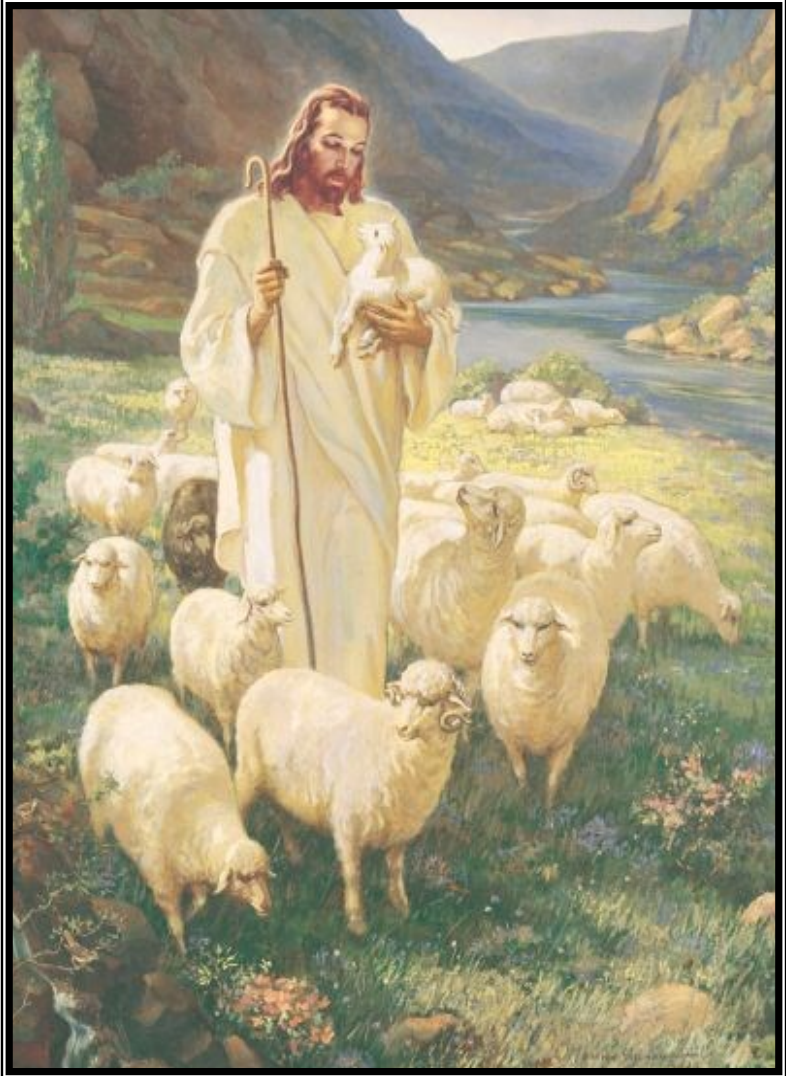


# THE SERAPH

April 2024

Vol. XLIV No. 8



# The Seraph

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APRIL 2024

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THE SERAPH

# A SEASON OF FAITH, HOPE, & CHARITY

*Father Anthony Lentz, OFM*

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*This article first appeared in the Spring Issue of The Cherub*

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## **EASTER SUNDAY:**

### **FAITH**

The Paschal Season is a time of great happiness. We all should feel the joy of this season. It begins with Easter Sunday and continues with two other major feasts – Ascension Thursday and Pentecost Sunday. These holydays should excite us to practice our Faith and to grow in virtue. The three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity are expressed by these three feasts.

Easter Sunday is an example of faith. Faith is belief in a truth, on the word of another, though that truth is not fully understood. Supernatural faith is believing the words of God and those of His Divine Son Jesus Christ. The symbol of faith is a cross.

The Apostles traveled and lived with Jesus for around three years. During that time they had come believe in His teachings, and they believed in the miracles He performed.

St. Peter himself openly confessed to Jesus that He is, “... *the Christ, the Son of the Living God.*” So what happened? What shook their faith? The suffering and death of Jesus on the Cross is what shook their faith to the core. They were afraid. They forgot that Jesus told them that this would happen. They forgot the most important part – that after three days He would rise from the dead. The Apostles’ faith was incomplete and it needed to be strengthened. So after Our Lord rose from the dead He appeared to them and said, “*Peace be to you.*” He wanted them to have peace and to see that their faith in Him was not vain or useless. Thomas was not among the other Apostles when our Lord appeared the first time and would not believe when the others told him. The next time that Our Lord appeared to the Apostles, Thomas was with them. When Thomas saw our Lord he was amazed and ashamed. Ashamed that his faith was lacking. He fell

down on his knees and said, *“My Lord and My God.”* Jesus said, *“Now that you have seen Thomas you believe, blessed are they who have not seen and believe.”*

Our faith cannot be something that we just say we believe in, it has to be something we live. Our faith in God has to grow stronger, as we grow up. We must learn and study our faith. We must show God our faith in Him by fighting off temptations to sin. We must learn to love to pray. By prayer our faith is made stronger. We must be willing to show our faith to others, such as making the Sign of the Cross in public. These are examples of living our faith daily and letting it become a part of us.

#### **ASCENSION THURSDAY:**

##### **HOPE**

Ascension Thursday is an example of hope. Hope is the virtue by which we firmly trust that God will give us eternal happiness and the means to obtain it. The symbol of hope is an anchor. An anchor is attached to a rope or a cable that keeps the boat or ship from floating away. The virtue of hope is what helps keep us floating away in the

sea of the world. It is our hope in the Christ's promises that helps to keep us anchored to the faith.

After Jesus rose from the dead He spent forty days with His Apostles and disciples. He continued to teach them about the Kingdom of God. When it was time for Him to return to Heaven, He took them to Mount Olivet and gave them their final instructions. He told them: *“Go you into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believes not shall be condemned.”* (St. Mark 16: 15,16) What does this mean? What does it have to do with the virtue of hope? Jesus makes it very clear here and in other parts of the Gospels that if we do what we are supposed to do, we will be rewarded. We have to have hope that God will be fair and honest. We can trust God's word and He will not go back on it. It is a matter of justice that He rewards those who do what they are told and punishes those who do not. Remember that God is not just going to give you Heaven for doing nothing, that would not be fair. Our Lord promised His Apostles that He would send them the Holy Ghost. He makes the same promise to

you and me. Since God is the God of truth, we know that He will always give us the grace we need to please Him, to live for Him and to spend eternity with Him in Heaven.

## **PENTECOST SUNDAY:**

### **CHARITY**

Pentecost Sunday is an example of charity. Charity is the virtue by which we love God above all things for His own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves, for the love of God. The symbol of charity is the heart. As you know the heart pumps the blood through our bodies, if we didn't have our hearts we would not be able to live. So if we do not have charity we cannot live for God.

There is another symbol that we use that helps to understand what kind of charity our love should be. That is fire. Fire is a very powerful thing and it consumes whatever it comes in contact with. Fire of charity must consume our entire soul.

Our Lord told the Apostles that He would not leave them orphans. He would send them the Paraclete or the Helper. This Helper is the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. He said that

the Holy Ghost will teach them all truth. The most important truth that He taught the Apostles, and us, is that God is love, and true love is charity.

Before He ascended into Heaven, Jesus asked Simon Peter, better known to us as St. Peter,; *“Simon, son of John, do you love me?”* St. Peter quickly said: *“Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.”* Jesus asked him this question two more times and St. Peter responded that he did love Him. St. Peter was not lying He did love Jesus, but his love was not complete. He lacked, with the other Apostles, the courage to love God completely, that is, living only for God. He would receive this courage on Pentecost Sunday. The Holy Ghost came and descended upon St. Peter and the rest of the disciples present, in the form of tongues of fire. This spiritual fire lit a fire within their souls. Now they understood all truth. They understood the love which moved Jesus to suffer and die for all mankind. They understood what Jesus meant when He said, *“No greater love than this, than I man laying down his life for his friends.”* He loved them and now they loved Him better. This love burned within

them, so they were no longer fearful. They now had the courage to stand up to the world and preach the Gospel. Right away St. Peter followed the command to preach and baptize, by converting thousands of souls in one day.

The fire of love, just like a camp fire, can die out. This happens when it is not taken care of. We must take care of the fire of love that we have within us. We can keep this fire going by receiving the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist

frequently with reverence. The way to have reverence is to think of Jesus when we are receiving Him sacramentally. We can recite very short prayers afterwards, such as: “*O Sacred Heart of Jesus I implore that I may daily love thee more and more.*” To love God more and more each day in adoration of Him and charity towards our neighbor prepares us to love Him completely in Heaven.

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# GOD ACCEPTS THE DESIRE FOR THE DEED

*Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD*

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We frequently mention the Bible when we emphasize the importance of intention or desire, so we have taken the time to compile a few Biblical sources that show that God accepts the desire for the deed when we cannot bring our true desires to fruition. We have taken these from the “Father Haydock Bible and commentary.” The text is the Douay-Rheims English translation from the Latin Vulgate. Father Haydock compiled the commentaries. This old source (1859) was chosen because it predates the “Second Vatican Council,” has been reprinted, and is available.

Our argument is simple. God condemns evil desires and will punish or hold us accountable for them; it then follows that He will bless or reward us for good or holy desires.

## **Exodus 20.17**

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house; neither shalt thou desire [*emphasis added*] his wife, nor his servant, nor his hand-maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his.”

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## **Deuteronomy 5.21**

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife: nor his house, nor his field, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his.”

## **Father Haydock**

### **Commentary:**

“The express prohibition of lustful and unjust desires, might suffice to have obviated the mistake of Josephus, and of the Jews, in Our Savior’s time, who looked upon them as indifferent, provided they were not carried into effect. They render us guilty in the sight of God, (Matt. V. 28) whenever we give consent to them, as even Ovid and the pagan philosophers acknowledged. ...”

## **Job 31.1**

“I made a covenant with my eyes, that I would not so much as think upon a virgin.”

## **Father Haydock**

### **Commentary:**

“... Why should I expose myself, by indiscreet looks,

since the passage from the eye to the heart is so easy. – In the warfare between the flesh and the spirit, Job deemed this precaution necessary, and was thus preserved from carnal thoughts.”

### **Proverbs 6.25-27**

“25. Let not thy heart covet her beauty, be not caught with her winks:

26. For the price of a harlot is scarce one loaf: but the woman catcheth the precious soul of a man.

27. Can a man hide fire in his bosom, and his garments not burn?”

### **Father Haydock**

#### **Commentary:**

“26. *Woman.* Who is married, exposes her lover to the danger of death. She chooses the most accomplished men, while the harlot receives the first comer.

27. *Burn.* No one can deal with an adulteress without guilt. All probable occasions of sin must be shunned.”

### **Saint Matthew 5:21-22**

“21. You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not kill. And whosoever shall kill, shall be liable to the judgment.

22. But I say to you, that whosoever is angry with his

brother, shall be liable to the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, *Raca*, shall be liable to the council. And whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.”

### **Father Haydock**

#### **Commentary:**

“21. *Shall be liable to the judgment.* That is, shall deserve to be punished by that lesser tribunal among the Jews, called the *judgment*, which took cognizance of such crimes. ... Among the Jews at the time of Christ, there were three sorts of tribunals: the first composed of three judges to try smaller causes, as theft; there was one in each town: the second of twenty-three judges, who judged criminal causes, and had the power of condemning to death. This was called the Little Sanhedrim, and of this it is supposed Jesus Christ speaks: the third, or Great Sanhedrim of seventy-two judges, who decided on the most momentous affairs, relating to religion, the king, the high priest, and the state in general. It is this last that is designed under the name of *council* in the next verse.”

“22.... *Raca* – St. Augustine thinks this was no significant word, but only a kind of interjection expressing a



motion of anger. Others take it for a Syro-Chaldaic word, signifying a light, foolish man, though not so injurious as to call another a fool. *Shall be guilty of the council* – that is, shall deserve to be punished by the highest court of judicature, called the council, or Sanhedrim, consisting of seventy-two persons, where the highest causes were tried and judged, and which was at Jerusalem. *Thou fool* – this was a most provoking injury, when uttered with contempt, spite, or malice. *Shall be in danger of hell fire*. Lit. according to the Greek, shall deserve to be cast into the *Gehennom of fire*. *Gehennom* was the valley Hinnom, near to Jerusalem, where the worshippers of the idol Molock used to burn their children, sacrificed to that idol. In that place was a perpetual fire, on which account it is made use of by Our Savior (as it hath been ever since), to express the fire and punishments of hell. Here is a plain difference between sin and sin; some mortal, that lead to hell; some venial, and less punished.”

**Saint Matthew 5:27,28,**

“27. You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou

shalt not commit adultery.

28. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

**Father Haydock  
Commentary:**

“27. Jesus Christ here perfects the Old Law, which makes no mention of the acts of the mind and will.

**Saint James 1.13-15**

“13. Let no man, when he is tempted, say, that he is tempted by God: For God is not a tempter of evils: and he tempteth no man.

14. But every man is tempted, being drawn away by his own concupiscence, and allured.

15. Then when concupiscence hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: But sin, when it is completed, begetteth death.”

**Father Haydock  
Commentary:**

“15. *When concupiscence hath conceived*, (man’s free will yielding to it.) *it bringeth forth sin*, our perverse inclinations become sinful, and when any grievous sin is completed, or even consented to, it begetteth death, it maketh the soul guilty of eternal death. It may not be amiss here to observe with S.

Gregory, etc. that there are three degrees in temptations; the first, by suggestion only; the second, by delectation, the third, by consent. First, the devil, or our own frail nature tempts us by a suggestion of evil thoughts in our imagination: to have such thoughts and imaginations may be no sin at all, though the things and objects represented be never so foul and hideous, though they may continue never so long, and return never so often. The reason is because we cannot hinder them. On the contrary, if our will remains displeased with them and resist them, such a resistance is meritorious, and by the mercies of God will purchase us a reward. Second, these representations may be followed with a delight or delectation in the sense, or in the body only; and if by an impression made against the will, which we no ways consent to, there is again no sin. There may be also some neglect in the person tempted, by not using sufficient endeavors to resist and repel those thoughts, which if it be only some small neglect the sin is not great: but if the person tempted hath willfully, and with full deliberation, taken delight in

evil thoughts, either of revenge, or of fornication, or adultery, or about anything very sinful, such a willful delight is a grievous and deadly sin, though he hath not had a will or design to perform the action itself. The reason is, because he willfully consents in mind and heart to a sinful delight, though not to the execution or action. And the sin may be great, and mortal, though it be but for a short time: for a temptation may continue for a long time and be no sin; and there may be a great sin in a short time. The reason again is, because we are to judge of sin by the dispositions and consent of the will, not by the length of time. Third, when the sinner yields to evil suggestions and temptations, so that his will fully consents to what is proposed, and nothing can be said to be wanting but an opportunity of putting his sinful desires in execution, he has already committed the sin; for example, of murder, of fornication, etc. in his heart, as our blessed Savior taught us. St. Matthew 5.28.”

# SIMPLY ANSWERED

*Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD*

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## ***Do unborn babies go to Heaven?***

This is a very sensitive topic requiring consideration of the dogmas and principles the Catholic Church has laid out for us.

On the one hand, the Catholic Church teaches that we are all conceived in Original Sin, and nothing stained can enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. On the other hand, we must reconcile the infinite justice of God with His infinite mercy. The liberal heresies would have us deny the doctrines of Original Sin and the need for baptism. The ultra-conservative heresies would have us deny the possibility of God's love and mercy.

Between these two extremes, some theologians posit the existence of Limbo (a place of natural happiness – neither Heaven nor Hell.). We know that before the coming of Jesus Christ, the just were not permitted into Heaven, nor were they sent into Hell but were kept in Limbo. We believe that the existence of Limbo ceased when Jesus opened the Gates of Heaven. The logical need for Limbo ceased when Heaven was opened because

there was no need for a place to hold the just because the just were now in Heaven.

Similarly, Purgatory is only temporary and will cease at the end of time. There does not seem to be any final destination other than Heaven or Hell. Either we will be with God or without Him in eternity. The argument of a place of “natural happiness” appears to me to be illogical. We are all made with immortal souls and destined to be with God in Heaven. Every one of us is loved by God, and it is His Will that we are united with Him in Heaven. Our very natures require that for us to be happy, we must be united with God in Heaven. There is no “natural happiness” outside of God.

As with other things, truth and virtue are between the two opposing extremes. It seems logical and appropriate to consider that an infant has an immortal soul with all its faculties from the moment of life — even though he cannot clearly demonstrate those faculties to others. The child has free will. God accepts the desire for the deed. This opens up the concept of Baptism of Desire to us.

I think that in some manner, unexaminable by us, God gives everyone – even the pre-born child – the capacity and sufficient understanding to choose to love Him or not. This can be done instantly, as with the angels in Heaven.

So, we hold that the pre-born infants can go to Heaven, but we refrain from saying that all those who die before they can be baptized are all in Heaven or are all in Hell. In their brief lifetime, they were given the choice that we have our entire lives to make. God’s justice, His mercy, and the dogmas of the Church all appear to fit logically and coherently in this position.

### ***Is it a sin to get a tattoo?***

Before we condemn everyone with a tattoo, we need to consider what it takes to make a sin mortal (deadly). The Catechism lays out three things: 1) the action, word, thought, or omission must be seriously wrong. 2) the person must know that it is seriously wrong. 3) the person must be willing to choose to do it anyway. If any one or more of these is missing, then there is no mortal (deadly) sin.

In stating that any action is a mortal sin, we must never forget that the intention of the individual involved is imperative. Next, we should consider

that every sin that is repented can be forgiven before we die.

Body “art”/modifications are historically considered a means of identifying slaves as property – much like livestock, which is tattooed/tagged/branded/chipped to identify the individual animal and its owner. There is also historical evidence of bodily scars signifying enslavement to demons.

Our bodies are living temples of the Holy Ghost. Every deliberate disfiguration of our bodies is like a demonic insult to God.

We should strive to avoid the world’s fashions, and most tattoos are made in response to the temptation to follow the world’s fashions. No matter how “unique” a body modification might be, it is ultimately the same as all the others in disfiguring God’s creation.

We must be careful not to be too harsh in our condemnation, but we must also be careful not to appear indifferent to the evil influences of the world’s fashions. For those whom this infectious fashion of the world has not marred, we say strive to stay that way. For those who have already succumbed, we suggest that they humbly and modestly do what they can to hide their shame lest their example become a temptation or an occasion for others to follow them.



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# OUR CATHOLIC HISTORY: PART FOUR

*Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD*

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It is sometimes necessary to review more distant historical events to understand our current history. In the “Traditionalist” movement, we often see a return of previous schisms and heresies. The principal ones that I perceive are “Donatism” and the “Boston Heresy” (Father Feeny / Feenyites).

## **DONATISM**

Donatism began in Africa as a schism in the early Church. The first edict of Diocletian against Christians (24 Feb., 303) commanded Christian churches to be destroyed, their Sacred Books to be delivered up and burnt, and Christians to be made outlaws. Severer measures followed in 304 when the fourth edict ordered all to offer incense to the idols under pain of death.

## **CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA**

“A hundred years earlier, Tertulian had taught that flight from persecution was not permissible. Some now went beyond this and voluntarily gave themselves up to martyrdom as Christians. Their motives were, however, not always above suspicion. Mensurius, the Bishop of Carthage, in a letter to Secundus,

Bishop of Tigisi, then the senior bishop (primate) of Numidia, declares that he had forbidden any to be honored as martyrs who had given themselves up of their own accord or who had boasted that they possessed copies of the Scriptures which they would not relinquish; some of these, he says, were criminals and debtors to the State, who thought they might by this means rid themselves of a burdensome life, or else wipe away the remembrance of their misdeeds, or at least gain money and enjoy in prison the luxuries supplied by the kindness of Christians. The later excesses of the Circumcellions show that Mensurius had some ground for the severe line he took. He explains that he had himself taken the Sacred Books of the Church to his own house and had substituted a number of heretical writings, which the persecutors had seized without asking for more; the proconsul, when informed of the deception, refused to search the bishop’s private house. Secundus, in his reply, without blaming Mensurius, somewhat pointedly praised the martyrs who in his province had been tortured and put to death for refusing to deliver up the Scrip-

tures; he himself had replied to the officials who came to search: 'I am a Christian and a bishop not a *traditor*.' This word *traditor* became a technical expression to designate those who had given up the Sacred Books, and also those who had committed the worse crimes of delivering up the sacred vessels and even their own brethren" (Catholic Encyclopedia 1913).

A division was created in the Church between those who considered it an unforgivable crime to cooperate with the demands of the state as opposed to those who regarded human life of more value than the material objects the State wished to destroy. To outright betray the Church and Catholics was sinful; however, it was imprudent to seek the wrath of the state voluntarily.

### SCHISM/HERESY

The Donatists concluded that anyone who was a "traditor" was not a true Christian and was to be avoided (schism). They went so far as to say that everything the "traditor" did was null and void – of no value. Hence, anyone who was baptized by a "traditor" or even by one who was in union with a "traditor" was not truly baptized and must be baptized by a Donatist (non "traditor"). This is where St. Augustine and others argued that the worthiness of the minister does not affect the validity of the Sacrament. The Donatist denial

of the Catholic Doctrines led them into heresy as well as schism.

### "SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL"

With the conclusion, experimentations, and liberal Protestantism of the "Second Vatican Council," we observed a similar division between those who accepted and went along with the "New Mass" – "Novus Ordo Missae" and those who held onto the use of the Missale Romanum as codified by the Council of Trent. The Council of Trent, with its proclaimed doctrines and codifying of the Mass, opposed the Protestant attack on the Church at that time. Setting aside, weakening, or ignoring these doctrines and the Mass equates to embracing condemned Protestantism.

### SCHISM OF MODERNISM

A schism ensued, not because those wishing to be loyal to the dogmatic Doctrines and Decrees of the Council of Trent wanted to separate, but because the Modernist majority did reject the "harsh" decrees of the Catholic Church against the Protestant innovators. The Modernists embraced something new, different, and in opposition to defined doctrines to seek unity with non-Catholics by focusing on what "we have in common and agree upon, rather than what we disagree upon."

## **SCHISM HISTORICALLY LEADS TO HERESY AND INVALIDITY**

Just as the schism in England under Henry VIII led to heresy and the invalidation of Anglican priestly orders, so did the New Church for the rest of the world after the “Second Vatican Council.” Those possessing the buildings and properties and using Catholic titles and names were not Catholic. Their changes to the rites of the Sacrament of Holy Orders invalidated their priesthood. We hold that the changes to the right of ordination by the “Second Vatican Council” Church are invalidating, like the Anglican changes. Neither holds valid orders any longer.

While the Donatists refused unity with those they perceived as morally weak or cowards, “traditionalist” Catholics refuse participation with those who hold condemned doctrines or employ questionable rituals in the Sacraments of the Church. “Traditionalists” went out of their way to seek unity with Catholics and clergy, hoping and praying for a return to a semblance of sanity – a return to the absolute, undoubtable doctrines, decrees, rites, and ceremonies of the Catholic Church. All that was perceivable in the “Vatican II” Church was experimentation, confusion, and divisions, which opened the doors to the heresies of Modernism, Liberalism, Protestantism, and Socialism.

## **CLEVER AMBIGUITIES OF THE “NEW CHURCH.”**

As the “Council of Vatican II” was non-dogmatic, they adamantly denied any change to the doctrine, only changes to the liturgy, rites, ceremonies, etc. The Mass and Sacraments were put in a very questionable and subjective situation. Many inventions and experimentations, like “Clown Masses,” “Cookie Communion Wafers,” etc., only compounded the problem. The argument was that when these are correctly used with the proper matter, form, and intention, they are valid and licit. It then became a very Donatist matter to try and discern which parish, priest, or bishop held the true Catholic doctrines and intentions.

### **AD HOMINEM ARGUMENTS ARE INEFFECTIVE.**

To declare a person heretical, it must be proven that he 1.) holds to a clearly defined heresy and 2.) is obstinate in his adherence. The vagueness and variability of the “Vatican II” rituals made it virtually impossible to hold any individual accountable. Even when public statements that were heretical or at least questionable were made, they consistently fell back on the claim that they were taken out of context or that what they said must be taken “in the context of the Vatican II Council.” Definitive absolutes were cast aside in fa-



vor of ambiguities and broad allowance of differing and even conflicting interpretations.

**AMBIGUITIES AND DIVERSITY OF RITUALS MADE ARGUMENTS AGAINST THEM INEFFECTUAL AS WELL.**

It was a much easier case to make that the new rites and ceremonies were now ambiguous at best, and at worst, they were clearly heretical by the practical denial of one or more Catholic doctrines and more in line with non-Catholic beliefs and practices. The usual reply was we must look at the hearts and minds of these promoters of ambiguity and not judge them simply on their ambiguous actions. We were told to see in them the work of the “Spirit.” Many did not doubt that a spirit moved the innovators but were reasonably sure it was not the “Holy Spirit.”

**LIBERAL VS CONSERVATIVE PERSPECTIVES OF “SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL” EFFECTS.**

The liberals rejoiced that the “Catholic Church” was now more in line with non-Catholics and that the rigidity of the Church was broken down. There was now an opening, welcoming, and acceptance of non-Catholic beliefs and practices.

The conservatives wept as they perceived the “New Church” was destroying the “True Church” with ever-increasing “annulments” being granted so

that annulments were frequently referred to as “Catholic divorce.” This was a direct attack upon the sanctity of Marriage. Religious and clerical vows were increasingly ignored and set aside as friaries, convents, and monasteries were abandoned by religious renouncing their vows to God and returning to the world. Many vows of celibacy were ignored as the return to the world and the abandonment of the religious houses was celebrated. The Protestant (demonic) attack upon priestly and religious celibacy was welcomed and praised.

While the liberalism and indifferentism of the “New Church” were acceptable to many, it was intolerable and unbearable to the few seeking to serve and preserve the solid, safe, and secure beliefs, practices, and rites the Church had so carefully and cautiously given us. Religious Sisters were permitted/encouraged to visit different non-Catholic Churches on Sundays. Still, they were forbidden to attend a Mass offered according to the Tridentine Rite (the rite codified and guaranteed by the Council of Trent). Everything was acceptable in the “New Church” except for the rigid and unbending doctrine, practices, and rituals of the “True Church.”

**FALSE RELIGIONS HAVE A FALSE JESUS – A FALSE GOD.**

The Donatists were historically wrong in their rigid separation

and for not allowing for the repentance of traitors. Catholics are not mistaken for refusing separation from non-Catholics. By the First Commandment of God, we are forbidden to pray and worship with non-Catholics (they worship a different God.) Differing doctrines create different gods. The god of Protestantism is not the God of Catholics. The god of Jews is not the God of Catholics.

### **ECUMENISM / TRUE VS. FALSE.**

The goal of true ecumenism is embracing true faith and true God by all non-Catholics. The goal of false ecumenism is the denial of the true faith and true God by Catholics. The Church clearly teaches that the Faith and Doctrines are uncompromising. Either we are with Jesus and the Church or against Him. The smorgasbord or cafeteria religions are a denial of Jesus and an embrace of demonism.

### **BOSTON HERESY**

Many in the "Traditionalist" movement embraced the "Boston Heresy," the denial of Baptism of Blood and Desire. In this, they embraced the rigid separation of the condemned Donatists. It is a doctrine of the Church that "there is no salvation outside the Catholic Church." These heresies do not allow for the subjective error of individuals or the goodness and mercy of God. Those who genu-

inely die for the True Faith (the true Jesus) are believed to have won the martyr's crown even if they were physically prevented from receiving the Sacrament of Baptism. The promoters of the "Boston Heresy" will not allow for the mercy of God to open the Gates of Heaven to these because they did not receive the Sacrament of Baptism. The same is true for the desire for Baptism. The "Boston Heresy" promoters do not allow the value of hearts and minds to enter the equation. They are, in a manner, formal "materialists" who only allow for the effects of grace to come through outward signs and symbols.

Jesus clearly taught that the outward signs of the Sacraments give grace. However, He also revealed that inward intentions and desires outweigh any outward signs or symbols. God accepts the desire for the deed. He will consider a man guilty of murder when he harbors hatred in his heart. He will consider a man guilty of adultery when he lusts after another. Logically, the man who loves and desires true Faith and eternal life with Jesus in Heaven will also find grace before God.

# THE COMMUNIST THREAT

Father Joseph Noonan, OFM

## Part Twenty-Five: The Undermining of Education

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

1979

**“Georgia Basic Life Process Skills, ESEA, Title II, Proposed Instructional Time in School Programs,”** prepared by Lucille G. Jordan, associate state superintendent for Instructional Services of the Georgia Department of Education, was submitted to the U.S. Department of Education for a grant in 1979. The particular curricular programs which received funding under Title II were jointly funded by Exxon Corporation and the U.S. Department of Education. On page 34 of Georgia’s grant proposal an extraordinary curriculum graph/chart recommends the following percentages of time be spent at and between 5, 10, 15 and 18 years of age on the following subjects:

Basic 3 R’s: 90% at 5 yrs. Declining to 40% at 10 yrs. Declining to 30% at 15 yrs. Declining to 15% at 18 yrs.

Life Process Skills: (Critical thinking, problem solving, and

decision making): 5% at 5 yrs. Increasing to 40% at 10 yrs. Increasing to 70% at 15 yrs. Increasing to 90% at 18 yrs.

Citizenship and Humanities Studies: 30% at 5 yrs. Increasing to 40% at 10 yrs. Increasing to 70% at 15 yrs. Increasing to 90% at 18 yrs.

Science and Technology: 25% at 5 yrs. Increasing to 28% at 10 yrs. Increasing to 30% at 15 yrs. Increasing to 55% at 18 yrs.

Career Education: 20% at 5 yrs. Increasing to 22% at 10 yrs. Increasing to 30% at 15 yrs. Increasing to 55% at 18 yrs.

Health and Physical Education: 10% for ages 5 through 18 yrs.

**Charlotte Iserbyt’s Note:** Please note that the “Basic 3 R’s” is the only curriculum area targeted for decrease in time spent on instruction. An official of the Georgia School Boards Association cited this graph as being representative of Bloom’s Taxonomy. Also, why would Exxon, who was in the early 1980s one of the major corporations complaining about illiteracy and workers who are not educated in basic academics, have funded a program guaran-

teed to water down basic academics? (In a 1976 speech NEA President Catherine Barrett recommended teaching basic skills in only one fourth of the school day.)

**The U.S. Congress fulfilled President Jimmy Carter's promise to the National Education Association** by voting for a U.S. Department of Education in 1979. Now the United States which, heretofore, had been represented at international conferences as the unenlightened member of the crowd (no ministerial/socialist status), could join the "big boys" of the international community: the "big boys" being those countries who, since World War II, had been represented at these policy-planning conferences by ministers of education. Interestingly enough, the majority of teacher members of the National Education Association were opposed to the creation of the U.S. Department of Education.

The new Cabinet-level department allowed the former Bureau of Research under the National Institute of Education to become the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), which would be closely linked to the Paris, France-based Center for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), part of the United Nations' Office of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). OERI's assistant secretary would attend OECD/

CERI meetings at which he would receive his "marching orders" related to international restructuring efforts and programs, all of which were either being implemented or would be implemented in the future in the United States—effective school research, site-based management, school-to-work, community education, Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM), etc.

**A Study of Schooling** in the United States by John Goodlad, PH.D., Dean of the Graduate School of Education, University of California, Los Angeles and associated with the Institute for Development of Educational Activities (I.D.E.A., funded by Kettering Foundation), was compiled in 1979 after being researched over a period of several years. Under Dr. Goodlad's direction, trained investigators went into communities in most regions of the country. The sample of schools studied was enormously diverse in regard to size, family income, and racial composition of the student body. The result of the landmark report was *A Place Called School: Prospects for the Future* (McGraw-Hill: New York, 1984) by Goodlad.

*In A Place Called School*, Goodlad proposed pushing high school graduation back to age 16 and having all students take a core curriculum until then. A new "fourth phase of education" would combine work, study, and community service to help ease

students' transition into careers, higher education, and adult responsibilities. The following three books were additionally commissioned to be written as a result of this project:

(1) *Schooling for a Global Age*, James Becker, Editor (1979), in the preface for which Dr. Goodlad made the following statement which has contributed to the development of parent school partnerships:

Parents and the general public must be reached, also. Otherwise, children and youth enrolled in globally-oriented programs may find themselves in conflict with values assumed in the home. And then the education institution frequently comes under scrutiny and must pull back.

(2) *Communities and Their Schools*, Don Davies, Editor (1981), in which the history of community education at the national and international levels (China, Tanzania, etc.) was covered and the participatory democratic operation of our schools and communities was recommended (government by unelected councils).

(3) *Arts and the Schools*, Jerome J. Hausman, Editor (1980), in which the role of the arts in schools and in society was examined and then the focus shifted to the needs of the individual. Arts addressed curricular issues involved in designing and imple-

menting school arts programs and, again, actual programs are discussed and analyzed. The policy implications of implementing the programs described in the book are then discussed along with change strategies for moving from rhetoric to reality.

The three books were published by McGraw Hill. The study itself was funded by the National Institute of Education, U.S. Office of Education and the following foundations: Danforth; Ford; International Paper; The JDR 3rd Fund; Martha Holden Jennings Foundation; Charles Stewart Mott Foundation; Needmor Fund; Pedamorphosis, Inc.; Rockefeller Foundation; and Spencer Foundation. The Advisory Committee for A Study of Schooling included the following persons: Ralph W. Tyler, chairman; Gregory Anrig; Stephen K. Bailey; Lawrence A. Cremin; Robert K. Merton; and Arthur Jefferson. The study was conducted under the auspices of the Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc. (IDEA) and The Laboratory in School and Community Education, Graduate School of Education, University of California, Los Angeles.

*To Be Continued*

## **THE MAKING OF A GOOD WILL OR TRUST:**

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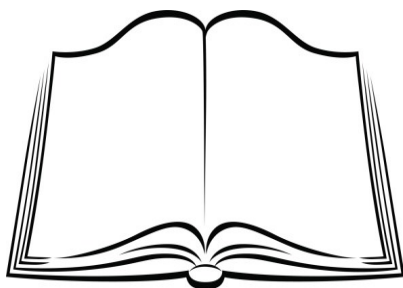
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# *The Catholic Mother to Her Children*

*The Countess de Flavigny*

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## *EIGHT LESSON*

*ON THE RESPECTFUL DEMEANOR WE OUGHT TO HAVE IN CHURCH*

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“My house shall be called the house of prayer.” Matthew 21:13

At that time, it was six days before His Passion, Our Savior entering God’s temple, drove out of it all those who came there to buy and to sell, He overturned their tables and chairs, and said: “My House shall be called a House of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.” We have much to learn from these few lines of the Holy Gospel! Let us meditate on them, my children: they will teach us to know the sentiments and feelings we ought to have in going to church.

Jesus Christ, speaking of the temple, said My House. It was, in fact, in the temple of Jerusalem that the holy majesty of God had taken up His dwelling; it was there that God has chosen His abode,

there He was to be adored by His creatures, there they were told to hearken to His voice. A Catholic Church, my children, can be still more rightly named the House of the Lord, for Jesus Christ resides there truly in the Sacrament of Eucharist. Our eyes cannot see Him, but Faith tells us He is really present among us. O My God, if our hearts were more fully persuaded of Thy August Presence, then indeed Thy House would be really the House of prayer, of that prayer which consists in glorifying Thee, in blessing Thee, in imploring Thy help, in confiding to Thee our misery! Poor children, you who have such great need of God’s blessing, and of His protection! When you go to Church, how can you so often forget that you are in the presence of One Who can do all He wills, and Who is ever ready to grant

all that is humbly asked of Him by prayer.

If Our Lord appeared now all at once in the temple certainly, He would not find sellers like those that He once drove away with such wrath; but now, to how many Christians without fervor, to how many heedless children given up to all sorts of distractions, might not Jesus Christ still say in a tone of reproach: "My House is a House of prayer!" To let your mind run on thoughts that have nothing to do with devotion; to be occupied only in looking at the people who come into the church and those who go out of it; to examine with curiosity the demeanor, perhaps even the dress of the persons who surround you, instead of looking into your own hearts to see what may be there displeasing to God, is not that, my children, being wanting in the respect due to the holy temple? And this sin, must be a very displeasing one in Jesus Christ's eyes, for it is the only one He punished with a severity not habitual to Him, to Him always so good, so full of indulgence and of gentleness. I know, my children, and God knows also, that at your tender age, the service must often seem long. It may also happen that sometimes the sermon is beyond your understanding. If, neverthe-

less, you lend it an attentive ear, you may now and then reap some simple advice, that God would make you understand quite well, in reward for the respect you show his holy word. This respect would assuredly be more charitable, and at the same time more beneficial to you, than the malicious and frequently improper remarks that you allow yourselves to make on the preacher's voice and gestures.

When the service is very long, it is not required of you, my children, to keep up your attention until you feel fatigued. When you have prayed a long time, you may close your book for a few moments, but at least you must maintain the pious thoughtfulness of your soul, and you must remain respectfully quiet so as to disturb no one around you. You may then examine the interior of the church; everything may be to you a source of useful reflections. Here first of all, at the entrance of the church, is the stone vessel which contains the holy water. This holy water used by the church in the greater part of her ceremonies, reminds us how necessary it is to be pure and without stain when about to appear before God: it contributes also to procure us



that purity of heart which God requires of us, and that is why it takes a part in the principal religious ceremonies of our life. When we shall have left this world, Jesus Christ's ministers and our friends will come once more and sprinkle some on us.

At the further end of the sanctuary, my children, is placed the high altar: it is ornamented with wax candles and chandeliers, during which may be seen the cross, that precious sign of our salvation. A little lower down, guarded by cherubim with gilt wings, is the tabernacle, where Jesus Christ dwells in the Sacrament of His Love. The Holy Sacrifice of Mass is celebrated every day on the Altar; a stone railing closes the sanctuary, that is the holy table, where the people come to receive the Blessed Sacrament.

Do you see further on, that chapel which you cannot help remarking among and above all the others? It is the chapel of the Blessed Virgin; in which are placed the varied flowers of each season; you will always meet there young girls who pray to Mary as to their kind patron, mothers who come to implore Mary to protect the lives of their children.

Here is the pulpit of truth, from which the pastor explains

the Gospel to the people; the confessional, from which you come forth with a contented heart, after having obtained the forgiveness of your sins; further on, the altar for the dead, with its black curtains, its emblems of sorrow, its funeral ornaments; in front, the baptismal font, where little children become little angels. Above, near the arched roof, you may perceive the organ with its grave and religious sounds. And at last, under this arch begins the long winding staircase which leads to the elevated turrets of the church. There hang the bells which sound the call to prayer and give pious thoughts to those Christians whom duty or illness keep away from the House of God.

May these reflections, my children, recur in your mind when you go to church; may you never, when there, experience a feeling of fatigue or weariness! Rather may you exclaim, like David: I rejoiced when these words were said to me: we are going to the House of the Lord. A single day passed in Your temple, O my God, is worth more than a thousand other days!"

# THE LITTLE CATECHISM OF THE CURÉ OF ARS

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



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## EXPLANATIONS AND EXHORTATIONS ON SIN

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Sin is a thought, a word, an action, contrary to the law of God.

By sin, my children, we rebel against the good God, we despise His justice, we tread under foot His blessings. From being children of God, we become the executioner and assassin of our soul, the offspring of Hell, the horror of Heaven, the murderer of Jesus Christ, the capital enemy of the good God. O my children! if we thought of this, if we reflected on the injury which sin offers to the good God, we should hold it in abhorrence, we should be unable to commit it; but we never think of it, we like to live at our ease, we slumber in sin. If the good God sends us remorse, we

quickly stifle it, by thinking that we have done no harm to anybody, that God is good, and that He did not place us on the earth to make us suffer.

Indeed, my children, the good God did not place us on the earth to suffer and endure, but to work out our salvation. See, He wills that we should work today and tomorrow; and after that, an eternity of joy, of happiness, awaits us in Heaven. O my children! how ungrateful we are! The good God calls us to Himself; He wishes to make us happy forever, and we are deaf to His word, we will not share His happiness; He enjoins us to love Him, and we give our heart to the devil. The good God commands all nature as its Master; He makes

the winds and the storms obey Him; the angels tremble at His adorable will: man alone dares to resist Him. See, God forbids us that action, that criminal pleasure, that revenge, that injustice; no matter, we are bent upon satisfying ourselves; we had rather renounce the happiness of Heaven, than deprive ourselves of a moment's pleasure, or give up a sinful habit, or change our life. What are we, then, that we dare thus to resist God? Dust and ashes, which He could annihilate with a single look...

By sin, my children, we despise the good God. We renew His Death and Passion; we do as much evil as all the Jews together did, in fastening Him to the Cross. Therefore, my children, if we were to ask those who work without necessity on Sunday: "What are you doing there?" and they were to answer truly, they would say, "We are crucifying the good God." Ask the idle, the gluttonous, the immodest, what they do every day. If they answer you according to what they are really doing, they will say, "We are crucifying the good God." O my children! it is very ungrateful to offend a God who has never

done us any harm; but is it not the height of ingratitude to offend a God who has done us nothing but good?

It is He who created us, who watches over us. He holds us in His hands; if He chose, He could cast us into the nothingness out of which He took us. He has given us His Son, to redeem us from the slavery of the devil; He Himself gave Him up to death that He might restore us to life; He has adopted us as His children, and ceases not to lavish His graces upon us. Notwithstanding all this, what use do we make of our mind, of our memory, of our health, of those limbs which He gave us to serve Him with? We employ them, perhaps, in committing crimes.

The good God, my children, has given us eyes to enlighten us, to see Heaven, and we use them to look at criminal and dangerous objects; He has given us a tongue to praise Him, and to express our thoughts, and we make it an instrument of iniquity — we swear, we blaspheme, we speak ill of our neighbor, we slander him; we abuse the supernatural graces, we stifle the salutary remorse by which God would convert

us...we reject the inspirations of our good guardian angel.

We despise good thoughts, we neglect prayer and the Sacraments. What account do we make even of the Word of God? Do we not listen to it with disgust? How miserable we are! How much we are to be pitied! We employ the time that the good God has given us for our salvation, in losing our souls. We make war upon Him with the means He has given us to serve Him; we turn His own gifts against Him! Let us cast our eyes, my children, upon Jesus fastened to the Cross, and let us say to ourselves, "This is what it has cost My Savior to repair the injury my sins have done to God."

A God coming down to the earth to be the victim of our sins! A God suffering, a God dying, a God enduring every torment, because He has put

on the semblance of sin, and has chosen to bear the weight of our iniquities! Ah, my children! at the sight of that Cross, let us conceive once for all the malice of sin, and the abhorrence in which we should hold it...Let us enter into ourselves, and see what we ought to do to repair our past sins; let us implore the clemency of the good God, and let us all together say to Him, from the bottom of our heart, "O Lord, Who art here crucified for us, have mercy upon us! Thou comest down from Heaven to cure souls of sin; cure us, we beseech Thee; cause our souls to be purified by approaching the tribunal of penance; yes, O God! make us look upon sin as the greatest of all evils, and by our zeal in avoiding it, and in repairing those we have had the misfortune to commit, let us one day attain to the happiness of the saints."



# ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

## *An Autobiography*

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### CHAPTER TWELVE THE APOSTLE OF PRAYER

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It is not only when He is about to send some trial that Our Lord gives me warning and awakens my desires. For years I had felt a longing to have a brother a priest, though I knew my wish could not be realized. I used often to think that if my little brothers had not been taken to Heaven I should have had the happiness of seeing them at the altar, and I greatly regretted being deprived of such a joy. Yet God went far beyond my dream. I had only longed for one brother who would remember me each day at the altar, and He has united me in the bonds of spiritual friendship with two of His apostles. I should like to tell you, dear Mother, how Our Divine Master granted me this favor.

In 1895, our Holy Mother, St. Teresa, sent my first brother as a gift for my feast. It was washing day and I was busy at my work when Mother Agnes of Jesus, then Mother Prioress, called me aside and read to me a letter from a young seminarist, in which he said he had been inspired by St. Teresa to

ask for a Sister who would devote herself specially to his salvation, together with that of the souls one day to be entrusted to him. He promised that when he was ordained he would always remember in the Holy Sacrifice the one who should become his sister in Christ. And thus it was that I was chosen to have this future missionary for my brother. I cannot tell you, Mother, how happy I felt. Such an unlooked-for fulfilment of my desires awoke in my heart what I can only describe as the joy of a child, and it carried me back to those early days when pleasures were so keen that my heart seemed too small to contain them. Years had passed since I had tasted such happiness. It was as if some forgotten chords had been stirred within me.

Conscious of my new obligations, I set to work to discharge them and strove to redouble my fervor. Now and again I wrote to my new brother. Beyond all doubt it is by prayer and sacrifice we can best help our missionaries, but

sometimes, when Our Lord is pleased to unite two souls for His glory, He permits them to exchange their thoughts and so rouse one another to a greater love for God. Such a correspondence must of course depend entirely on the express desire of those in authority, otherwise it seems to me it would do more harm than good — if not to the missionary, at least to the Carmelite, whose life is so largely one of thought. For a correspondence carried on at her own request, even at distant intervals, instead of uniting her to God would occupy her mind uselessly and perhaps lead her to believe that she was doing wonders, when in reality, under cover of zeal, she was simply procuring herself a needless distraction.<sup>1</sup>

But here am I, dear Mother, launched, not upon a distraction, but upon a dissertation equally superfluous. ... I shall never correct myself of these lengthy digressions which you must find most wearisome. Forgive me then, even if I begin again at the very next opportunity.

Last year, at the end of May, it was your turn to give me my second brother, and when I represented that, having given all my slender merits to one

future apostle, I feared they could not be given to another, you told me that obedience would double their value. In the depth of my heart I had felt certain of this, and moreover, since the zeal of a Carmelite ought to embrace the whole world, I hope with God's help to be of use to more than two missionaries. I pray for all, without forgetting our priests at home, whose ministry is often as full of difficulties as that of the missionary preaching to the heathen. Like our

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<sup>1</sup>St. Thérèse warned Mother Agnes of Jesus that if, after her death, young priests knew that she had been given as spiritual sister to two missionaries, they would solicit the same favour, and this might become a great danger. "It is only by prayer and sacrifice that we can be of use to the Church," she added. "Letters should be allowed but seldom, and not at all to those whom such a correspondence might pre-occupy, and who would injure their souls, under the impression that they were working wonders. This is a most important matter. We Carmelites must not manufacture false coin to purchase souls. Now too often fair words written and fair words received are merely an exchange of false coin." (*Spirit of St. Thérèse.*)

Holy Mother, St. Teresa, I wish to be a true daughter of the Church, and to make prayer for all the intentions of Christ's Vicar the one great aim of my life.

But just as I should have taken a special interest in the work of my own dear brothers had they lived, without neglecting on that account the general interests of the Church, so now I unite myself in a special manner to the new brothers whom Jesus has given me. To each of them belongs all I possess, for God is too good, too generous to divide my offering; He is so rich that He gives without measure all I ask, even though I do not lose myself in lengthy enumerations.

Since I have two brothers, as well as my little Sisters the novices, the days would be too short to ask in detail for the needs of each soul and I am afraid I might forget something important. Complicated methods are not for simple souls, and as I am one of these, Our Lord Himself has inspired me with a very simple way of fulfilling my obligations.

One day, after Holy Communion, He made me understand these words of Solomon: "Draw me: we will run after Thee to the odour of Thy oint-

ments." O my Jesus, there is no need then to say: In drawing me, draw also the souls that I love. The words "Draw me" suffice. When a soul has been captivated by the odour of Thy perfumes she cannot run alone; as a natural consequence of her attraction towards Thee, all those whom she loves are drawn in her train.

As a torrent bears down to the depths of the sea whatsoever it meets on its way, so likewise, my Jesus, does the soul that plunges into the boundless ocean of Thy Love bring with it all its treasures! My treasures, as Thou well knowest, are the souls it has pleased Thee to unite with mine, and which Thou Thyself hast confided to me. I dare, therefore, to borrow Thy own words, Thy prayer on the last night that saw Thee still a traveller on this earth.



*To Be Continued*



# FRANCISCAN SAINTS

APRIL 5TH

**Blessed John Penna**  
*Confessor, First Order*

A true son of our holy Father St. Francis was John of Penna in the March of Ancona, who was called by a heavenly messenger to be a follower of St. Francis. When our Seraphic Founder sent his first disciples into the provinces of Italy to preach penance and to extend the order, Brother Philip came to Penna in order to preach in the church of St. Stephen. At the same time, the devout young man John saw a youth of extraordinary beauty standing beside him, who invited him to go to St. Stephen's Church to listen attentively to the preacher. He added: "You will make a great journey, but at the end of it heaven itself will be opened to you." John went to the church, listened with astonishment to the zealous preacher, and after the sermon he begged for the habit of the Order.

'He was invested at the provincial chapter of the Order at Re-

canati, and in the year 1217 St. Francis sent him to France with many others of his brethren. His unchanging sweetness, his invincible patience, and his angelic purity drew all hearts to him. He spent twenty-five years in southern France, where he accomplished untold good for the salvation of souls and the extension of the Order. Meanwhile he earnestly desired that his earthly pilgrimage would draw to a close and that he might be permitted to go to God. Seated under a tree, he prayed as did the prophet Elias, "Lord, take away my soul" (3 Kings 19:4). But he received the same answer, "Thou hast yet a great way to go."

Then a messenger arrived from the Father Provincial of the Order recalling him to Italy. John set out joyfully in the hope that at the end of the journey Our Lord would call him to Himself. But he was



disappointed; he had to tarry thirty years before his hopes were realized.

Ever perfectly resigned, he accomplished much good with his patience and gentleness as guardian of several convents in Italy. Finally his end drew nigh. One night after Matins, as was his custom, he remained in contemplation until break of day, when an angel appeared to him and announced that his death was near and left to him the choice of suffering one day in purgatory or of expiating his remaining faults through seven days of sufferings here on earth. John chose to suffer seven days here. At once he fell sick with a high fever and pain in all his bodily members; besides, he was afflicted with great interior troubles of mind and temptations to despair. It seemed to him that he had never done anything good, but had burdened himself with great responsibility. The exhortation of his Father Confessor and his references to God's mercy comforted him. On the seventh day Our Divine Savior Himself appeared to him in all His glory, and with a marvelous sweetness put an end to all his sufferings and told him that eternal bliss was his portion. The soul of John then winged

its flight to heaven. This was in the year 1271. Pope Pius VII approved the devotion accorded to him from time immemorial. His feast is observed on April third.

## ON MEEKNESS

1.) Reflect the meekness which Blessed John displayed in the various circumstances of life. Sent to France at a very early age, he not only bore with meekness all the hardships of the journey, but in a country where he was unfamiliar with the language, and where he was certainly exposed to much contempt in his unusual garb, he bore everything with such meekness that he drew all hearts to himself. Although he earnestly desired to be with God, nevertheless he submitted patiently to the delay, bore the burden of official positions with meekness, and by means of this virtue was able to correct the imperfections of his brethren. His meekness was put to a final test amid the greatest sufferings of body and soul, and he was then admitted to his reward. Truly he could say with Our Divine Lord: "Learn of Me because I am meek and humble of heart" (Matth. 11: 29). — Is

there not, perhaps, a lesson in this for you?

2.) Consider how we should comply with the lessons taught by Christ and by Blessed John. Do not permit anger and ill will easily to find place in your heart. “The bee,” says St. Francis de Sales, “manufactures sweet honey even out of bitter juices, but the spider turns everything into poison.” Should ill will rage in your heart, should the flame of anger be kindled, then let it die there; if you open your lips, it will flare up. Whatever can be corrected, will be more easily achieved with meekness than with passionate anger. “A soft tongue shall break hardness” (Prov. 25:15). But if you have been overcome by anger, “or if it is a justifiable ill will at the offenses committed against God, then do not let passion sway you, but remember the admonition of the Apostle: “Be angry and sin not; let not the sun go down

upon your anger” (Eph. 4:26). — Do you act in this manner?

3.) Consider the reward of Christian meekness. Christ our Lord says: “Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land” (Matth. 5:4). They establish the land of their own hearts, since the meek person preserves that peace which surpasses all earthly happiness.

Through meekness one also wins over the hearts of others, as can be seen in Blessed John. That holy meekness, which is not weakness or indifference towards others but rather is interested in everything with Christian charity, comprehending and bearing all with an even temper — we love it in a child, we treasure it in a young woman or in a young man, we praise it in a woman, we respect it highly in a man. Here on earth it conquers the hearts of men, and in eternity it secures a place near the heart of God.

### ***PRAYER OF THE CHURCH***

O GOD, WHO, WHEN BLESSED JOHN, THY CONFESSOR, FAITHFULLY RESPONDED TO THY PROMISES, DIDST ADMIRABLY GUIDE HIM ON ALL THE PATHS OF LIFE, GRANT US BY THE SAME KINDNESS, THAT IN ALL THE VICISSITUDES OF LIFE WE MAY EVER OBEY THY PRECEPTS AND ARRIVE AT THE HAVEN OF ETERNAL BLISS.  
THROUGH CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

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