

# THE SERAPH

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# The Seraph

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*In essentia - Únitas. In dubio - Libertas.  
In omnibus - Caritas.*

THE SERAPH

# CANDLEMAS DAY & OUR PURIFICATION

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*Father Anthony Lentz, OFM*

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The feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or Candlemas Day, is a unique and spiritually enriching feast. It marks the official end of the Christmas Cycle and may occur during the Septuagesima season, the season which prepares us for the spiritual contest of Lent. The placement of this feast is not accidental but holds a deeper spiritual significance. To fully grasp this, we must delve into the origin and importance of this feast.

In the Western Rite (the Latin Rite), the feast of Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, forty days after Christmas. Why is it “forty days”? The reason for this takes us back to the Law of Moses. In his wonderful book, *The Holyday Book*, on page 86, Father Francis Weiser clearly explains: “*The Law of Moses prescribed that every Jewish mother after giving birth to a boy child was to be excluded*

*from attendance at public worship for forty days. At the end of the period, she had to present a yearling lamb for a holocaust and a pigeon for sin-offering, thus purifying herself from ritual uncleanness. In the case of poor people, two pigeons sufficed as an offering (Lev. 12, 2-8). The Gospel reports how Mary, after the birth of Jesus, fulfilled this command of the Law and how, on the same occasion, Simeon and Anna met the newborn Savior (St. Luke 2, 22-38). ”*

This feast was originally celebrated as one of Our Lord since He was present during the events commemorated. We know that its observance is from antiquity. “*The first historical description of the feast*”, says Father Weiser, “*is given in the diary of Egeria, a lady from the Roman province of Spain, who made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 380. She mentions that the service in Jerusalem began with a*

solemn procession in the morning, followed by a sermon on the Gospel text of the day, and finally, Mass was offered. At that time, the festival was kept on February 14 because the birth of Christ was celebrated on the Feast of the Epiphany (January 6<sup>th</sup>). It had no special name but was called 'the fortieth day after Epiphany.'" (ibid, page 87) The time and significance of this feast changed when the Church fixed the celebration of Christmas on December 25<sup>th</sup>. The Church did not designate this date for any historical reason, for there is no clear proof that this is when Our Lord was actually born, but she did it for liturgical and spiritual reasons. The Church wanted to replace the popular pagan winter solstice celebration with a truly Christian holyday. On December 25<sup>th</sup>, the Old Roman pagans celebrated what they called "the Birth of the Unconquered Sun." This was a feast of the Mithras cult to honor their Sun-god. Since about 400 A.D., the whole Christian world celebrated Christmas on December 25<sup>th</sup>. And it must be made clear that the early Christians never under-

stood that Christmas was merely the Christianization of this pagan feast. They understood that these were two different and distinct celebrations. The testament of some of the early Fathers attests to this belief. St. John Chrysostom (407) wrote in one of his books: "They (the pagans) call December twenty-fifth the 'Birthday of the Unconquered (Sun)': Who is indeed so unconquered as Our Lord? ... or, if they say that it is the birthday of the Sun: *He* is the Sun of Justice." (from St. John's work *On the Solstice and Equinox*)

Returning our attention to the Feast of the Purification, we see that it was definitely celebrated as a feast of the Blessed Virgin by the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Pope Sergius I (701) prescribed the procession with candles, a practice that symbolizes the light of Christ entering the world. Although he did not provide any special blessing for the candles, the ceremony of the blessing "*originated at the end of the eighth century in the Carolingian Empire (Charlemagne dynasty), as did most of the other liturgical blessings*

*(Easter fire, Easter water, palms, etc.)” (Holy Day Book, page 89)*

On this day, we are encouraged to follow the Blessed Virgin Mary for our own purification. She, who was free from sin, submitted herself to the precepts of the Law. May we willingly obey the Laws of God and His Holy Church. As we approach the Lenten sea-

son, when the precepts of the Church are most felt, let us use the mortifications prescribed by the Church as a means of purification from our sins. By following the Blessed Virgin’s example, we can become lights that shine on the mountain tops, inspiring others with the wonderful works of God’s grace.



“IF, THEN, WE ESTABLISH SOLID DEVOTION TO OUR BLESSED LADY, IT IS ONLY TO ESTABLISH MORE PERFECTLY DEVOTION TO JESUS CHRIST, AND TO PROVIDE AN EASY AND SECURE MEANS FOR FINDING JESUS CHRIST. IF DEVOTION TO OUR LADY REMOVED US FROM JESUS CHRIST, WE SHOULD HAVE TO REJECT IT AS AN ILLUSION OF THE DEVIL; BUT SO FAR FROM THIS BEING THE CASE, DEVOTION TO OUR LADY IS, ON THE CONTRARY, NECESSARY FOR US — AS I HAVE ALREADY SHOWN, AND WILL SHOW STILL FURTHER HEREAFTER — AS A MEANS OF FINDING JESUS CHRIST PERFECTLY, OF LOVING HIM TENDERLY, OF SERVING HIM FAITHFULLY.”

ST. LOUIS DE MONTFORT



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# NEW CHURCH COMMUNION VS. CATHOLIC COMMUNION

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*Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD*

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The *Catholic News Agency* published an article by Tyler Arnold on Dec. 13, 2024, entitled: “*Cardinal Cupich asks Catholics ‘to receive holy Communion standing’ in Chicago Archdiocese.*”

The Cardinal is quoted as saying: “The norm established by [the] Holy See for the universal Church and approved by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is for the faithful to process together as an expression of their coming forward as the body of Christ and to receive holy Communion standing. ... Nothing should be done to impede any of these processions. ... Disrupting this moment only diminishes this powerful symbolic expression, by which the faithful, in processing together, express their faith that they are called to become the very Body of Christ they receive. ... Certainly, reverence can and should be expressed by bowing before the reception of holy Communion. Still, no one should engage in a gesture that calls attention to one-

self or disrupts the flow of the procession. ... That would be contrary to the norms and tradition of the Church, which all the faithful are urged to respect and observe.”

As Tyler Arnold points out, the norm within the Latin rite for centuries before the Second Vatican Council was to receive Communion on the tongue while kneeling. The council’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, promulgated in 1963, did not make any changes in this norm. Instead, it responded to bishops permitting Communion in the hand while standing. The Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship issued the document *Memoriale Domini* in 1969 to permit the practice in some circumstances but emphasized the need to ‘avoid any risk of lack of respect or of false opinions with regard to the blessed Eucharist and to avoid any other ill effects that may follow’ when allowing Communion in the hand.

In THE CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA (1908), under the heading “Communion-Bench,” we read: “Standing in front of this barrier, in a space called the chancel, or pectoral, the faithful were wont in early times to receive Holy Communion, the men taking the Consecrated Bread into their hands and the women receiving it on a white cloth, called the dominical, while deacons administered the Precious Blood which each took through a reed of gold or silver. About the twelfth century, when the custom arose of receiving under one kind only, the priests placed the small Hosts on the tongues of the communicants at the chancel-rail. Later on, about the fifteenth century the practice was introduced of receiving Holy Communion kneeling, and so the altar-rail gradually came to assume a form better suited to its modern use, and like what it is at present.”

After reading Cardinal Cupich’s quotes, I cannot help but recall that people bow or kneel before secular royalty (kings). In Western culture, men kneel when proposing marriage. Is it not obviously proper for us to kneel before

the King of Kings — God the Son? Is it not appropriate for us to kneel before the Bridegroom of our souls, Jesus Christ?

As we consider Cardinal Cupich’s words, a question arises: Does the Cardinal and the New Church believe in the True Presence in the Holy Eucharist? When the Cardinal says the faithful are ‘coming forward as the body of Christ and to receive holy Communion standing,’ is he inadvertently confusing or equating the faithful with Jesus Christ? Is the bread they receive Jesus Christ, or are the people themselves Jesus Christ? These questions raise important theological concerns that we, as Catholics, should carefully consider.

In the Catholic Church, the act of receiving Holy Communion is a deeply reverent and solemn moment. The recipient kneels and the priest, speaking in Latin, says: “May the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve your soul to life everlasting. Amen.” *“Corpus Dómini nostri Jesu Christi custódiat ánimam tuam in vitam ætérnam Amen.”* The recipient, in a gesture of humility and reverence, says



nothing and waits with his tongue extended to receive Jesus from the hand of the priest. This practice ensures that the unconsecrated hands of the laity never directly touch the Body of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist, maintaining the utmost respect for the sacrament.

In the New Church, the minister (clergy or appointed laity) administers Communion with the words “The Body of Christ.” In an awkward moment, the communicant responds with ‘Amen.’ This practice, where the communicant speaks during Communion, raises critical questions about the reverence and solemnity of the sacrament, particularly when receiving on the tongue.

The question now arises: when the New Church says “The Body of Christ,” do they believe that the bread being given is the Body of Christ, or is the person receiving the bread the Body of Christ? The Church has often been called the “Mystical Body of Christ,” a term that refers to the collective body of believers united in Christ. Is the New Church deliberately confusing or equating Christ’s

mystical presence in the life of the Church with His real, true, and physical Presence in the Holy Eucharist?

Perhaps the New Church is demonstrating what we concluded many years ago. The New Church has different (in our studied opinion, invalid) sacramental rites. Their priests are not ordained true Catholic priests but rather ordained Protestant ministers. Their Eucharist is not the real Body of Jesus Christ, but instead, as Protestants believe, a symbolic representation. This departure from the Catholic tradition raises questions about the New Church’s belief in transubstantiation as defined and understood by the Catholic Church prior to the Second Vatican Council. The act of receiving standing and in the hand suggests a departure from belief in transubstantiation. The use of the unqualified and indeterminate words: “The Body of Christ” appears to support, at minimum, a false belief or understanding of transubstantiation.

We recall that the “Spirit of Vatican II” was about experimenting with liturgy to find out what was useful or helpful to the people. Deviating from

the norm was encouraged and promoted. However, the aftermath of this experimentation has led to a material suppression of the True Church by the New Church. The New Church, having sown the seeds of confusion and doubt in its liturgies, now demands conformity and compliance.

True sacraments, true beliefs, and true worship become better defined and understood with the development of Church norms and practices. It is insincere to refer to the ancient customs that were abandoned with the development and advancement of

doctrine, custom, and liturgies. What was deliberately dismissed because of abuses and false understandings should not be re-established. But this is exactly what the New Church has done in returning to the abandoned practices of ancient times. In this, too, we see surprising similarities between the New Church and the Protestant Churches. We see and apply many of the doctrines decreed against Protestantism by the Council of Trent apply today to the New Church.

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# VIRTUE IS IN THE MIDDLE

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*Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD*

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Saint Thomas the Apostle is often called “doubting Thomas” because of his insistence on empirically verifying the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus answered Saint Thomas’ incredulity by showing Himself to him. “Put in thy finger hither, and see My hands, and bring hither thy hand, and put it into My side; and be not faithless but believing. ... Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen and have believed” (*Saint John 20:27-29*).

On the other hand, we have Saint John, who says: “Dearly beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (*1 John 4:1*).

We must strive to avoid Saint Thomas's incredulity, but we must also remember to avoid blind trust in every false doctrine that comes from the dev-

ils or the world. We must seek to be skeptical but not incredulous.

Many non-Catholic “Christians” hold the Bible up as the absolute discerners of truth from falsity – “Sola Scriptura.” They wish to reject everything that is not explicitly stated in the Bible. This is absurd because not everything is mentioned in the Bible, nor does the Bible lay claim to this authority. “But there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written” (*Saint John 21:25*).

The Bible is nothing without the living authority of the Catholic Church, which upholds it. The Catholic Church collected, authenticated, codified, and translated the written works that comprise what even the modern Protestants accept as the “Bible.” I make this exception for the many non-Catholics because they simply

omit anything from the Bible that undermines their false doctrines and claim that they now have a “purer” Bible than what the Catholic Church has given them. It is, however, undeniable that what they do have, they have because they have taken it from the Catholic Church.

If something is found in the Bible, it is true, but this does not imply that every truth must be found in the Bible. Every intact cup can hold water, but not all water is found in cups. One of the greatest proofs of the certainty of a doctrine is that Jesus has said it. If we can find Jesus's very words in the Bible, we will have the uninterrupted authentication of Jesus' words by the Catholic Church. The living Catholic Church gives authenticity to the Bible – not the Bible to the Catholic Church. However, the Bible offers us indirect proof of the Catholic Church. Scripture and tradition go hand in hand. They are two sides of the same coin. We cannot have one without the other. Jesus did not write these things down but related them orally to the Church through the Apostles. The Holy Ghost inspired the Evangelists to put

the words and teachings of Jesus Christ in writing so that future generations could easily access them.

Our second level of proof, after quoting directly from Jesus Christ, is an uninterrupted practice, tradition, or belief that dates back to the early Church, the Church Fathers, and/or the Apostles. The third level of verification is reason. Reason is a powerful tool in our quest for truth. If something agrees with all the other verifiable truths and logically flows or develops from these truths, then it must itself be true. We must not underestimate the power of reason in our journey of faith.

We know that even devils can quote Scripture (*Saint Matthew 4:6*). What the demons lack is the honesty or integrity to interpret them correctly. In the world, many can misquote the Scriptures, just like demons. Few are humble enough to submit their understanding to the scrutiny of Tradition or the living authority of the Catholic Church.

Someone once said that he had “searched the entire Bible and cannot find anywhere that it

says that Mary Ascended into Heaven.” This would be humorous if it were not so tragic. How illogical is it to search for something where you think, believe, or hope that it cannot be found? Then, if you wish to discredit a Catholic doctrine, you should probably make sure you know what that doctrine is that you are trying to discredit. The Catholic doctrine is that Mary was Assumed (not Ascended) into Heaven. Jesus Ascended into Heaven. Mary was Assumed into Heaven. Jesus acted by His own power. Mary was taken into Heaven by the power of God – not her own. Next, the doctrine of Mary’s Assumption is based on tradition and reason more than Sacred Scripture.

Not finding something in the Bible does not make it false. If we are to engage in this foolish logic, then we should abstain from belief, trust, or the use of many things. Automobiles, modern medicine, electricity, modern appliances, technologies, etc., are not found in the Bible.

Before trusting material principles, we test them with empirical evidence. Before trusting

spiritual principles, we test them with conformity to the clearly recorded, defined, and accepted Scripture and Tradition of the living authority of the Catholic Church.

Incredulity can easily become overwhelming, and when this happens, the demons are eager to promote indifferentism. When we are overwhelmed with all the subjective or false beliefs and teachings of others, we are tempted to protect or harden ourselves through indifferentism. This is a dangerous path. We often hear phrases like: “One religion is as good as another.” “We all believe in the same God.” “As long as you are sincere.” etc. These are the whispers of indifferentism, a dangerous trap that we must avoid at all costs.

We witness this in the false ecumenism of the Modernist New Church. Because God is Truth, accepting everyone’s subjective “truths” is rejecting objective truth – God Himself. Indifferentism to the false “truths” of others is equal to indifferentism to their eternal salvation. If we are indifferent to the salvation of our neighbors, we cannot say that we love them. If we are indiffer-

ent, we cannot claim to love God, Who has commanded us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves.

Jesus has taught us that He detests indifferentism: "I would thou wert cold or hot: But because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth" (*Apocalypse 3:15-16*).

In the many false religions, we can often search the origins and see the very subjective origins as opposed to the straightforward, objective truth that is given to us by God through His Church. The Anglican Church finds its origins in the clearly subjective and adulterous desires of King Henry VIII. The spiritual weakness of Martin Luther, bolstered by demonic pride, led to the very subjective "truth" (error) that we are incapable of being good, so we should stop trying and simply believe and trust in the mercy of God.

The New Church sought a kind of Masonic indifferentism. They don't care what religion is practiced or how it is practiced as long as everyone bows before the Masonic altar.

Pagan Rome welcomed and permitted every religion and made a place for them in the pantheon as long as they recognized Rome's authority or power over them all.

The sincerity of those in false religions does not make their subjective "truth" (error) objectively true. The subjective "Jesus" of the Protestants is not the true Jesus. They are not the same. Protestant "Jesus" says it is okay to divorce and remarry. The true objective Jesus condemns this. Protestant "God" says that Communion is symbolically receiving Jesus. Objective God says that Holy Communion is truly receiving Jesus (true God and true Man). It has been said that they may be sincere, but they are sincerely wrong.

This false ecumenism/indifferentism is readily seen in Protestant and New Church sects. However, it is more and more obvious in the many "Traditionalist" sects. Each "Traditionalist" sect is founded on one or more subjective "truths." So many are only concerned with the nostalgia of Latin. (Latin is lovely club.) They generally do not care about doctrine and sometimes

not even about morality. Distinctions between valid and invalid, licit and illicit, are lost on them. An actor donning Traditional Mass Vestments, going through the motions of the True Mass is all they really want. They are indifferent to the validity of the “priest,” the “ritual,” or the “sacraments.” If they cannot get exactly what they want, then they are content with the next closest thing. If they cannot get to a Latin Mass, then they go to a conservative vernacular one.

Among Traditionalists, there is anarchy. Some bishops and priests say they have no jurisdiction or authority while doing all the things that require true objective jurisdiction. Some claim Bergoglio is their pope, but they see no need to obey him. Laity bounce from one bishop to another and from one priest to another regardless of the true order of the Catholic Church. It is hard to condemn them when the “clergy” is just as subjective or indifferent.

It is true that God accepts the desire for the deed, but this implies that our desires are real and not just wishful thinking or subjective dreams. If we

truly desire to know something, we actively seek it out; we study it; we don’t simply make an empty wish and then do nothing. The sincerity of such desires is a thin veil of indifferentism.

It is shocking to the world when true Catholic bishops stand up and say that the New Church is not the Catholic Church, that the head (pope) of the New Church is not the pope of the true Catholic Church. It is shocking to the world when true Catholic bishops say that we are currently without a true vicar of Jesus Christ here on earth, but Jesus Christ, the True Head of the Church, still looks over and guides the Church even in the absence of a true vicar here on earth. It is shocking to the world when true Catholic bishops say that they have jurisdiction and that laity and priests must be subject to them.

The objective truth may be hard to believe, but it is better to embrace the cross than to embrace subjective “truths” (errors) and turn away from the cross.

# IS GOD CALLING YOU?

*“Be not conformed to this world; but be reformed in the newness of your mind, that you may prove what is the good, and the acceptable, and the perfect will of God.”*

*Romans 12:2*

*Do you love serving God and neighbor?*

*Do you find yourself increasingly unsatisfied by the life of the world?*

*Do you yearn for something more?*

*Not all of us are meant for marriage or a life in the world. Some souls are set aside by God for special tasks. These are the souls that find joy and contentment in the religious life or sacred priesthood.*

*Do not be deterred by what you think you know or by what the world tells you. Find out for yourself. If you feel called, then at least learn more.*

*Any happiness we may have on earth and all the joy we hope for in heaven depend on answering God’s individual call for us. The sooner we do His Will, the happier we will be.*







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# A BIBLE READING GUIDE

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*Father Anthony Lentz, OFM*

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For the needs of the ordinary priest and layman, a very practical program of Bible reading is suggested by the Church's outline in the Breviary. The Breviary covers the whole Bible in one year, not chapter by chapter, or book by book, but in an order which follows the development of the Church Year. The following guide is based on the Breviary outline, and is adapted to the use of the laity. Do not feel bound to read the chapters with lists of names or laws which occur in some parts of the Bible; they have a purpose there, but not necessarily for you, and might only discourage you from reading further; it is not irreverent to skip them.

*Note: This plan starts with the beginning of the Church Year, the First Sunday of Advent.*

**December:** The Prophecy of Isaias & the Gospel of St. Luke

**January:** The Epistles of St. Paul

**February:** The Books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, (Leviticus might be skipped), Numbers & Deuteronomy

**March:** The Prophecy of Jeremias and Baruch

**April:** The Lamentations of Jeremias (*During Holy Week*)

**May:** The Acts of the Apostles; the Two Epistles of St. Peter; the Epistle of St. James; the Three Epistles of St. John & the Epistle of St. Jude

**June:** The Gospel of St. Mark & the Apocalypse of St. John

**July:** The Book of Josue; the Book of Judges; the Book of Ruth & the Four Books of Kings

**August:** The Book of Proverbs; Ecclesiastes; Cantic of Canticles; the Book of Wisdom & Ecclesiasticus

**September:** The Two Books of Esdras; the Book of Job; the Book of Tobias; the Book of Judith & the Book of Esther

**October:** The Two Books of the Machabees

**November:** The Prophecy of Ezechiël; the Prophecy of Daniel and the Minor Prophecies from Osee to Malachias

(Note: The two books called Paralipomenon, which follows the Books of Kings in the Old Testament, have not been included on this list, since they cover the same periods as the Books of Kings, though with incidents of their own. They might be read in July after the others books assigned to that month have been finished.)

This plan does not suggest that all the books assigned to a given month must be read within that calendar month. It would be far better to choose one of the assigned books for a given month of one year, another for the same month of the next year. For example: during November of this year, the Prophecy of Ezechiël; for November of next year, the Prophecy of Daniel; for November of the following year, a few of the Minor Prophecies; and so on. Within five years the whole ground could be easily covered.

In the *Book of Psalms*, it is suggested that one or two psalms be taken each day. As this is the great prayer book of the Bible, used by Jesus Himself, it ought to be read every day, and not for just one month of a year. Most of the Psalms are quite short, and one or two of them could form the direct prayer portion of your daily Bible period.

### GATHERING BIBLE VERSES

Never read the Bible, even devotionally, without a pencil in your hand, ready to underline special passages, or to write your observations in the margin. This helps to keep the mind alert, and to simplify the finding of your favorite passages later on. Be especially watchful for verses which deepen and heighten your perception of God – of His beauty, His power, His goodness, His mercy, His holiness, His love. With a little industry you could copy out the most striking verses into a small notebook for use in your devotion.

# THE COMMUNIST THREAT

*Father Joseph Noonan, OFM*

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## ***Part Thirty-Two: 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.*

**1981**

In a 1981 Alaska Governor's **Task Force Report on Effective Schooling** to the Honorable Jay S. Hammond the following statements were made in regard to mastery learning and direct instruction (highly structured learning activities):

It has been determined that in the learning of specific skills and factual data that it is possible to enhance achievement by using the approach of mastery learning, wherein instructional objectives are clearly defined — and instructional activities are tied directly to objectives. It has been demonstrated that direct instruction—highly structured learning activity — is effective with certain groups of students. These approaches will assist students with low

achievement to move closer to the current mean or average. Yet, a highly structured system of instruction applied to everyone may in fact impede the progress of those students achieving at a level above the current mean or average. The result is that, while variance (or the spread of scores from the mean) is reduced, there is a reduction in both directions. Low achievers may move closer to the mean, but high achievers may well do likewise. The examples presented above regarding achievement may well apply to the operation of schools. If effective schooling practices are too narrow and a rigid system results, variance among districts will be reduced, but the limiting of creativity and the limiting of schools in their ability to adapt to local circumstances will cause reduction in variance from both above and below the mean or average. (pp. 38–39)

**Charlotte Iserbyt's Note:** The introduction to this report

which stated: "As part of the Task Force effort several studies were conducted by Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory under contract with the (Alaska) Department of Education," should explain to the reader that the U.S. Department of Education has funded — and continues to fund — mastery learning and direct instruction programs even in the face of evaluative evidence that strongly suggests that average and above average students do not benefit from such educational approaches.

**Two important Conferences for "School Improvement"** were sponsored by The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (U.S. Department of Education) in 1981. They are described below:

**MEETING THE FUTURE:** Improving Secondary Schools with Goal-Based Approaches to Instruction. Marriott Hotel, Portland, Oregon. Major addresses: "Alternative Futures for Our Society and Implications for Education" by Dr. Harold Pluimer, Futurist and Educational Consultant, Minneapolis, Minnesota and "School Effectiveness and Implications for Secondary School Improve-

ment" by Dr. Alan Cohen, Professor of Education, University of San Francisco.

Sessions on Innovative Practices: "Improving Goals, Objectives and Competencies; Making the Community a Resource for Learning"; "Learning through Mastery Techniques; Organizing for Continuous Progress"; "Involving Teachers as Advisors to Students"; "Individualizing Programs for All Students"; "Managing Instruction with Computers"; "Developing Options for Student Assessment"; "Improving Record Keeping and Reporting Procedures"; "Increasing Staff Motivation through Group Planning and Decision-Making"; "Techniques for Managing School Improvement"; "Concerns-Based Adoption Model"; "Force Field Analysis"; "Curriculum Alignment Processes"; "Staff Development Models," and "Wisconsin R&D Center Model for School Improvement."

**Microcomputers in Today's Schools: A Conference for Educational Leaders.** Benson Hotel and NWREL Headquarters, Portland, Oregon. Major addresses: "Why We Went for Micros and What Our Community Had to Say about It"

by Dr. Billy Reagan, Superintendent, Houston, Texas Public Schools; "Tomorrow's Technology in Today's Schools" by Dr. Dexter Fletcher, World Institute for Computer-Assisted Teaching, and others.

The National Education Association published NEA Special Committee on ***Instructional Technology Report*** which was presented to their 60th Representative Assembly, held July 4–7, 1981. An excerpt from the report related to the problems of programmed learning (computer assisted instruction) follows:

In its coming involvement with a technology of instruction, the profession will be faced again with the challenge of leadership — by example and by effective communication — the challenge of convincing the public that education is much more than treating students like so many Pavlovian dogs, to be conditioned and programmed into docile acceptance of a do-it-yourself blueprint of the Good Life.

The problems associated with technology, in its final analysis, are problems of freedom and control. Whose freedom?

Whose control? As a result of its study, the committee urges the Association to view the problems and promises of instructional technology not as a single issue but rather as a broad continuum of issues affecting all aspects of education and teaching—from purposes to products, from political pragmatism to professional practice. Most problems produced by technology have to do with the human use of human beings. In his book, *The Illusion of Technique: A Search for Meaning in a Technological Civilization* (Doubleday: New York, 1978), William Barrette observes that — Human creativity exceeds the mechanisms it invents and is required even for their intelligent direction.... If we try to flee from our human condition into the computer we only meet ourselves there.

**“Families and Schools: A System of Mutual Support,”** A speech delivered in 1981 by Secretary of Education T.H. Bell before a Freeman Institute audience in Utah, included Bell's recommendation that schools should use Professor Lawrence Kohlberg's "Ethical Issues in Decision Making" to teach values. (A synopsis of Kohlberg's

*Stages of Moral Development* is contained in a 1975 entry on the topic.)

In 1981 **Maine's State Capacity Building grant** from The National Institute of Education (NIE), U.S. Department of Education, was examined and verbatim notes taken by this writer from the file at NIE. The same Capacity Building Grants were made to all fifty state departments of education. The writer has selected this important grant as an example of federal control of local education through federal funding. The following verbatim notes will help the reader understand the farce of local control and ***why the U.S. Department of Education must be abolished*** (author's emphasis).

This particular grant was of extreme interest to the writer due to her involvement in the late seventies — along with Bettina Dobbs, the president of Guardians of Education for Maine (GEM) — in a statewide, grassroots effort to stop the very controversial State Health Education Program (SHEP) funded in part by the Kellogg Foundation. Believe it or not, as a word of encouragement, GEM was in-

strumental in stopping this education program in many school districts (a good example of David and Goliath in the twentieth century). Evidently, the above referenced NIE grant was used to further the implementation of this and other health education programs. Other states would use these grants for whatever programs they perceived to be of importance to them at that time. State budget requests for matching funds would be listed simply as "State Capacity Building." NIE Grant G-80-0025 was in the amount of \$98,000 per year for four years. Maine's share towards total federal funding was to be \$118,025 out of the four-year total of \$392,000. Excerpts from the grant request follow:

These systems will emphasize staff development as primary vehicle for promoting utilization of state and national information resources for purpose of school improvement....

Brief description of Project: This project is attempting to develop a means by which Maine educators can easily acquire and use information for problem solving and school improvement....

## OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop computerized information resource base which includes national, state and local resources.
2. Develop an information service that provides easy access to the information resource base.
3. Refinement of computer program and initiation of revision of data collection forms (upon recommendation of a Technical Assistance Team from the National Institute of Education).
4. Develop a system for coordinating, disseminating, and distributing school improvement efforts with the state education agency....

1/30/80... D \_\_\_\_\_ wanted to know about a technical assistance team at NIE that works with projected content of private data banks.... Believe B \_\_\_\_\_ heads such a team and could help her with her file building activities....

## DEVELOPMENT OF MAINE DATA BASE:

Administration, coordination and facilitation of Development of a Statewide School Practice/ Improvement Sys-

tem.... A meeting was held with the Systems Analyst of the State Education Agency to explore private file development options available through the state government computer.... Model for staff development.... Training of State Health Education Program (SHEP) staff in completing and editing data collection forms.... SHEP will receive printouts for all health education resources entered into Maine Resource Bank.

Early in 1981 **The President's Task Force on Private Sector Initiatives** was installed at 734 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. Membership listed on The White House letterhead read like a "Who's Who" of individuals in government agencies, universities, tax-exempt foundations, non-governmental organizations, business, media, labor unions, and religion. The names of some individuals on the task force follow: William Aramony, president, United Way; William J. Baroody, Jr., president, American Enterprise Institute; Helen G. Boosalis, mayor, City of Lincoln, Nebraska; Terence Cardinal Cooke, archbishop of New York; Governor Pierre S. Dupont,



Delaware; Senator David Duranberger; Luis A. Ferre, former governor of Puerto Rico; John Gardner, chairman, Independent Sector; Edward Hill, pastor, Mt. Zion Baptist Church; Michael S. Joyce, executive director, John M. Olin Foundation; Edward H. Kiernan, president, International Association of Police; Arthur Levitt, Jr., chairman, American Stock Exchange; Richard W. Lyman, president, Rockefeller Foundation; Elder Thomas S. Monson, The Mormon Church; William C. Norris, chairman and CEO, Control Data Corporation; George Romney, chairman, National Center for Citizen Involvement; C. William Verity, Jr., chairman, Armco Steel, Inc.; Jeri J. Winger, first vice president, General Federation of Women's Clubs; Thomas H. Wyman, president, CBS, Inc.; and William S. White, president, C.S. Mott Foundation.

This totally new and un-American concept of partnerships between public and private sector has been readily accepted by our elected officials who ignore its roots in socialism and its implications for the discontinuation of our representative form of government and accountability to the

taxpayers. Under the "partnership" process, determining responsibility when something goes wrong is like pinning Jello to the wall.

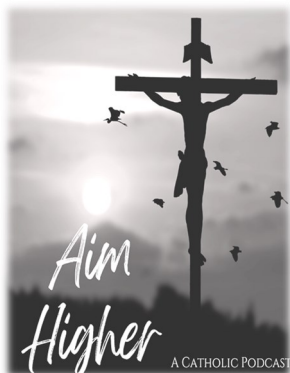
Such a change in government, if presented in clear language to citizens at the polls, would be rejected. However, when implemented gradually, using the Marxist-Hegelian Dialectic, citizens don't even notice what is happening. The shift is away from elected representatives. In time, after voters have become even more disenchanted with the candidates and election results, fewer and fewer citizens will vote. At that point a highly-respected member of the public will enter the picture to propose a solution to the problem: some sort of compromise toward parliamentary form of government found in socialist democracies which will be acceptable to Americans unfamiliar with the protections guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.

One says to oneself, confidently, "This will never happen." Look around you. What do you see? Site-based management in your local schools, transferring decision-making, traditionally exercised by

elected school boards, to politically correct appointees and the creation of unelected task forces at all government levels; proposals to “separate school and state” which make no mention of governmental and social structure consequences — efforts to have government money (taxes) pay for services delivered by private religious or home-schools, etc., with no public

representation. There can be no accountability to the taxpayers under a system so alien to the United States’ form of representative government.

How clean, neat and tidy. Wholesale destruction of an entire, wonderful system of government without firing a shot.



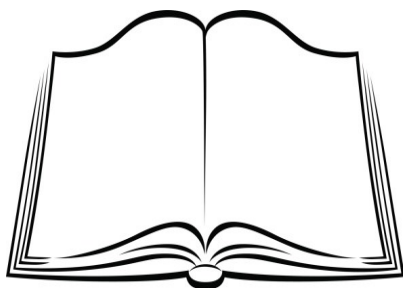
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# *The Catholic Mother to Her Children*

*The Countess de Flavigny*

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## **SIXTEENTH LESSON**

*WEDNESDAY OF THE HOLY WEEK*

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“The kings of the earth, stood up, and the princes assembled together against the Lord, and against His Christ.” Acts 4:26

On the Monday and Tuesday of the Holy Week, my children, nothing particular takes place in Church. On the Wednesday begins the service of the *Tenebrae*, which is also celebrated on the two following days. This service is so called because it is sung in the evening; it is also called *Nocturn*, because formerly it began at midnight. The *Tenebrae* are composed of psalms, of passages taken from the writings of the holy Fathers, and from the Lamentations of Jeremiah. These lamentations are sorrowful chants, which were inspired to Jeremiah by the knowledge imparted him by

**FEBRUARY 2025**

God, of the impending ruin of Jerusalem. All the prayers of *Tenebrae* are sung in a slow and mournful tone. During this office it is customary to light a triangular candlestick composed of fifteen branches, in each of which I fixed a wax-paper; at the end of each psalm, one of these wax-tapers is extinguished. These wax-papers represent the light of heavenly knowledge gradually diffused over the world by the succeeding prophets until the coming of the Son of God on earth. The last taper alone remains lit; and is emblematic of Jesus Christ, Who is the True Light of man during all eternity.

Our Lord, my children, had returned from Jerusalem to Bethania; where He lived in the house of Simon the leper.

On the eve of the day on which He was for the last time to eat the Pasch with His disciples, Our Lord foretold His approaching death. On that same day the chief priests and ancients of the people were gathered together in the house of Caiphas, the high priest; they all hated Jesus Christ, on account of the affection the people showed Him, and also because the virtues preached by Our Lord were the condemnation of their vices. They met together accordingly to deliberate on the means of putting Jesus to death, and they said: "Not on the festival day, lest perhaps there should be a tumult among the people." In the meantime, Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve Apostles, inspired by the demon of covetousness, shamefully plotted to sell his Divine Master. He went to the princes of the priests, and said to them: "What will you give me, and I will deliver Him up to you?" They promised him thirty pieces of silver, and from thenceforth he sought for an opportunity to betray Our Lord.

All the secrets of men's hearts are known to Jesus, Who was therefore fully aware of

Judas's criminal design. We can all the more easily imagine how deeply the ingratitude of one He had so loved must have wounded the heart of Our Savior. He most assuredly felt then what David experienced when persecuted and betrayed by his son Absalom: "I am torn with anguish in the depths of my soul," said the holy king; "It is not my enemy who insults me: it is thou, my son, thou whom I loved, thou, a part of myself."

How effectually do these sorrowful words express the sadness thou must have felt, O My Savior, at thy Apostle's treason! How can I explain the sentiments with which such odious conduct inspires me? I feel my heart swell with indignation. And yet, my God, when I prefer my pleasure to Thy Holy Will, as I often had the misfortune to do, when I disobey Thy laws after promising Thee to be faithful, do I not also betray Thee? Do I not, to a certain degree, imitate the ingratitude of Judas?

# 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 DEATH

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A day will come, perhaps it is not far off, when we must bid adieu to life, adieu to the world, adieu to our relations, adieu to our friends. When shall we return, my children? Never. We appear upon this earth, we disappear, and we return no more; our poor body, that we take such care of, goes away into dust, and our soul, all trembling, goes to appear before the good God. When we quit this world, where we shall appear no more, when our last breath of life escapes, and we say our last adieu, we shall wish to have passed our life in solitude, in the depths of a desert, far from the world and its pleasures. We have these examples of repentance before our eyes every day, my children, and we remain always the same. We pass our

life gaily, without ever troubling ourselves about eternity. By our indifference to the service of the good God, one would think we were never going to die.

See, my children, some people pass their whole life without thinking of death. It comes, and behold! they have nothing; faith, hope, and love, all are already dead within them. When death shall come upon us, of what use will three-quarters of our life have been to us? With what are we occupied the greatest part of our time? Are we thinking of the good God, of our salvation, of our soul? O my children! what folly is the world! We come into it, we go out of it, without knowing why. The good God places us in it to serve Him, to try if

we will love Him and be faithful to His law; and after this short moment of trial, He promises us a recompense. Is it not just that He should reward the faithful servant and punish the wicked one? Should the Trappist, who has passed his life in lamenting and weeping over his sins, be treated the same as the bad Christian, who has lived in abundance in the midst of all the enjoyments of life? No, certainly not. We are on earth not to enjoy its pleasures, but to labor for our salvation.

Let us prepare ourselves for death; we have not a minute to lose: it will come upon us at the moment when we least expect it; it will take us by surprise. Look at the saints, my children, who were pure; they were always trembling, they pined away with fear; and we, who so often offend the good God — we have no fears. Life is given us that we may learn to die well, and we never think of it. We occupy ourselves with everything else. The idea of it often occurs to us, and we always reject it; we put it off to the last moment. O my children! this last moment, how much it is to be feared! Yet the good God does not wish us to despair; He shows us the good thief, touched with repentance, dying near Him on the cross; but he is the only one; and then see, he

dies near the good God. Can we hope to be near Him at our last moment — we who have been far from Him all our life? What have we done to deserve that favor? A great deal of evil, and no good.

There was once a good Trappist Father, who was trembling all over at perceiving the approach of death. Someone said to him, “Father, of what then are you afraid?” “Of the judgment of God,” he said. “Ah! if you dread the judgment — you who have done so much penance, you who love God so much, who have been so long preparing for death — what will become of me?” See, my children, to die well we must live well; to live well, we must seriously examine ourselves: every evening think over what we have done during the day; at the end of each week review what we have done during the week; at the end of each month review what we have done during the month; at the end of the year, what we have done during the year. By this means, my children, we cannot fail to correct ourselves, and to become fervent Christians in a short time. Then, when death comes, we are quite ready; we are happy to go to Heaven.



# FRANCISCAN SAINTS

**FEBRUARY 16TH**  
**Blessed Veridiana**  
*Virgin, Third Order*

Veridiana was born in the year 1182 at Castelfiorentino, near Florence, of the noble family of the Attavanti. Her vocation to a higher life was discernible even in her youth; she loved seclusion, prayer, and works of penance. As she advanced in years, she grew in grace, and her innocence and virtue won for her the love and veneration of everyone with whom she came in contact.

As a young girl, Veridiana was sent to the home of a relative to assist his wife in the administration of the household. Here she displayed good sense that was quite extraordinary for one of her age. She also utilized every opportunity to practice works of charity.

Once in a famine she distributed to the poor a great quantity of beans from the store-

rooms, not knowing that they had already been sold by her uncle. When the buyer arrived to get them and the bins were found empty, her uncle reproached her bitterly. Veridiana, deeply grieved, prayed all night long, and lo, in the morning the bins of the store-room were again filled to the brim.

The news of this miracle spread far and wide, and in order to avoid the marks of respect that were being shown her on all sides, she undertook a pilgrimage to Compostella, in Spain, to the grave of St. James the Apostle, and later also to the tombs of the Apostles in Rome.

Upon her return home, Veridiana had an anchorage built hard by the chapel of St. Anthony in Florence. The cell is

preserved to this day. It is ten feet long and three and a half feet wide. For furniture there is only a ledge, a foot wide, projecting from the stone wall and serving as a seat. A small window in the cell opens upon the chapel. Through it she could attend holy Mass and receive holy Communion as well as the necessary bodily nourishment.

Veridiana was only twenty-six years old when, with a crucifix in her arms and escorted by her spiritual director and a great number of people, she entered the narrow cell and permitted the door to be immediately walled up. In this voluntary retirement she spent the remaining thirty-four years of her life as an anchoress in prayer and severe penance. In summer her bed was the bare earth; in winter she lay on a board with a block of wood serving as a pillow. Her food consisted of bread and water and herbs. Her only living associates were two large snakes which crept in and out of her cell, with whom she shared her food and her dwelling, in the spirit of penance, for many years.

About the year 1222, when St. Francis was preaching penance in the vicinity of Florence, he also went to visit the poor anchoress, gave her the habit of the Third Order and many beautiful lessons on the proper way to live a contemplative life.

After a very saintly life in which she had been vouchsafed the gift of miracles, Veridiana was also privileged with the revelation concerning the hour of her death. She prepared herself with the devout reception of the holy sacraments. While praying the penitential psalms she died on February 1, 1242, being sixty years old. Moved by the many extraordinary miracles that had occurred, Pope Clement VII approved the devotion to her in the year 1533, and later on Pope Innocent XII added his approbation in 1694. Her feast is observed on February sixteenth.

## ON THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE

1.) Consider that Blessed Veridiana, after several years spent in a devout active life, was led by divine inspiration to devote herself entirely to a



life of contemplation. Perfect contemplation cannot be enjoyed by man until he has entered heaven, where the sole happiness of the blessed consists in beholding God. But the perfect contemplation in heaven gives its name to that form of life here below in which men renounce all aspiration to material things and, as it were, forget them entirely, in order to spend their lives only in contemplation of the things of heaven. Only souls that have been specially called by God can pursue this kind of life. A previous holy life, as in the case of our anchoress, or severe penance and complete contempt for material comforts, are usually signs of such a vocation. — What high esteem we owe a life so heavenly spent here on earth!

2.) Consider the great benefits that accrue to the world from the life of contemplation which is led in so many convents and at times even by private individuals. It is for souls of that kind that almighty God was ready to spare Sodom if even no more than ten of them could be found. Souls of that kind pray for the faithful living in the

midst of the turmoil of the world, that the world, the flesh, and the devil may not destroy them, as Moses of old prayed with outstretched arms when Israel was set upon by the Amalekites. “And when Moses lifted up his hands, Israel overcame; but if he left them down a little, Amalec overcame” (*Exod. 17:11*). What a lack of understanding, then, to say that such a life is useless, or that talent which could have been used to advantage in society is wasted there. Shall we perhaps also call it wasteful to burn the very best oil in the sanctuary lamp?

3.) Consider that we are all destined to lead the life of contemplation, inasmuch as it is the only kind of life that is led in heaven. Our first parents lived in most intimate association with God; but sin separated them from Him. They themselves realized that they were no longer worthy to behold Him, and they hid themselves from His sight. Our hearts are, so to say, encrusted with personal sins and evil habits, so that even if we keep ourselves free from mortal sin, we are not capable of

permanent intimate association with God. This crust must be removed, and the soul must be cleansed from its scars either here on earth with perfect penance or in the next life in

the flames of purgatory. — Let us aim with the help of grace and by means of sincere penance to become worthy of the vision of God soon after death.



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

O GOD, WHO DIDST UNITE IN THY SERVANT VERIDIANA EXTRAORDINARY FRUITS OF PENANCE WITH THE FLOWER OF VIRGINITY, GRANT US, WE BESEECH THEE, THAT WE MAY THROUGH HER MERITS AND INTERCESSION CLEANSE OUR SOULS WITH TEARS OF REPENTANCE AND, THUS PURIFIED, DESERVE TO BE ADMITTED INTO THY PRESENCE.  
THROUGH CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

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