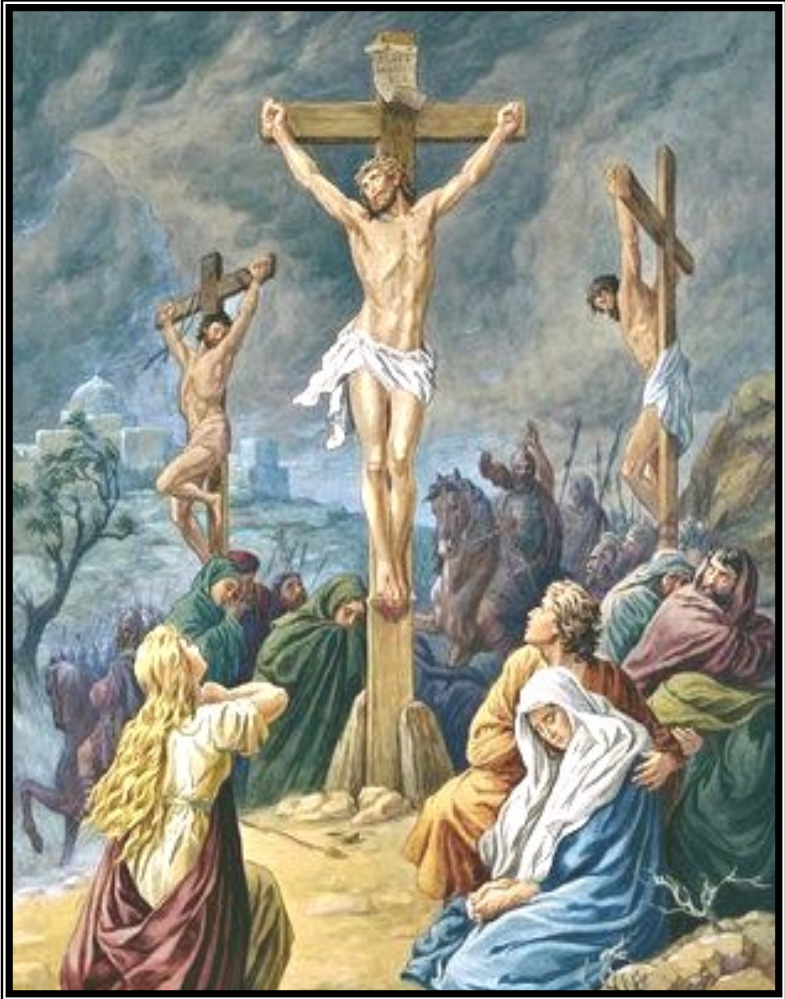


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The Crucifixion of Our Lord

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

SIMPLY ANSWERED

Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD

If God is so good, why does He allow bad things to happen?

This is a common question for non-believers. It is an attempt to mock faith in God or undermine the faith of others. On the surface, it appears to cause great difficulty without any solution. Let us examine it a little bit.

The beginning essential Catechism instructs us on the Person of God. God is pure spirit; the Creator of everything; infinite – without beginning or end; omnipresent – everywhere; omniscient – all-knowing (He knows everything, past, present, future, even our most hidden thoughts and desires); omnipotent – all-powerful (He can do anything); He is all just; all beautiful; all goodness; etc. He has every quality in its perfection.

Once we begin to understand and believe this, we are confronted with the difficulty of evil in this world. How can bad things happen if God is all-good, loves us, and can do all things?

God is the Creator of all things – both visible and invisible

(material and spiritual). The only thing that God did not make is sin. Sin or evil are not positive things but are the absence of something that should be there but is not. Darkness is the absence of light. A hole is the absence of the material that usually fills that space. Sin is the absence of virtue.

God has given every one of us free will by which we can love Him. But the ability to love God must come with the ability not to love Him as well. For Love to be loved, it must be free, and there must be the possibility of not loving.

In short, the free will choices of each of us are the causes of evil in this world. Far from causing us to doubt the existence of God, we are amazed at the wisdom of God and His love for us. He will not force us into Heaven or to love Him. We must choose Him and Heaven or reject Him and Heaven. This brings about or allows (necessitates) evils in this life but gives us the means and opportunities to bear them patiently and lovingly as Jesus did and thereby follow Him into Heaven.

God allows evil because He loves us and always draws the greater good from every evil. Every one of our crosses here on earth is a key to helping us open the Gate of Heaven for ourselves. Love that is not tested is not yet true or pure love.

Why do you worship Mary?

Adoration and worship are only offered to God. To adore or worship anyone or anything other than God is idolatry. Catholics do not worship Mary, the Mother of God. We honor her and love her because God honors her and loves her.

In Theology, we make three levels or distinctions in the honor we give our Heavenly friends. Latria is the supreme honor of worship and adoration we only give to God. Hyperdulia is the greatest honor we can give any of God's creatures. This is the honor that we give to Mary. This honor is below Latria but above the honor we give to any of the angels and saints in heaven. The next level is Dulia, which is the level of honor paid to all the angels and saints in heaven.

We do not worship any angels or humans. Nor do we worship any statues or images of angels or humans. We honor the

angels and saints in Heaven by honoring their images or statues here on earth. We know the plaster, canvas, and paint are not the angels or saints they depict. These are made to encourage us to think of them, remember them, and pray for their intercession (help). We do not pray for them to give us what we need, but rather to ask them to intercede for us before the Throne of God. They are God's special friends, and He is pleased to give them what they ask for on our behalf.

We cringe when we read or hear of some of the titles used in forbidden secret societies. There is a title of "Worshipful Master" that should make every God-fearing person run away as fast as possible. Sadly, our sensitivity in this matter has become dull. Perhaps a more common abuse is the term "adorable," which we carelessly use to describe infants, baby animals, or anything beautiful, new, innocent, etc. This is a misuse of the word because only God is adorable.

We should strive to be careful in the choice of words we use so that we do not fall into the sin of idolatry or lead others into this sin by our careless misuse of words.



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OUR CATHOLIC HISTORY: PART THREE

Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD

It is said that “no good deed goes unpunished.” It is well for us to remember this as we live our lives here on earth, as well as when we examine history.

We mentioned earlier that the devils have been around since the beginning of time, and they have constantly studied us – always with the intention of destroying any good that is in us. These demons often find willing accomplices in our fellow men – some knowingly and some unknowingly following the devils’ bidding.

As we consider the greatest good in human history, Jesus Christ, we see that the demons used every method to destroy Him. And they continue their assault upon Jesus Christ through their assault on the true Catholic Church. Men have accused Truth Itself (The Son of God) of blasphemy, of being a deceiver, etc.

The example of Jesus, when He stood before Pontius Pilate and the false accusers, is our goal and role model. He was

not shocked at the demonic assault; He was prepared for it; He expected it. He did not hate or wish harm upon the human instruments that demonic instigators were using. On the contrary, Jesus cared for them and desired their repentance and salvation. He loved his enemies and desired and did good to them.

Often, the best answer we can give to false accusations is the humble silence of Jesus. To do this well, we must also recall that the devils can only go as far as God allows them. All power and authority come from God. Demons and men may abuse the power and authority that God has entrusted to them, but they will all have to give an account for this on the Last Day.

Silence is the best response because any answer or defense gives credit to the false accuser. In addition, it is nearly impossible to prove the negative of the accusation. For example, how is a priest to prove, against false accusations, that he is not homosexu-

al? How is he to prove that he is not having an affair with a woman? How is he to prove that he is not molesting children? It is easy for those with malicious intent to dream up and spread calumnies and lies. Our modern internet/social media frenzy has only made this evil more ubiquitous.

We have suffered many attacks in silence as we pray for those who are moved and guided by unholy spirits. However, as we do this, we also realize that many others are falling for these deceptions.

With the help of God's grace, we shall attempt to answer some of the historical calumnies and half-truths waged against our predecessors. As the false accusations can be limitless, we can only respond to a few more common ones. We ask to be excused or forgiven for not giving names or origins for these as we still hope and pray for their conversion and repentance.

Some have said that Bishop Louis Vezelis OFM is evil because he practiced hypnotism. I have known and lived with Bishop Louis Vezelis OFM for over thirty years. I have never seen him hypnotize anyone during that whole

time. (Of course, the accusers can say that it is because I was hypnotized.) The only time the subject was ever brought up was in the study of human psychology. Without getting into much detail, we can state that there can be superstitious intentions with the ignorant, but with the clear-headed, we see that genuine "hypnotism" is an openness of the human mind to suggestions. In "Moral Theology" by Rev. Heribert Jone, OFM CAP., J.C.D. 1958, we read: "Hypnotism is not a sin against the worship due to God as long as it is not associated with superstitious intentions or a pantheistic philosophy of life."

Spiritual meditation is a kind of "self-hypnotism" in that we calm ourselves in prayer. We examine our spiritual life, set goals, and make resolutions. With the aid of God's grace, we rise from our meditation and put into motion those inspirations (suggestions) given to us during the meditation.

Before Bishop Louis Vezelis OFM was consecrated a bishop, he suffered from a perforated ulcer. At this time, he did not have health insurance; he was not receiving any aid from any bishop or the Franciscan Order. He had been

hospitalized and given an exploratory surgery to determine the cause of his pain. Now, with an expensive medical bill and no monetary assistance, he clearly understood what was necessary to physically help him in healing this ulcer. He needed to slow down the secretion of the acids in his stomach. He did this through prayer and meditation or “self-hypnosis.” The human mind is capable of many wonderful things. We have what psychologists call “self-fulfilling prophecies.” When we think about something and imagine ourselves doing that very thing, we often find that we do what we previously imagined. A child dreams of becoming a doctor and later becomes that doctor. We envision doing well on a test, and this gives us confidence, and we do well, etc.

This is all fascinating and wonderful as we consider the often-untapped power that God has given us. But this is primarily a natural phenomenon, as with all things, it can be used for good or evil. Nonetheless, the person “hypnotized” will never do anything against his own will or nature. The evil person may visualize killing or robbing and then find himself doing those things. The man who

harbors hatred in his heart is already guilty of murder in the Eyes of God. The man who lusts for another is already guilty of adultery in the Eyes of God. Why? Because the desire precedes the deed. The other side is just as accurate and valid, and so we encourage people to pray, dream, and plan for heaven so that they will then obtain their desires. With the help of God’s grace, we can obtain this, but we do need to use all the talents that God has given us. The natural means involve prayer, meditation, resolutions, desires, amendments, etc. In human or natural psychology, we have “visualization” or self-hypnosis/self-fulfilling prophecies.

I have heard that some people have witnessed Father Louis Vezelis, OFM hypnotize a young man and make him cluck like a chicken or bark like a dog. I have never seen such things. However, assuming they did, it is simply a natural phenomenon, not a supernatural one. It is merely relaxing someone to the point of opening his mind to receive suggestions and then having him carry out the suggestions. Remember that besides the individual involved, only God can have absolute control over our free will. The person nev-

er does anything against his will, which is natural rather than supernatural. It is a simple parlor trick, much like many “magic” tricks. There is nothing evil or demonic; it just appears so to the ignorant or simple-minded. It can be innocent entertainment if we are not superstitious and realize that there are natural explanations. And knowing this is a reason to give greater honor and glory to God for the marvelous creatures that we are.

Another common accusation is that Bishop Louis Vezelis, OFM stole Bishop Peter Martin Ngo Dinh Thuc’s passport so that he could not travel. (Again, I was not present when Bishop Ngo Dinh Thuc was at the seminary in Rochester, NY. I entered shortly after he was abducted.) From what I understand and believe, Bishop Louis Vezelis, OFM did have Bishop Ngo Dinh Thuc’s passport under lock and key for safe-keeping. It was not to make Bishop Ngo Dinh Thuc a prisoner. Winter in Rochester, NY, was very hard on Bishop Ngo Dinh Thuc. He was not accustomed to such cold and snow – especially in his advanced age. Bishop Louis Vezelis, OFM sought out true bishops in

warmer climates to open their homes for him, but none were able or willing to take him in. What the Franciscans had to offer was not much nor ideal for him, but all that was available was provided freely.

From what I understand, those who wished to abduct Bishop Ngo Dinh Thuc asked for the passport when they were going to take him to New York City for a celebration with other Vietnamese. Bishop Louis Vezelis, OFM may have logically refused to give it to these men because 1.) a passport is not needed to travel within New York State or the continental United States of America. 2.) The stated goal was to return Bishop Ngo Dinh Thuc to Rochester, NY after the celebrations had ended.

And so, from time immemorial, we see that half-truths are truly whole lies.



No Cross, No Crown

I sometimes think, when life seems drear,
And gloom and darkness gather here –
When hope's bright star forsakes my skies
And sorrow in pathway lies –
It would be sweet, it would be best.
To fold my tired hands and rest;
But then God sends an angel down
Who sweetly says, "No Cross, No Crown."

Last night I heard the river moan
With sad and melancholy tone;
I saw its waters flashing free,
And dashing headlong to the sea.
I would have plunged beneath its tide,
And on its friendly bosom died,
But then God sent an angel down,
Who whispered still, "No Cross, No Crown."

I said the world is dark and lone;
There is no hand to hold my own;
I cannot bear the noonday heat;
The thorns so pierce my bleeding feet.
"Behold!" he cried. "Where sacrificed,
Shine the red, bleeding wounds of Christ."
And fell his tears of mercy down,
While still he said, "No Cross, No Crown."

Then turned I to the river shore,
And sought the lonely world once more,
With aching heart and burning head,
To battle for my crust of bread;
But hunger came who knew me well,
And fainting by the way I fell;
But still God sent an angel down,
And weeping said, "No Cross, No Crown."

“No Cross, No Crown,” as standing there
The Cross too heavy seemed to bear,
And for the Crown, I could not see
That it was ever meant for me.
The words I could not understand,
Even while I pressed the angel’s hand;
But still he looked with pity down
And still he said, “No Cross, No Crown.”

Back to the world I turned again
To feel its grief, endure its pain;
But all the sweetness that it gave
I followed weeping to the grave,
And from the cold and quiet sod
I lifted my sad eyes to God,
And saw the angel coming down
And in his hands a golden crown.

Then I forgot my earthly loss,
And kneeling lifted up the Cross –
Though all that once made life so sweet
Lay ‘neath the lilies at my feet.
A radiance from the realms of light
Flashed for a moment on my sight –
A still, small voice came fluttering down,
It is enough, “Receive the Crown.”



THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS: THE SOUL'S PILGRIMAGE

Father Anthony Lentz, OFM

The Catholic Encyclopedia defines pilgrimages as “journeys made to some place with the purpose of venerating it, or in order to ask there for supernatural aid, or to discharge some religious obligation.” This spiritual custom is not exclusively a Catholic practice, but it has been prevalent within the Church from the beginning. The place that has always attracted a significant number of pilgrims has been the Holy Land. We know of its popularity partially because one of the major concerns of Pope Urban II, when he called for the Crusade to the Holy Land (1095), was the protection of Catholic pilgrims who were being attacked, kidnapped, and killed by Muslim soldiers. The reason for the Holy Land’s popularity as a pilgrimage destination is evident because it is where Our Lord physically walked the earth. One cannot argue that it would be spiritually inspiring and uplifting to the soul to see those places where the major events of Our Lord’s life took place. The Church understands the need for Her children to

have this connection, and She has honored these places by erecting shrines and churches, such as the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and the Church of the Nativity. She also would never want to limit access to this connection to only those who can physically visit these places.

That is why she has encouraged exercises and meditation that can spiritually transport us to those holy sites while remaining in our parish church or home. The holy exercise that achieves this the most is the Stations of the Cross.

The Stations of the Cross did not take its present form until the 1600’s, but the devotion itself began much earlier. The early Christians in Jerusalem had such a deep devotion to the sufferings of Our Lord that they would visit the sites of His Passion. This devotion is said to have been started by the Blessed Virgin Mary herself. She would relive these events privately or with a group, remembering the works of the Redemption.

There are many methods for publicly praying the Stations of the Cross, such as the method of St. Alphonsus Ligouri. The Church encourages the faithful to do this holy exercise and has attached many indulgences to it. She knows that meditation upon the Suffering of Christ is the most profitable. To make the Way of the Cross and gain the indulgence, the faithful, while in church, must go from Station to Station, briefly meditating upon the subject matter of each. When they do this as a private devotion, they do not have to follow any prescribed method. Although I think we can say these methods are not only beneficial but essential when done publicly.

To derive the greatest benefit from this holy exercise, we must first understand that it is a meditation, and the end of all meditation is not the acquisition of more knowledge but rather the establishment of holy sentiments. The general sentiments that should grow within us here are contrition and appreciation.

There are many paths of meditation that we can follow to establish proper devotion, and each one requires the use of our imagination. Firstly, we can consider Our Lord's vari-

ous sufferings during His Passion. For instance, we can consider how when Our Lord was condemned to death, He had already suffered a great deal of physical pain. He was cruelly treated by the temple guards, who kept Him up all night by hitting and striking Him. He was scourged until His entire body was covered with wounds. He had to endure the weight of the cross, carrying it to Calvary. He was stripped of His garments, thus exposing His fresh wounds to the elements. He was nailed to the cross, with nails that tore His sensitive hands and feet. He then suffered three hours upon the cross, slowly suffocating and slowly dying in agony. These are some of the things we can meditate upon. We all have suffered some physical pain, and if we try to relive that pain, then perhaps we can understand and appreciate Our Lord's sufferings.

Secondly, we can consider Our Lord's spiritual sufferings. When entering the Garden of Gethsemane, He told His disciples, "My soul is sad even unto death." He then spent the remainder of the evening in prayer. The anticipation of His impending suffering caused such emotion that He sweat blood. His soul suffered when Judas came and

betrayed Him with a kiss. He suffered when He heard the calumnies slewed against Him by His own people. He suffered greatly when He was condemned to death, knowing that He is Innocence Itself. His suffering would be increased knowing that His holy Mother would be suffering alongside Him. Finally, He endured His greatest of all spiritual sufferings while upon the cross, knowing that very few people would benefit from His sacrifice.

Thirdly, we can consider our role in His Passion. We can spiritually accompany Our Lord and His Mother on the Way to Calvary, asking ourselves who we are. Are we the Pharisees and the chief priests? Being blinded by pride, we ignore the workings of God's grace. Are we Pontius Pilate? Condemning Our Lord to death by our constant

sins and never genuinely trying to amend them. Are we Simon of Cyrene? We accept our own crosses but only do so begrudgingly. Are we the Holy Veronica? Having a true devotion to Our Suffering Lord, offering Him all our small prayers and deeds faithfully. Are we St. John the Apostle? Knowing our Lord intimately means genuinely accepting our suffering without cowering from it. Are we St. Mary Magdalene? Recognizing that we are sinners but trusting in the mercy of Christ. The mercy that is exemplified during His Passion and Death.

Our devotion to the Passion and Death of Christ guides this pilgrim's journey. It is the map that we must follow to reach our heavenly goal. The footsteps of Christ are laid out before us; all we need to do is take up our cross and follow Him.

“IF YOU SEEK PATIENCE, YOU WILL FIND NO BETTER EXAMPLE THAN THE CROSS. GREAT PATIENCE OCCURS IN TWO WAYS: EITHER WHEN ONE PATIENTLY SUFFERS MUCH, OR WHEN ONE SUFFERS THINGS WHICH ONE IS ABLE TO AVOID AND YET DOES NOT AVOID. CHRIST ENDURED MUCH ON THE CROSS, AND DID SO PATIENTLY, BECAUSE WHEN HE SUFFERED HE DID NOT THREATEN; HE WAS LED LIKE A SHEEP TO THE SLAUGHTER AND HE DID NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH.”

~ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

THE COMMUNIST THREAT

Father Joseph Noonan, OFM

Part Twenty-Four: The Undermining of Education

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

1978

Professor Benjamin Bloom, the “Father” of Mastery Learning and developer of the Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, presented a paper entitled “New Views of the Learner: Implications for Instruction and Curriculum” at the 1978 Association for the Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Annual Conference. The paper was published in ASCD’s Educational Leadership April 1978 issue (Vol. 35, #7). The following quote explains clearly the reasoning behind UNESCO’s requirement that member states, including the United States, incorporate UNESCO’s lifelong learning philosophy into their education policies:

Continuing Learning

Throughout the world, the instruction and curriculum in the schools is being studied to de-

termine its long-term contribution to continuing learning throughout life. The Edgar Faure (UNESCO) report “Learning to Be” has had great influence on this thinking. The Faure report (Faure, 1972) stresses the many changes taking place in all societies and the difficulties individuals have in adjusting to rapid change in the society, in their work, and in their lives. Since, the report continues, it is virtually impossible to anticipate and plan for the changes that will take place, the only adaptive mechanism people have to adjust to and cope with these changes is their ability and interest in continuing learning throughout life....

We, who are responsible for the learning of our students for a ten-to-sixteen-year period, must extend our sights beyond the period that our students are in the schools or colleges. Until we do this and until it becomes a part of our curriculum planning, we will neglect those objectives of education that relate to the entire life of the individual. (pp. 574–575)

Charlotte Iserbytte's Note: It is important to recall Bloom's definition of education: "to change the thoughts, actions, and feelings of students." In other words, the above recommendation very simply calls for lifelong brainwashing.

In the August 1978 Issue of *The National Educator* Barbara Morris, Editor of *The Barbara Morris Report* and author of many books related to education including her most recent book, *The Great American Con Game*, reported on a speech given at the University of Illinois by Mary F. Berry, assistant secretary in the U.S. Office of Education (1977), regarding Chinese education. The following excerpts from Morris's report are too important to leave out of this book:

Indeed, what does the U.S.A. stand to learn? Let's take a look.

Red China has eliminated testing and grades. The U.S. is rapidly going the same route. Testing is being downgraded and scoffed at, and grades, where they do exist are just about meaningless.

For the Red Chinese, according to Ms. Berry, truth is a relative concept. In the U.S. schools students are taught the

same thing in "values clarification." It's called situation ethics and it means it's okay to lie or cheat or steal or kill when it suits your purpose.

In Red China, according to Ms. Berry, education must serve the masses. Ditto the U.S. Only the semantics are different here. In the U.S. education is not designed for the benefit of individuals, but for society. "Society" or "masses"—what's the difference?

In Red China, according to Ms. Berry, education must be combined with productive labor and starts at six years of age, with children working at least one hour a day producing voice boxes for dolls. At the middle school level, children make auto parts as part of the school day. We are not at this low level, but Secretary Berry frankly admits, "We will draw on the Chinese model..." We are fast approaching the Chinese model. We have work/study programs and the U.S. Office of Education is working on development of Life-long Learning programs — another Chinese import. Such programs will enable people to work and study their entire lives for the benefit of the state.

Ms. Berry admitted U.S. Life-long Learning programs are

indeed drawn on the Chinese experience, that such programs are expected to meet “needs for intellectual fulfillment and social growth. It is here that the Chinese have set the pattern for the world to follow, and it is here that American higher education may have its last, best opportunity for growth.”

Secretary Berry lamented that the U.S. is only slowly moving into Lifelong Learning, but that “The community college system with its nonconventional enrollment, is one harbinger of change. The traditional extension program is another.... But we have to go beyond them and bring four year institutions and secondary institutions, as well as private instructional facilities into the Lifelong Learning movement.”

Ms. Berry is not talking about the future when she recommends radical proposals for U.S. education. A meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies, held in Cincinnati last November, featured several presentations on Communist Chinese education as a model for U.S. education. In one such presentation, teachers learned how the Red Chinese educational system “is related to achievement of na-

tional goals and citizenship preparation... how cultural activities and recreational pastimes provide a vehicle for transmitting new social values.” Does this help you understand why U.S. schools usually list “worthy use of leisure” or “citizenship education” as a goal of education?

Charlotte Iserbyte’s Note:

Americans, involved in what would seem to be the worthy goal of implementing character, citizenship, or civic education in the government schools or in community groups, or in seeking “common ground” with groups who hold differing views on political, social, and religious issues, should think more than twice before becoming involved in this dangerous dialogue. The reason the dialogue is dangerous is evident when one studies the track record of nations whose citizens have allowed their governments to define morality or good citizenship; i.e., Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union and Red China, to name just a few.

Fifth Report of **The National Council on Educational Research**, funded by the U.S. Office of Education, was published in an issue spanning 1978–1979. The very clear connection drawn between

mastery learning and direct instruction, enabling one to understand that they are essentially the same or at least fraternal twins, is the importance of the following excerpt:

The Learning Research and Development Center (LRDC) at the University of Pittsburgh has developed instructional mastery of learning programs providing individualized instruction in math, science, reading, and early learning skills. These have been disseminated nationally through Project Follow Through

[Direct Instruction/DISTAR] and by Research for Better Schools (RBS). (pp. 28–29)

To Be Continued



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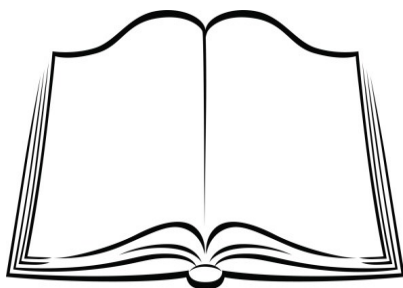
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The Catholic Mother to Her Children

The Countess de Flavigny



SEVENTH LESSON

SUNDAY: THE OBLIGATION OF REST, AND OF DIVINE WORSHIP

If there be one day in the week particularly consecrated to the Lord, it is not, my dear children, that every day of our existence does not belong to God, and ought not to be employed in His service. But this God of goodness, who might demand for Himself alone every moment of the life He give us, allows us to employ six days out of seven at our studies, our business, and provided we never go against God's will, that every one of our actions be done with the view of pleasing Him, our days may be sanctified, and our life become truly Christian, without our being forced to remain long hours in Church, to go through numerous devotional exercises. The fulfilment of the most ordinary duty, if offered to God piously, is another way

of serving Him, and as it was truly said by one of the Fathers of the Church, a well-known Saint: Work is prayer.

But there is a day God has kept for Himself entirely. This day is His: it is called by His Name; it is Sunday, the Lord's Day. It is well to remark, my children, that God ordered us to rest on the seventh day, not only for the sake of His glory, but also with fatherly foresight. Men were created by Him; He knows that their strength exhausts itself, that to work assiduously too long at a time would do them harm, and that it is good now and then to have a day's rest, which, in doing away with the fatigue of the preceding days, will give fresh strength to undertake the work of the morrow.

With Hebrews, the Lord's Day was the last of the week; it was called the *Sabbath*. God Himself had ordained the choice of that day, in remembrance of that one on which He rested after having created the world. These are the Lord's own words to His chosen people: "Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day." Thou shalt work during six days; but the seventh thou must do no work, for Thy God rested on the seventh day, and that is why He blessed this day, and consecrated it to His service.

According to the ancient law, my children, the rest of the sabbath day was so strictly kept that you could not trespass against it in the slightest manner without being condemned to death. All kinds of work were so strictly forbidden, that even food was prepared the day before. The manna of the desert, which fell on earth every morning for the Israelites, did not fall on the sabbath day. The people gathered a double quantity on the preceding day, and God caused it to keep quite fresh during two days.

According to our religion the day of rest is on Sunday, because this day, the first of

the week, was the day of Our Lord's Resurrection. The Holy Church, less severe than the law of Moses, as concerns the sanctification of the Sunday, nevertheless orders the people to hear Mass, and to abstain from all servile work, that is to say, from all heavy labor done by hand.

The Church also wishes the people to spend the greater part of their time in good works, to attend the evening service, to go to hear God's word, to read some religious book, to give alms to the poor, and in a word, *to keep the Sunday with devotion by serving God in the same manner.*

But it may happen, my dear children, that you pass the greater part of Sunday in Church, without having really sanctified the Lord's Day. It is by the pious bent of the soul, and by abstaining from sin that you really fulfil God's commandments. This is what you must remember.

It is right, my children, that Sunday should be to you, not only a day of rest, but also a day of recreation; nevertheless, a certain time should be set apart for useful occupations. Cast a look back on the

events of the past week, make good resolutions for the coming week, put your books and things in order, cast up your little accounts: and thus, you can very well employ your time on Sunday.

I should like you to associate some religious thought even with your amusements. This will never make them dull: it would only help to banish from your games those

quarrels which so often occur, would make you more amiable towards your play-fellows, and more inclined to be kind to a younger brother or to a little sister.

Remember, my children, that everything in your behavior, must mark the difference between Sunday and the remainder of the week, and show that Sunday is a holy day, that it is the Lord's Day.



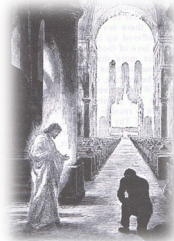
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TRUST IN GOD

It is true there are times of trial and days of darkness, when the best of us are apt to mistrust the providence of God over us, and are tempted to lose heart and hope altogether; but if we are seeking first the Kingdom of Heaven we shall understand that it is God Who gives and God Who takes away; and that He gives and takes away for our soul's sake, that we are of much more value in His sight than the birds of the air. We shall put our trust in His providence and suffer not the wants of the body, the things of sense, and the trials of this life to fill our souls with bitterness; we shall be trustful in hour of need, patient in the hour of disappointment, tranquil in the hour of trial, and when the hour of deliverance shall come we shall count as nothing the anxiety and sorrows through which we have passed for "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that shall be revealed in us."

~Author Unknown



THE LITTLE CATECHISM OF THE CURÉ OF ARS

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



EXPLANATIONS AND EXHORTATIONS ON THE LAST JUDGMENT

Our Catechism tells us, my children, that all men will undergo a particular judgment on the day of their death. No sooner shall we have breathed our last sigh than our soul, without leaving the place where it has expired, will be presented before the tribunal of God. Wherever we may die, God is there to exercise His justice. The good God, my children, has measured out our years, and of those years that He has resolved to leave us on this earth, He has marked out one which shall be our last; one day which we shall not see succeeded by other days; one hour after which there will be for us no more time. What distance is there between that moment and this — the space of an

instant. Life, my children, is a smoke, a light vapor; it disappears more quickly than a bird that darts through the air, or a ship that sails on the sea, and leaves no trace of its course!

When shall we die? Alas! will it be in a year, in a month? Perhaps tomorrow, perhaps today! May not that happen to us which happens to so many others? It may be that at a moment when you are thinking of nothing but amusing yourself, you may be summoned to the judgment of God, like the impious Baltassar. What will then be the astonishment of that soul entering on its eternity? Surprised, bewildered, separated thenceforth from its relations and friends, and, as it were, surrounded

with Divine light, it will find in its Creator no longer a merciful Father, but an inflexible Judge. Imagine to yourselves, my children, a soul at its departure from this life. It is going to appear before the tribunal of its Judge, alone with God; there is Heaven on one side, Hell on the other. What object presents itself before it? The picture of its whole life! All its thoughts, all its words, all its actions, are examined.

This examination will be terrible, my children, because nothing is hidden from God. His infinite wisdom knows our most inmost thoughts; it penetrates to the bottom of our hearts, and lays open their innermost folds. In vain sinners avoid the light of day that they may sin more freely; they spare themselves a little shame in the eyes of men, but it will be of no advantage to them at the day of judgment; God will make light the darkness under cover of which they thought to sin with impunity. The Holy Ghost, my children, says that we shall be examined on our words, our thoughts, our actions; we shall be examined even on the good we ought to have done, and have not done, on the sins of others of which we have been

the cause. Alas! so many thoughts to which we abandon ourselves—to which the mind gives itself up; how many in one day! in a week! in a month! in a year! How many in the whole course of our life! Not one of this infinite number will escape the knowledge of our Judge.

The proud man must give an account of all his thoughts of presumption, of vanity, of ambition; the impure of all his evil thoughts, and of the criminal desires with which he has fed his imagination. Those young people who are incessantly occupied with their dress, who are seeking to please, to distinguish themselves, to attract attention and praise, and who dare not make themselves known in the tribunal of Penance, will they be able still to hide themselves at the day of the judgment of God? No, no! They will appear there such as they have been during their life, before Him who makes known all that is most secret in the heart of man.

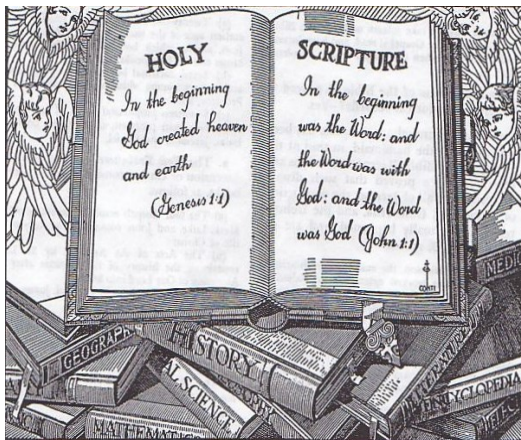
We shall give an account, my children, of our oaths, of our imprecations, of our curses. God hears our slanders, our calumnies, our free conversations, our worldly and licen-

tious songs; He hears also the discourse of the impious. This is not all, my children; God will also examine our actions. He will bring to light all our unfaithfulness in His service, our forgetfulness of His Commandments, our transgression of His law, the profanation of His churches, the attachment to the world, the ill-regulated love of pleasure and of the

perishable goods of earth. All, my children, will be unveiled; those thefts, that injustice, that usury, that intemperance, that anger, those disputes, that tyranny, that revenge, those criminal liberties, those abominations that cannot be named without blushes.

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ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

An Autobiography

CHAPTER ELEVEN THE NOVICE MISTRESS

Since that infinite mercy is the subject of the song I am trying to sing on earth, dear Mother, I ought also to speak here of another real advantage which I reaped in the discharge of my little task. Formerly when I saw a Sister doing something I did not like, and seemingly contrary to our Rule, I used to think how glad I should be if I could only warn her and point out her mistake. But since this burden has been laid upon me and it has become my duty to find fault, my ideas have undergone a change. Now, when I chance to see something wrong I heave a sigh of relief. I thank God the guilty one is not a novice and that it is not my business to correct her; then I do all I can to find excuses, and to credit her with the good intentions she no doubt possesses.

Your devotedness throughout my illness, dear reverend Mother, has also taught me many a lesson of charity. No remedy seems too costly, and should one fail, you try something else. When I am present

at recreation what precautions you take to protect me from the slightest draught! All this makes me feel that I ought to be as compassionate for the spiritual infirmities of my Sisters as you are, Mother, for my bodily ills.

I have noticed that it is the holiest nuns who are most loved; everyone seeks their company and is on the watch to do them a service without waiting to be asked. Virtuous souls who can bear to be treated with a want of respect and attention, find themselves surrounded by an atmosphere of love. It is with great truth that our Father, St. John of the Cross, says: "All good things have come to me since I no longer seek them for myself."

Imperfect souls, on the contrary, are left alone. They receive, of course, the measure of politeness which the religious life demands; but their company is avoided lest a word might be said which would hurt their feelings. When I say imperfect souls, I do not mean souls with spiritu-

al imperfections only, for the holiest will not reach perfection till they are in Heaven. I mean those who, being super-sensitive or wanting in tact and refinement, make life unpleasant for others. Defects of this kind are, I know, incurable, but I know too how patient you would be in nursing and striving to relieve me, even were my illness to last for years.

From all this I conclude that I ought to seek the companionship of those Sisters for whom I feel a natural aversion, and try to be their good Samaritan. It frequently needs only a word or a smile to impart fresh life to a despondent soul. Yet it is not merely in the hope of bringing consolation that I wish to be kind; if it were, I should soon be discouraged, for often well-intentioned words are totally misunderstood. Consequently, in order that I may lose neither time nor labor, I try to act solely to please Our Lord by following this precept of the Gospel: "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends nor thy brethren, lest perhaps they also invite thee again, and a recompense be made to thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the blind, and the lame, and thou shall be

blessed, because they have naught wherewith to make thee recompense and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee."

What can I offer to my Sisters but the spiritual feast of sweet and joyful charity? I know of no other, and I wish to imitate St. Paul who rejoiced with those who rejoiced. It is true he also wept with those who wept, and at the feast which I desire to provide, tears must sometimes fall, but I shall always do my best to change them into smiles, for "God loveth the cheerful giver." I remember an act of charity with which God inspired me while I was a novice, and, though seemingly small, it has been rewarded already in this life by Our Heavenly Father "who seeth in secret."

Before Sister St. Peter became quite helpless someone had to leave the evening meditation at ten minutes to six and take her to the refectory. Aware of the difficulty, or rather the impossibility, of pleasing the poor invalid, it cost me a great effort to offer my services. I was unwilling, however, to lose such a golden opportunity, remembering Our Lord's own words: "As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to Me."

I therefore humbly offered my help, which was accepted, though only after considerable persuasion. Every evening, when I saw her shake her sand-glasses I knew it was the signal to start.

Summoning up all my courage I rose, and quite a ceremony commenced. First her stool had to be moved and carried in a particular way, without the least hurry, and then began the journey. Supporting the poor old Sister by her girdle, I cried to acquit myself of the task as gently as I could; if by some mischance she stumbled, I was told I was going too fast and that she would certainly fall; when I tried to lead her more slowly she would say : "Where are you? . . . I don't feel your hand. . . . You are letting go your hold. . . . I am going to fall! . . . I was right when I said you were too young to take care of me."

At last we reached the refectory without further mishap, but there fresh difficulties awaited me. Taking every care not to hurt the poor invalid, I had to install her, with some maneuvering, in her place; that done, I had to turn back her sleeves — always according to her own special rubric — and then I was free to go. Noticing, however, that it was with ex-

treme difficulty she cut her bread, I would not leave her till I had rendered this last little service. As she had never expressed any wish that I should do so, the unexpected kindness touched her greatly. Through it — as I learnt later — and still more by bestowing on her my "sweetest smile " at the end of my task, I won her entire confidence.

A long time has elapsed since all this happened, but Our Lord allows the memory of it to linger with me like a perfume from Heaven. One cold winter's evening when I was humbly leading Sister St. Peter, there suddenly fell on my ears the harmonious strains of distant music. A picture rose before me of a richly-furnished room, brilliantly lighted and decorated, and full of elegantly dressed young girls conversing together as is the way of the world. Then I turned to the poor invalid; instead of sweet music I heard her complaints, instead of rich gilding I saw the bare brick walls of our cloister, scarcely visible in the dim flickering light.

The contrast thrilled me, and Our Lord so illumined my soul with the rays of His truth, in the light of which the pleasures of the world are but dark-

ness, that not for a thousand years of such worldly delights would I have bartered the ten minutes spent in my act of charity. And if now, in days of pain and amid the smoke of battle, the thought that God has withdrawn us from the world is so entrancing, what will it be when in eternal glory and everlasting repose we realize the favor He has done us here, by singling us out to dwell in His house, which is the very portal of Heaven?

These transports of joy have not always accompanied my acts of charity, but from the beginning of my religious life Our Lord would have me understand how sweet it is to see Himself in the heart of His spouses, and therefore when I acted as guide to Sister St. Peter, it was with such love, that I could not have taken more care had I been leading Our Divine Lord Himself. But to prove, dear Mother, what I have just said about my difficulties in the past with regard to charity, I shall relate to you a few of my many struggles.

For a long time my place at meditation was near a Sister who fidgeted incessantly, either with her rosary or with something else. Possibly I alone heard her because of my very sensitive ear, but I cannot

tell you to what an extent I was tried by the irritating noise. There was a strong temptation to turn round and with one glance to silence the offender; yet in my heart I knew I ought to bear with her patiently, for the love of God first of all, and also to avoid causing her pain. I therefore remained quiet, but the effort cost me so much that sometimes I was bathed in perspiration, and my meditation consisted merely in the prayer of suffering. Finally, I sought a way of gaining peace, in my inmost heart at least, and so I tried to find pleasure in the disagreeable noise. Instead of vainly attempting not to hear it, I set myself to listen attentively as though it were delightful music, and my meditation — which was not the prayer of “quiet” — was passed in offering this music to Our Lord.

On another occasion when I was engaged in the laundry, the Sister opposite to me, who was washing handkerchiefs, kept splashing me continually with dirty water. My first impulse was to draw back and wipe my face in order to show her that I wanted her to be more careful. The next moment, however, I saw the folly of refusing treasures thus generously offered, and I carefully

refrained from betraying any annoyance. On the contrary I made such efforts to welcome the shower of dirty water that at the end of half an hour I had taken quite a fancy to the novel kind of aspersion, and resolved to return as often as possible to the place where such precious treasures were freely bestowed.

You see, Mother, that I am but a very little soul, who can offer to God only very little things. It still happens that I frequently miss the opportunity of welcoming these small sacrifices which bring so much peace; but I am not discouraged — I bear the loss of a little peace and I try to be more watchful in the future.

How happy Our Lord makes me, how sweet and easy is His service in this life! He has always given me what I desired, or rather He has made me desire what He wishes to give. A short time before the terrible

temptation against faith, I had been thinking how free I was from great outward trials, and that if interior suffering was to be my lot, God must alter my spiritual path, a change which did not seem to me likely. Yet I felt I could not go on always living in peace and quiet, and I wondered how God would act.

The answer was not long in coming, and it showed me that He whom I love is never at a loss, for without altering my path He sent me this great trial, which soon mingled a salutary bitterness with all the joy.



To Be Continued

“DO NOT FEAR TO TELL JESUS THAT YOU LOVE HIM
EVEN WITHOUT FEELING IT. THAT IS THE WAY TO FORCE JESUS
TO HELP YOU, TO CARRY YOU LIKE A LITTLE CHILD
TOO FEEBLE TO WALK.”

~ST. THERESE OF LISIEUX



FRANCISCAN SAINTS

MARCH 20TH

Blessed Mark of Montegalloy

Confessor, First Order

Mark was the scion of a distinguished family of Montegalloy in the diocese of Ascoli. He was extraordinarily devout already in his youth, and undertook the study of medicine in order to be able to assist the sick poor. He received his doctor's degree at the University of Bologna. At the urgent wish of his father he entered the married state although he would rather have completely severed himself from the world and the things of the world. Not long afterwards his father and mother died. Again the devout longing for the religious state seized him. When he confided the fact to his wife, she told him she was of the same mind, and so both of them yielded to their pious desire, Mark entering the convent of the Friars Minor, and his wife joining the Poor Clares at Ascoli.

In a very short time Mark displayed all the virtues that are

distinctive of a true Friar Minor, so that as soon as he was ordained to the priesthood, his superiors placed him in charge of the community at San Severino. There he set a most extraordinary example in mortification, prayer, and works of charity. One day, while deeply absorbed in prayer, he heard a voice which said: "Brother Mark, go out and preach charity!" That was, indeed, a call from heaven, in compliance with which he now labored unceasingly during the space of forty years as a missionary.

The principal topic of his discourses was the love of God and neighbor, always a most timely one but notably at that time, for Italy was torn by factions that caused the inhabitants of almost every town to be at variance with one another. Mark's words, animated by true charity, affected them in an unusual way and produced the blessed

fruits of peace and harmony. He did not, however, only preach charity, he also practiced it and thereby induced others to follow his example. He knew just how to influence wealthy people generously to support the poor, and he was instrumental, wherever he perceived the need for it, in establishing people's banks of the kind called "Mounts of Mercy," in order to protect the people of moderate means from the hands of usurers.

Frequently God blessed his undertakings in a remarkable way. The plague had broken out in Camerino. Every day the terrible epidemic claimed new victims, and the entire citizenry was seized with a mortal fear. Father Mark went out among them like an angel of consolation sent by heaven itself. He rendered aid wherever he could; but as a physician of souls, he gave a sermon in which he told the people that the deadly plague came to them as a punishment for their indifference and their sins. If they would sincerely repent of their sins, God would withdraw the scourge. His admonition touched their hearts, they besought God for mercy, and were sincere in their conversion; soon the disease abated.

Mark was well nigh seventy years old when he conducted the Lenten sermons at Vicenza. About the middle of Lent he was seized with diphtheria, which brought him to death's door within a few days. After he had received the Last Sacrament, he had someone read to him the history of the sufferings of Our Lord. At the words: "He bowed his head and gave up the ghost," the servant of God also bowed his head and surrendered his soul into the hands of his Maker on March 19, 1497. Immemorial devotion to him was sanctioned by Pope Gregory XVI. His feast is observed on March twentieth.

ON ACTIVE CHARITY TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOR

1.) Our subject took to heart the admonition of the beloved disciple: "My little children, let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (*1 John 3:18*). While even his sermons and the reconciliation of enmities which he effected were extraordinary acts of charity, nevertheless, religious though he was, he found means to relieve the

needs of the poor and even to provide for an institution that would permanently assist many in their distress. “The accomplishment of the deed,” says a holy doctor, “is the best proof of the motives of the heart.” — Does your charity for your neighbor manifest itself in this way?

2.) Consider that works of charity, if they are to be accounted as virtue, must proceed from unselfish motives. The love of God, who so desires charity, must be the motive; to relieve the need of our fellowmen, must be the purpose. It will not make any difference to us, then, whether the needy person is a relative or a stranger, a friend or an enemy. “If the enemy be hungry, give him to eat; if he thirst, give him water to drink” (*Prov. 25:21*). The desire to be praised by men may not actuate our acts of benevolence; we should even be, so to say, unaware of our charity and think nothing of it. “But when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth” (*Matth. 6:3*). — Were your past acts of charity as disinterested as that?

3.) Consider how sweet will be the reward of our charity when it is motivated by the

love of God. Even here on earth it is decidedly a joy for any person that is not entirely without sentiment to have been instrumental in aiding another person in his need. The more unknown to others the good work has been, the more one has had to sacrifice personally to accomplish the good deed, so much the purer will be the joy of heart that we shall experience. Then we shall perceive that the words of Holy Writ, which the world finds so difficult to believe, are actually true: “It is a more blessed thing to give rather than to receive” (*Acts 20:35*). Hence, he that is wise will bear in mind not only to make bequests after his death for charitable purposes, but will contribute already in this life to such ends. That is ever so much more meritorious and provides us already in this life with the joy of heart which is vouchsafed in reward. The complete reward, of course, will be dispensed only in eternity, when on the last day, which else holds so many terrors, God will say to those who have practiced works of charity for His sake: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to Me” (*Matth. 25:40*).

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

O GOD, WHO THROUGH BLESSED MARK, THY CONFESSOR,
DIDST STIR UP THY FAITHFUL PEOPLE TO LOVE OF GOD AND
NEIGHBOR, WE BESEECH THEE, THAT THROUGH HIS MERITS AND
INTERCESSION! WE MAY OBTAIN THE GRACE EVER TO
DISCHARGE THE DUTIES OF CHARITY.
THROUGH CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.



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