

THE SERAPH

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Contents

The Sacrament of Penance	1
Mary Show Us	6
Vocations to the Priesthood	11
The Communist Threat	16
Just Stories	19
The Catholic Mother to Her Children	23
The Little Catechism of the Cure of Ars	26
Franciscan Saints	30

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THE SERAPH

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD

Penance is a true Sacrament and satisfies the definition of a Sacrament in that it is an outward sign instituted by Jesus Christ to give us grace. The absolution Jesus gives through His priest clearly shows what is happening. The Scriptures clearly show that Jesus gave His Apostles and their successors the power and the obligation to forgive sins. “Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them ...” A clear conscience with the ability to start again is God’s most wonderful gift or grace.

The Church teaches that every Sacrament contains proper matter, form, and intention. The matter of the Sacrament of Penance is debated among theologians. It cannot be the penitent’s sins. Sin is an absence of grace, not a material substance. Some theologians teach that the matter is the penitent’s three acts: contrition, confession, and satisfaction. These acts are not mere formalities but essential components of the Sacrament. The

form is absolution, and the intention is to forgive sin and its eternal punishment. Often, temporal punishment remains for the penitent to expiate either in this life or in Purgatory.

On the part of the priest, two things are required. 1.) He must be an ordained priest. Truly ordained bishops and priests have the power to forgive sins, but deacons and the laity do not. 2.) The priest must have jurisdiction. Popes, bishops, and pastors have ordinary jurisdiction. A pope has universal jurisdiction all over the world, including all Catholics. Bishops have ordinary jurisdiction throughout their diocese for all the Catholic souls within the diocese. Pastors have jurisdiction within their parish and over their parishioners. All other priests, though they have the power to forgive sins by their ordination, cannot validly use their power without delegated jurisdiction from someone with ordinary jurisdiction. The only exception to this law is in an

emergency, such as when someone is facing imminent death.

This raises an interesting and fundamental question regarding many “Traditionalist” sects. The “independent priest” has no jurisdiction because he is not in union with a bishop and is not appointed as a pastor of a parish. The “Traditionalist” priest who is in union with a bishop without jurisdiction is likewise, himself, without jurisdiction. The “Traditionalist” priest who claims to be united with the Novus Ordo Modernist pope and hierarchy but has not been approved by them or granted jurisdiction by them is clearly without the necessary jurisdiction. Perhaps they can all claim a constant state of “emergency” as they hear confessions and give absolution!? We suggest that people beware of seeking absolution from any priest who openly admits that he does not have jurisdiction or those who cannot show from whom they have been given delegated jurisdiction.

Our position is much more straightforward. The Modernist “Pope” is not a valid Catholic Pope but is instead an anti-pope without any jurisdiction

within the True Church. “Bishops” in union with an anti-pope are anti-bishops or anti-apostles without any jurisdiction within the True Church. True Bishops have ordinary jurisdiction from God by the grace of their episcopal ordination/consecration; they, in turn, establish parishes and pastors with jurisdiction, who have valid priestly ordination and valid jurisdiction to absolve others from their sins.

The deceptive tactics of “Traditionalists” claiming union with a Modernist “Pope” all the while operating in defiance of this very authority which they claim to be under is nothing short of demonic.

On the part of the penitent in the Sacrament of Penance, there are also requirements for the validity of the Sacrament. The penitents must have contrition or sorrow for their sins, confess their sins (at least all mortal sins), and do the penance that the priest imposes upon them (make satisfaction for their sins). This is not a passive act, but an active participation in the Sacrament. In the Catechism, we teach that to make a good Confession, we must: 1.) Examine our consciences (find out our sins), 2.)

be sorry for our sins (have contrition), 3.) make up our minds not to sin again (resolution) 4.) tell our sins to the priest (confession), and 5.) do the penance that the priest gives us (satisfaction).

We are bound by Church Law to confess our sins at least once a year. Again, this must be to our pastor or a ordained priest with jurisdiction. It may be psychologically helpful to confess to anyone, but only genuinely ordained priests with jurisdiction are able to forgive us our sins and remit the eternal punishment for them. Human forgiveness is good but does not even begin to compare with the forgiveness of God that is given to us in the proper and worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance.

We must confess all our mortal sins. Mortal sins are serious violations of God's law that destroy the life of grace in the soul of the sinner. It is also helpful to confess venial sins, but this is not essential because venial sins are less serious offenses that do not destroy the life of grace, and can be washed away through other means. Sacramental Penance (like Baptism) is a Sacrament

of the Dead because it is for those whose souls are dead in mortal sin. Its purpose is to restore our souls to life through the forgiveness of our sins and to remit the eternal punishments of Hell.

Our confession needs to express genuine sorrow or contrition with a firm purpose of amendment. These sentiments are usually found in an Act of Contrition we are asked to say in the confession. Our contrition or sorrow may be of two types: perfect or imperfect. Perfect Contrition is motivated by Charity or the Love of God. We are sorry for having offended God because we love Him. Imperfect Contrition is motivated by fear of Hell or loss of Heaven. Imperfect Contrition is the minimal sorrow necessary to receive absolution in the Sacrament of Penance.

Perfect Contrition can wash away mortal sins even before we receive the Sacrament of Penance. It is similar to "Baptism of Desire" or "Spiritual Communion" in that the desire brings forth the effect even before we receive the Sacrament. However, we must also understand that desire does not replace the Sac-

raments. When we truly desire, we seek the first opportunity to actually receive the Sacrament. Perfect Contrition includes the desire and resolution to actually confess our sins in the Sacrament of Penance at the first opportunity.

Lastly, we are to do the penance that the priest gives us. This is an essential element of the Sacrament. Our penances are usually very light and are not designed to remove all the temporal punishment due to our sins, but only the eternal punishment. The Church's treasury of indulgences is available to assist us in appeasing the Justice of God to remove even the temporal punishment due to our sins. We should always be eager to gain indulgences by offering the prayers, good works, or alms required for each indulgence.

The Council of Trent warns confessors not to "connive at sins and deal too indulgently with penitents by enjoining certain very light works for very grievous crimes." The current practice appears to be at odds with this injunction. The satisfaction imposed by the confessor is gauged on the one hand by the grievousness and specific nature of the sins confessed, and on the other by the ability of the penitent. The mildness of our modern penances is based upon our current weakness. Too great severity would repel rather than benefit the faithful. The Sacrament of Penance has been instituted for the salvation of souls, and the temporal punishments it does not remit are sure to be redeemed in Purgatory if they are not redeemed on earth.

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MARY SHOWS US

Father Anthony Lentz, OFM

On March 25, we celebrate the Feast of the Annunciation. This is one of the most solemn feasts on the Roman calendar because it is on this day that we commemorate the Mystery of the Incarnation. In the very early centuries of the Church, it was considered a feast of Our Lord, but in later years, it took the character of a Marian Feast. The reason for this transition was practical and truly organic because it was meant to show the intimate relationship that Our Blessed Mother has with the Blessed Trinity.

And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel being come in, said unto her: 'Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.' Who having heard, was troubled at his saying, and thought within herself what manner of

salutation this should be. And the angel said to her: 'Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son; and thou shalt call his Name Jesus. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of David His father; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob forever. And of His Kingdom there shall be no end.' And Mary said to the angel: 'How shall this be done, because I know not man?' And the angel answering, said to her: 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore, the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren: Because no word shall be impossible with God.' And Mary said: 'Behold the

handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word.' And the angel departed from her. (Gospel of St. Luke 2: 26-38)

The Virgin Mary's relationship with God took on a different and unique threefold character that day. At the moment of her consent, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord..." she became the first and prized daughter of God the Father. She also became naturally and truly the Mother of God the Son, Who took up our human nature. Finally, by the overshadowing of God's grace, she became the Holy Ghost's intimate spouse. This was her singular vocation, but the graces that followed were meant to touch all of us.

When Our Lord began His Sermon on the Mount, He gave us the *Eight Beatitudes*, and so doing, He presented to us a concise description of the ideal Christian. Knowing better than anyone of the manifold blessings and effects of divine grace, He surely had His Blessed Mother in the forefront of His mind. By her holy life, which she lives united to the Divine Will, she shows us how to live according to the Beatitudes. I

do not say "lived" but "lives" because she continues her holy example and good works in Heaven. The words and sentiments that St. Therese of Lisieux wrote in her autobiography can also be applied to the Blessed Mother: "*I want to spend my heaven doing good on earth.*"

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven – The poor in spirit are the humble.

Throughout her life, Mary was the model of humility. She humbly accepted the Divine Motherhood by considering herself as a mere handmaid. When she visited her cousin Elisabeth, she recognized the value of humility: "*My soul does magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. He has regard to the humility of His handmaiden.*" She submitted herself to the care and authority of St. Joseph, not with resentment but with love and resignation. She did not murmur at the humble dwellings that they lived in or their poverty but recognized that this was a sure way to God, and thus, glorified Him.

2. Blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land. –

The meek are those who control their emotions and have firmly taken their inheritance by possessing the land of their own soul.

How many trials did she bear in perfect patience? The Seven Sorrows of Mary are a testament to her meekness and self-control. When she was given difficult news from Simeon during Our Lord's Presentation in the Temple, she did not complain but kept these things in her heart and quietly accepted them as God's Will.

3. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. – Spiritually speaking, we mourn for our sins and find comfort in our contrition. The contrite heart may taste the mercy of God and have the hope of the final resurrection.

Mary was sinless and blameless, but she mourned for her Son when He walked the Via Dolorosa – the Way of Sorrow. She mourned for the sins of mankind that had created the heavy burden that afflicted Him. She witnessed His death, and the “Swords of Sorrow” made their final piercing. She spiritually died with her Divine Son at that moment. After three days of

humble prayer, she is comforted by the vision of Jesus resurrected.

4. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice; for they shall have their fill. – It is not our own selfish justice that we must hunger and thirst for but that which is owed to God. We must listen to His revelation, to His holy words. This is the true spiritual food that is meant to fill us up. As Our Lord Himself proclaimed, “*Not by bread alone does man live, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.*”

The Blessed Mother has never sought evil but only good. She knows that mankind must unite with its Savior and encourages us to make it a genuinely intimate union. As she received Our Lord and bore Him for nine months in her womb, she calls us to receive Him in the Holy Eucharist and bear the testimony of Him within our very souls. She is the Lady of the Blessed Eucharist.

5. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. – We show mercy in this life by performing the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. As far as we can, we should try to

alleviate our neighbor's physical sufferings and supply his physical needs. The spiritual works have the soul's needs in mind, predominately by instructing the ignorant and correcting the wayward. In this, we see the old axiom come to life: Helping others, we help ourselves.

Over the centuries, the Blessed Queen of Heaven has worked to aid mankind through many glorious apparitions, such as Guadalupe, Lourdes, and Fatima. As the ambassador of her Son, she shows mercy and compassion for her children. She is the mother wanting to correct and encourage us by recognizing the power and benevolence of God in our daily lives.

6. Blessed are the clean of heart: for they shall see God. – The clean of heart are those with pure intentions. We can also use this as a way of understanding the poor souls in Purgatory. Before they can enter Heaven, that is, see God, they must be purified from their venial sins and the stain left over from sins forgiven.

The Blessed Mother prays for these suffering souls. Her motherly love is moved with compassion, and she wishes to

aid them. She encourages us to offer up our prayers and intentions for them. She hopes to guide us to heaven and present us before God's throne as white as snow.

7. Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called children of God. – Desiring peace throughout the world is a mark of a faithful Christian. This is not a worldly peace that is passing, but that eternal peace that comes from conforming oneself to God.

Our Lady came to two young shepherd children in the town of La Sallette. In this lesser-known apparition, she revealed many things. Once, she revealed that the constant blasphemies were enflaming the divine wrath of her Son. She is doing all she can to hold back His arm of vengeance. She tells us to keep the commandments, keep the Lord's Day holy, and attend the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with devotion. To become a child of God, we must make peace with God by amending our offenses.

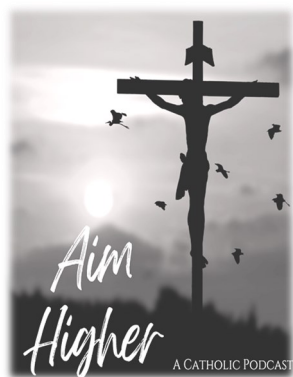
8. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. – Once again, it is not

the justice of mankind but that of God. Our minds turn to the Holy Martyrs, who gave their lives for Christ and were rewarded with heavenly glory.

The Mother of Sorrows is the Queen of Martyrs. She witnessed the suffering of Christ and became our Co-Redemptrix. She shows us how to bear persecution with grace, dignity, and forgiveness. She is simply a living embodiment of our suffering Savior's words, *"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."*

In all of this, we see how the honor we give to Our Queen

Mother does not take away the honor we owe to her Divine Son but rather magnifies and perfects it. St. Bernard of Clairvaux, the Doctor of Mary, used an analogy to describe the relationship. He considered Our Lord as an ancient document whose text could not be read by all, due to its difficulty and solemn content. Mary is the perfect and simple translation that helps us understand Christ's words better. She gives us confidence to follow His Holy Way. She shows us what the blessings of God can do to a soul who desires to love.



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VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD

Very Reverend Lyman A. Fenn, S.S., D.D.

CHAPTER TWO THE SIGNS OF A VOCATION:

Part One

What signs are we to look for as pointing to the presence of a call from God? What qualities shall we expect to find in a prospective candidate that will give the well-founded hope that he will be a successful seminarian and a holy priest? The gospels have told us what types and characters Christ Himself deemed worthy and acceptable; so we can do no better than to make use of the lives of the Apostles as the basis for an explanation of the marks of a vocation. We shall consider these signs under three heads: 1, the intellectual; 2, the moral and spiritual; 3, physical fitness and home background.

But before considering the particular signs, it will be well to bear in mind two important facts. The first is that we can never have ironclad certainty that this or that individual possesses all the marks. We can never say in truth: "I am

positive that he has a vocation — or that he will surely be a priest." The best we should look for are those signs which give promise and hope that the boy will develop well in the seminary. He will have twelve long years of training, of discipline, of study between him and his ordination day, and those years, God willing, will bring to flower the seeds of a vocation which we look for in the boy in his present stage of development. Too great certainty in the matter will lead to mistakes, or at the least to many disappointments.

However, we must remember secondly that while we can only hope, we must at the same time have high ideals as our standards of measurement in the search for future priests, for the priesthood is the destiny of the finest. There must be some personal distinction in the candidate who will exercise his ministry in this non-Catholic, democratic American atmosphere, where, too, there is creeping in the tendency to accept or reject a man on his personal merits or defects, regardless of

his priestly dignity. *Hence, we must expect all the signs, described in the following pages, to be present to some degree in a boy; complete lack of even one of them creates a presumption against a genuine vocation.* Is this expecting too much? Will our search inevitably end in failure? No! But it will not produce the large numbers of candidates that we may dream of. It will rather single out the chosen few. After all a vocation to the priesthood is rare, and one good priest will do more than ten bad or mediocre ones. (According to the latest statistics, as given in Bishop Stockums' book *Vocation to the Priesthood*, page 52, there is only one priest for every 5,678 people in the whole world; only one for every 1,084 Catholics. Another priest has expressed the rarity as follows: "In every two hundred Catholic families with school children, one vocation, should be found every year." (1938)

THE FIRST SIGN — INTELLECTUAL TALENT

A. THE APOSTLES

The Apostles, with the possible exception of one or two, were not well educated,

even according to the standards of learning of their day. "Seeing the constancy of Peter and John, understanding that they were illiterate and ignorant men, they wondered" (Acts iv. 13).

But if they were unschooled, they were not stupid, for it took more than the minimum of native ability to absorb so much of Our Lord's doctrine in three years. To them "it was given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt, xiii, 11). It must be recalled, moreover, that when they joined the ranks of Jesus' followers, they were already adults, and there was no time for them to undergo the slow and long training which the normal learning process requires. The wonderful knowledge and grasp of Christ's teaching which they manifested after Pentecost was the result of the coming of the Holy Ghost upon them, "the Spirit of truth, who taught them all truth." In their case it was the Holy Ghost who supplied the knowledge, even a portion of which under present conditions demands fair intelligence and many years of hard work.

B. THE BOY

The priest, like the Church whose minister he is, has a

mission to man's spirit. Not by physical force does he accomplish this mission but by spiritual ways and means. Mind and spirit, thoughts and ideas, words spoken and written, these are the priest's tools that he must use well or forever be handicapped in realizing the very purpose for which he is ordained. Definitely he belongs to the class of mental workers.

Besides, more demands are made today on a priest's intellectual and scientific ability than ever before. Our (1938) present Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, states these demands as follows: "None (of the clergy) should remain content with a standard of learning and culture which sufficed, perhaps, in other times; they must try to attain, or rather, they must actually attain a higher standard of general education and of learning. It must be broader and more complete; and it must correspond to the generally higher level and wider scope of modern education as compared with the past." A candidate for the priesthood, then, must have the mental capacity and desire for pursuing a long and strenuous course of studies.

Now the seminary curriculum

of twelve years, no matter how thorough and well planned, cannot take the place of native intelligence. It presupposes it and merely attempts to develop it and bring it to actual fruition. Neither the seminary nor the student (and what teacher does not know this!) can count on a sudden descent of the Holy Ghost. Our schools, indeed, cannot train any and every boy to be the intelligent and practical leader which the priesthood demands, simply because every boy has not the inborn ability to become an intelligent leader. Plato has well said that men are from birth either of gold, or of silver, or of baser metal. Hence in selecting boys for the priesthood, great attention must be paid to the factor of intellectual talent. And no amount of piety, be it noted well, can substitute for the lack of mental equipment. The pious dullard may in the course of his years lose his piety, but his dullness will ever remain.

How, then, are we to judge in practice whether this twelve- or thirteen-year-old boy has the talent sufficient for him to carry successfully the seminary studies? It is not easy to form a judgment concerning the small boy's intellectual

equipment. Pedagogical insight and experience are necessary; and even with both a teacher may overestimate a talent. Leaders in the eighth grade may be failures or very mediocre students in high school. Here are a few general hints which may help in coming to a decision.

1. The young boy should be able to grasp clearly present class matter, and the meaning of the facts as they are presented in grammar school subjects. He must be able to understand, for example, the function of parts of speech in English grammar, or the reason for the use of certain methods in working out problems in arithmetic.

2. He must have a reliable memory. It has been said that memory is in direct correlation with general intelligence, taking humanity as a whole. This does not mean, of course, merely the ability to reproduce mechanically what is said or read (learning "by heart") but implies an ability to apply what is known to new situations, v. g., the power not only to recall a method or rule of working a problem in arithmetic, but the power to apply it to a new set of figures. Reliability of memory likewise supposes the gift of a

practical judgment. There are some little fellows, diligent in their way, who will sit down to a history lesson, for instance, with the determination to memorize every part of it, having no power of selecting the important items or studying the lesson as a whole. They absorb part by part like blotters, with no sense of evaluation. The knack of learning a lesson as a whole has proved to be a particularly reliable gauge of a student's intellectual ability.

These two capacities — the ability to grasp class matters, and reliability of memory, in the last analysis depend upon the faculty that a boy possesses to pay attention, even when the matter is not attractive to him, as quite commonly happens in arithmetic class. He must have the capacity to fix his attention on a subject in order to grasp and understand it, and he must be able to make repeated efforts of attention in order to remember it. Consequently, as in any effort-making activity, the will here comes into play.

As a matter of fact, the strength of a student's will may often be a deciding factor in passing judgment on his intellectual fitness for the seminary. We must ask: has he the earnest will to work, the

capacity for sustained application? The star of a class, who with a richly endowed intellect can obtain a 95 percent in any subject with ease, will never become a leader as a man, unless he has also the quality of “sticking” to his work. On the other hand, many boys with average or little better than mediocre mental equipment have gone from year to year in the seminary, showing steady improvement thanks to their methodical plodding and their diligent tending to business.

THE SECOND SIGN —

MORAL FITNESS

Coupled with an intellectual aptitude our young candidate must have a certain amount of moral fitness; that is, he must possess those fundamental habits of will and heart which can be developed later into all the priestly qualities which the Church expects to find in her sacred ministers. Of course, we shall not find perfection in a thirteen-year-old. A boy of this age has the defects that go with his state of development. He is all boy, if he be healthy and normal. He will be very thoughtless of others at times, and selfish. But underneath these faults, which are more typical than individual, we must discern at least the

beginnings of certain gifts of spirit, which, if absent, can never be replaced by training.

The moral and spiritual gifts of a person, even a young one, form a closely-knit whole which we call “character.” So closely bound together are they that they act as a unit in practice, the whole character being made manifest in every act, especially if that act be the result of deliberation and conscious effort. There is danger, therefore, of presenting a one-sided picture if we single out for description the individual gifts of spirit, when actually they never occur thus singly or alone. Humility, for example, runs into the spirit of sacrifice, and, if there is any dividing line between them, it will be very thin. Again, the obedient boy will have the elements of generosity in his make-up. However, with this in mind and for the sake of greater clearness, we shall treat moral fitness under the following heads: 1, humility and obedience; 2, generosity and the spirit of sacrifice; 3, reverence; 4, kindliness; 5, uprightness of character.

To Be Continued

THE COMMUNIST THREAT

Father Joseph Noonan, OFM

Part Thirty-Six: The Undermining of Education

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

1982

Chester Finn wrote **“Public Service, Public Support, Public Accountability”** for the March 1982 issue of the National Association of Secondary School Principals’ Bulletin. Finn became a high profile figure in education circles with his appointment as assistant secretary, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, by Secretary of Education William Bennett. Finn’s article was quoted in Barbara Morris’s book, *Tuition Tax Credits: A Responsible Appraisal* (The Barbara Morris Report: Upland, Cal., 1983):

Short of scattering money in the streets or handing it out to everyone who wants some, the funding agency must define eligible recipients.... This means, in a word, “regulation,” the in-

evitable concomitant of public financial support.

Finn also believed the government is obligated to recognize that the private schools it helps support are different from public schools—that it is this “differentness” that makes them supportable. The other side of the coin, he says, is the obligation of private schools to recognize certain limits to their differentness and certain ways they must conform to the norms and expectations of a society that values and supports them....

Some, to be sure, like to think they can have it both ways; i.e., can obtain aid without saddling themselves with unacceptable forms of regulation. But most acknowledge the general applicability of the old adage that he who pays the piper calls the tune, and are more or less resigned to amalgamating or choosing between assistance and autonomy.

On March 29, 1982, at the **“Closed to the Public”**

annual meeting of The Council of Chief State School Officers, Secretary of Education T.H. Bell's top assistant, Elam Herzler, told the assembled fifty state superintendents of education:

One of the elements of an effective school is to monitor, assess, and feed back.... As little as 5 percent of a school budget K-12 would be needed over a period of 12 years to enable each student to have his own computer, and this is within our cost range.

"Can Computers Teach Values?" by Joseph A. Braun, Jr. and Kurt A. Slobodzian, assistant professors in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction of the Northern Illinois University School of Education in Dekalb, Illinois, was published in the April 1982 issue of *Educational Leadership*. The following are excerpts:

In helping children learn how to inquire and examine their own emerging value systems, most educators agree that unintentional negative reactions by teachers are deleterious to youngsters' self-concept. Couple this with potential ridicule from student peers, and one can readily see why values education has been a delicate

and controversial issue. However, a student using CAI [computer-assisted instruction] in the examination, evaluation, and acquisition of values would be able to do so with mature guidance in an environment free from potential rejection or scorn.

Another pitfall for teachers of values education is the invasion of a child's right to privacy. Well-intentioned teachers often expect self-disclosure beyond a student's limit of psychological safety (Lockwood, 1977) by demanding deeply personal revelations from participants who are not prepared to discuss their more private thoughts. The computer, in contrast, has no misguided need to get to know "the real you."

The computer, then, is ideally suited to the role of facilitator in values education. It inherently possesses the Rogerian [psychologist Carl Rogers] qualities of genuineness and congruence. It can even be programmed to positively regard anyone who uses it. A student using CAI gains a sense of protection as well as a constant source of appropriate feedback while exploring and integrating feelings, beliefs, and behavior.

Computers have also been programmed to pick out key words from a respondent's statements. The computer program then formulates open-ended questions from key words, which causes the respondent to focus and further clarify feelings. In other words, using a program called "Doctor," Holden (1977) describes a conversation between a computer and a troubled young woman who began with a common complaint:

Human: "Men are all alike."

Computer: "In what way?"

Human: "They're always bugging us about something or another."

Computer: "Can you think of a specific example?"

Human: "Well, my boy friend made me come here."

Computer: "Your boyfriend made you come here?"

Human: "He says that I'm depressed much of the time."

Computer: "I am sorry to hear that you are depressed."

Human: "It's true, I am unhappy."

Computer: "Do you think coming here will help you not be unhappy?"

Human: "I need some help.

That much seems certain."

Computer: "What would it mean if you got some help?"

Human: "Perhaps I could learn to get along with my mother."

Computer: "Tell me more about your family."

The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: A Christian

Worldview, Volume One, a Christian View of Philosophy and Culture (Crossway Books: Westchester, Ill., 1982) was published. In a treatise entitled "A Christian View of Philosophy and Culture: Back to Freedom and Dignity," noted Christian scholar and theologian Dr. Francis Schaeffer warned of B.F. Skinner and his methods:

Skinner says that up until the present time all of humanity has considered man to be in some sense autonomous — that is, that there is in each individual an "ego" or mind or center of consciousness which can freely choose one or another course of action. But, Skinner says, autonomous man does not exist, and it is the task of behavioral psychology to abolish the conception.... Skinner declares that everything man is, everything

man makes, everything man thinks is completely, 100 percent, determined by his environment.

After the publication of *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* [1972], when he [Skinner] was at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, he spoke at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California. There he said, "The individual does not initiate anything." In fact, he said that any time man is freed from one kind of control, he merely comes under another kind of control. Christians consider that man is autonomous in that he is significant, he affects the environment. In behavioristic psychology, the situation is reversed. All behavior is determined not from within but from without. "You" don't exist. Man is not there. All that is there is a bundle of conditioning, a collection of what you have been in the past: your genetic makeup and your environment. But Skinner goes a step further, subordinates the genetic factor, and suggests that man's behavior can be almost totally controlled by controlling the environment.... Some behaviorists would differ with him on this last point. How is it that the environment controls behavior?

Here Skinner brings up the concept of "operant conditioning." This notion is based on his work with pigeons and rats. The basic idea is that "when a bit of behavior is followed by a certain consequence, it is more likely to occur again, and a consequence having this effect is called a reinforcer." (p. 27) That is, for example, "anything the organism does that is followed by the receipt of food is more likely to be done again whenever the organism is hungry."

There are two kinds of reinforcers: negative reinforcers which have adverse effects, and positive reinforcers whose effect is positive. Skinner contends that only the positive reinforcers should be used. In other words, in order to reinforce a certain kind of behavior, one should not punish; he should reward. If a person is surrounded by an atmosphere in which he gets a sufficient reward for doing what society would like him to do, he will automatically do this without ever knowing why he is doing it.... Within the Skinnerian system there are no ethical controls. There is no boundary limit to what can be done by the elite in whose hands control resides.

The reduction of man's value to zero is one of the important factors which triggered the student rebellion at Berkeley and elsewhere in the 1960s. Those students sensed that they were being turned into zeros and they revolted. Christians should have sensed it long before and said and exhibited that we have an alternative.... We are on the verge of the largest revolution the world has ever seen—the control and shaping of men through the abuse of genetic knowledge, and chemical and psychological conditioning.

Will people accept it? I don't think they would accept it if (1) they had not already been taught to accept the presuppositions that lead to it, and (2) they were not in such hopelessness. Many of our secular schools have consistently taught these presuppositions, and unhappily many of our Christian lower schools and colleges have taught the crucial subjects no differently than the secular schools.

Schaeffer's "Conclusion" follows:

What do we and our children face? The biological bomb, the abuse of genetic knowledge, chemical engineering, the behavioristic ma-

nipulation of man. All these have come to popular attention only a few years ago. But they are not twenty years away. They are not five years away. They are here now in technological breakthroughs. This is where we live, and as true Christians we must be ready. This is no time for weakness in the Church of Christ. What has happened to man? We must see him as one who has torn himself away both from the infinite-personal God who created him as finite but in his image and from God's revelation to him. Made in God's image, he was made to be great, he was made to be beautiful, and he was made to be creative in life and art. But his rebellion has led him into making himself into nothing but a machine. (pp. 374–384)



To Be Continued

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.

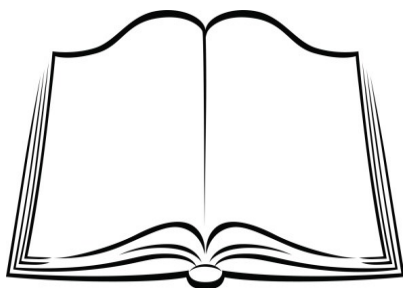
Do not be deterred by what you think you know or by what the world tells you. Find out for yourself. If you feel called, then at least learn more.

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.



The Catholic Mother to Her Children

The Countess de Flavigny



TWENTIETH LESSON

EASTER DAY: A DAY OF GLADNESS

“This is the day which the Lord hath made: let us be glad, and rejoice therein.”
Psalm 117:24

My Dear Children, this feast has always been considered as the first and most solemn of all those the Church celebrates during the year. It is the day of Our Lord Jesus Christ’s Resurrection. In the ancient law, there was also a feast of Easter, and this name, which signifies *Passover*, reminded the Hebrew people of the passage of the exterminating angel, and also the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea. Easter, in the new law, reminds all Christians, that Jesus Christ in His Resurrection has passed from death to life. The history of this marvelous event is as follows:

Our Lord’s Body had been already two days in the closed tomb. On the morn of the third day, Mary Magdalen and several other holy women went to the sepulcher to anoint the Body of Jesus Christ. It was a custom amongst the Jews: and these pious women wished to offer this last homage after death, to Him whose lessons they had listened to, and whose virtues they had admired. As they walked along, they asked one another if it would be possible for them to open the tomb, for its entrance was closed by an enormous stone. Great then was their surprise when, on drawing near, they perceived the stone rolled back; a young man was sitting near the sepulcher; his face was all

radiant with a celestial brilliancy; his clothes were white as snow; "Be not affrighted;" saith he to them, "you seek Jesus of Nazareth: He is risen, He is not here: behold the place where they laid Him. Go tell His disciples."

The holy women hastened to inform Peter, the chief of the apostles, and John, called in the Gospel the disciple Jesus loved. Both ran in great haste to the sepulcher; but the angel had disappeared, the tomb was empty, the burial cloth only remained. Overcome with terror at the Angel's apparition, announced by an earthquake, the soldiers appointed by Pilate to guard the sepulcher, had fallen down motionless; when they recovered their senses they fled in affright.

The two apostles hastened to tell the others of the glorious Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and to prove the reality of this extraordinary event. Our Savior made Himself visible several times to His disciples, while they were assembled together.

The miracle of this Resurrection, my dear children, is the

most remarkable of all miracles, you will easily understand this. In the course of scriptural history, we are told that sometimes holy men, the prophet Elias for instance, had obtained from God the power of recalling life to the dead. Our Lord had also restored to life persons, either to show His power, or to give men a fresh proof of his love; but His own Resurrection is still more miraculous. Yes, indeed, Jesus Christ rose from the dead by His own power, and He had foretold this miracle, when He said: "The son of man must be put to death, and the third day He will rise again."

His enemies refused to believe in the fulfilment of His prophecy, they had already triumphantly exulted over Him when they saw Him nailed to the Cross saying: "He saved others; himself he cannot save; let him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe in Him!" Even the faith of His disciples was shaken. They regretted Jesus Christ as a righteous man, they mourned for him as a friend; but they could hardly recognize a God in the being they had just seen put to death

with so much suffering and ignominy. Therefore, the news of the Resurrection was received by them with no less surprise than admiration and joy.

My children, by His Glorious Resurrection, Jesus Christ most effectually proved his power and His Divinity. He did more than come down from the Cross; He rose alive from the tomb in which He had been put. By this miracle Jesus Christ showed Himself to be truly God; indeed, without it our religion would not have existed.

That is why the feast of Easter is considered by the Church as the most important one of the year. The faithful crowd the churches with more than ordinary eagerness on this holy day, and we see the ministers of our worship arrayed in their most beautiful vestments in honor of Easter. The prayers set apart to celebrate this feast are all canticles of joy. All Christian countries make this day a time of rejoicing, and in some, when friends meet, they congratulate each other in these words: "Jesus Christ is risen!"

My dear children, will you be content with merely praising Our Lord for the great victory he has won over death? No, certainly not. From this mystery you must learn a grand and useful lesson. Jesus in all the mysteries of His life has no other purpose in view than our sanctification. If He vouchsafed to become as one of us by taking upon Himself the nature of man, it as to raise us to Him, to show us the perfect being that man was destined to be, and which he should strive to become. If Jesus died on the Cross, it was to teach us how to die a holy death; and finally, if he rose from the dead, it was to open the gates of Heaven for us, and make us partakers of His Resurrection.

But you may say, how can we hope to gain such a blessed destiny? Can we then die and rise again during this life? No, my children, but we can correct our evil propensities, destroy them, pluck them from our hearts; and replace them by the opposite virtues. A lazy, disobedient, violent child, may become meek, painstaking, and obedient. He can this begin a new life. That is what St. Paul calls stripping

off the old man and putting on the new one. This is, my children, the kind of Resurrection Jesus Christ expects of you in this world, in imitation of his own.

But your resurrection to a life of grace, besides being real and true, must have another quality, in order to bear a

resemblance to that of your Blessed Redeemer; it must be permanent, as His was permanent, for He rose so as to “die no more.”



The Catholic Faith

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THE LITTLE CATECHISM OF THE CURÉ OF ARS

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



EXPLANATIONS AND EXHORTATIONS ON THE LOVE OF GOD

“If you love Me, keep My Commandments.”

Nothing is so common among Christians as to say, “O my God; I love Thee,” and nothing more rare, perhaps, than the love of the good God. Satisfied with making outward acts of love, in which our poor heart often has no share, we think we have fulfilled the whole of the precept. An error, an illusion; for see, my children, St. John says that we must not love the good God in word, but in deed. Our Lord Jesus Christ also says, “If anyone love Me he will keep My Word.” If we judge by this rule, there are very few Christians who truly love God, since there are so few who keep His Commandments. Yet nothing is more essential than the love of God. It is the first of all virtues,

a virtue so necessary, that without it we shall never get to Heaven; and it is in order to love God that we are on the earth. Even if the good God did not command it, this feeling is so natural to us, that our heart should be drawn to it of its own accord.

But the misfortune is that we lavish our love upon objects unworthy of it, and refuse it to Him alone who deserves to be infinitely loved. Thus, my children, one person will love riches, another will love pleasures; and both will offer to the good God nothing but the languishing remains of a heart worn out in the service of the world. From thence comes insufficient love, divided love, which is for that very reason unworthy of the good God; for He alone, being

infinitely above all created good, deserves that we should love Him above all things: more than our possessions, because they are earthly; more than our friends, because they are mortal; more than our life, because it is perishable; more than ourselves, because we belong to Him. Our love, my children, if it is true, must be without limit, and must influence our conduct.

If the Savior of the world, addressing Himself to each one of us separately, were now to ask us the same question that He formerly asked St. Peter: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?" could we answer with as much confidence as that great Apostle, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee"? *Domine, tu scis quia amo te.* We have perhaps pronounced these words without taking in their meaning and extent; for, my children, to love the good God is not merely to say with the mouth, "O my God! I love Thee!" Oh, no! where is the sinner who does not sometimes use this language?

To love the good God is not only to feel from time to time some emotions of tenderness towards God; this sensible devotion is not always in our own power. To love the good God is not to be faithful in fulfilling part of our duties and to neglect

the rest. The good God will have no division: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength." This shows the strength of the Commandment to love God. To love God with our whole heart is to prefer Him to everything, so as to be ready to lose all our possessions, our honor, our life, rather than offend this good Master. To love God with our whole heart is to love nothing that is incompatible with the love of God; it is to love nothing that can share our heart with the good God: it is to renounce all our passions, all our ill-regulated desires. Is it thus, my children, that we love the good God?

To love the good God with our whole mind is to make the sacrifice to Him of our knowledge and our reason, and to believe all that He has taught. To love the good God with our whole mind is to think of Him often, and to make it our principal study to know Him well. To love the good God with our whole strength is to employ our possessions, our health, and our talents, in serving Him and glorifying Him. It is to refer all our actions to Him, as our last end. Once more, is it thus that we love the good God? Judging by this invariable rule, how few Christians truly love God.

Do those bad Christians love the good God, who are the slaves of their passions? Do those worldly persons love the good God, who seek only to gratify their body and to please the world? Is God loved by the miser, who sacrifices Him for a vile gain? Is He loved by that voluptuary, who abandons himself to vices the most opposite to divine love? Is He loved by that man who thinks of nothing but wine and good cheer? Is He loved by that other man, who cherishes an aversion to his neighbor, and will not forgive him? Is He loved by that young girl, who loves nothing but pleasure, and thinks of nothing but indulgence and vanity? No, no, my children, none of these persons love the good God; for we must love Him with a love of preference, with an active love!

If we had rather offend the good God than deprive ourselves of a passing satisfaction, than renounce those guilty meetings, those shameful passions, we do not love the good God with a love of preference, since we love our pleasures, our passions, better than the good God Himself. Let us go down into our own souls; let us question our hearts, my children, and see if we do not love some creature more than the good God. We are permitted to love our relations, our possessions, our

health, our reputation; but this love must be subordinate to the love we should have for God, so that we may be ready to make the sacrifice of it if He should require it.

Can you suppose that you are in these dispositions — you who look upon mortal sin as a trifle, who keep it quietly on your conscience for months, for years, though you know that you are in a state most displeasing to the good God? Can you suppose that you love the good God? Can you suppose that you love the good God — you who make no efforts to correct yourselves; you who will deprive yourselves of nothing; you who offend the Creator every time that you find opportunity? Yes, my children, what the miser loves with his whole heart is money; what the drunkard loves with his whole heart is wine; what the libertine loves with his whole heart is the object of his passion. You, young girls, you who had rather offend God than give up your finery and your vanities, you say that you love God; say rather that you love yourselves.

No, no, my children; it is not thus that the good God is to be loved, for we must love Him not only with a love of preference, but also with an active love. “Love,” says St. Augustine, “cannot remain without the con-

stant action of the soul: *Non potest vacare amor in anima amantis*. Yes,” says this great saint, “seek for a love that does not manifest itself in works, and you will find none.” What! could it be, O my God, that Thy love alone should be barren, and that the Divine fire, which ought to enkindle the whole world, should be without activity and without strength?

When you love a person, you show him the more or less affection according as the ardor of your love for him is more or less great. See, my children, what the saints were like, who were all filled with the love of the good God: nothing cost them too much; they joyfully made the greatest sacrifices; they distributed their goods to the poor, rendered services to their enemies, led a hard and penitential life; tore themselves from the pleasures of the world, from the conveniences of life, to bury themselves alive in solitude; they hastened to torments and to death, as people hasten to a feast. Such were the effects which the love of the good God produced in the saints; such ought it to produce in us. But, my children, we are not penetrated with the love of God; we do not love the good God. Can anyone say, indeed, that he loves the good God, who is so easily frightened, and who is

repulsed by the least difficulty? Alas! what would have become of us if Jesus Christ had loved us only as we love Him? But, no. Triumphant over the agonies of the Cross, the bitterness of death, the shame of the most ignominious tortures, nothing costs Him too dear when He has to prove that He loves us. That is our only model. If our love is active, it will manifest itself by the works which are the effects of love, because the love of the good God is not only a love of preference, but a pious affection, a love of obedience, which makes us practice His Commandments; an active love, which makes us fulfill all the duties of a good Christian. Such is the love, my children, which God requires from us, to which He has so many titles, which He has purchased by so many benefits heaped upon us by His death for us upon the Cross. What happiness, my children, to love the good God! There is no joy, no happiness, no peace, in the heart of those who do not love the good God on earth. We desire Heaven, we aspire to it; but, that we may be sure to attain to it, let us begin to love the good God here below, in order to be able to love Him, to possess Him eternally in His holy Paradise.



FRANCISCAN SAINTS

MAY 3RD

Venerable Jane of the Cross

Virgin, Third Order

On the feast of the Finding of the Cross, May 3, 1481, Jane was born at Hazagna, not far from Toledo, Spain. Even as a child she gave signs of future holiness; for example, she took no food at all on Fridays. Her bodily as well as her spiritual development progressed so rapidly beyond her years, that, on the death of her mother, although she was only ten years old, she managed the household of her father.

Because of her special endowments, she was sought in marriage by a distinguished young man when she was but fourteen years of age. Her father urged her to consent, but Jane definitely declared that she would never enter the matrimonial bond and wished to serve God in a convent. When her father enlisted the help of relatives, all endeavoring to influence her toward marriage, Jane secretly took flight in men's clothing.

In Cuba, some hours' distance from her native town, Jane again donned her own clothing, which

she had brought with her in a bundle, and asked for admission into the convent of the Tertiaries there. She was invested on her fifteenth birthday, and on the same day of the next year she made her profession. She received the surname of the Cross, because of the feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross.

Jane redoubled her zeal in mortification, in prayer, and in all the religious virtues. She had a special devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and a great desire for Holy Communion. Gladly would she have received every day, but in accordance with the custom of the time and the wish of her confessor, she contented herself with the general Communion days of the sisters. But she was all the more zealous in receiving the Holy Sacrament spiritually. Her ardent desire led her to receive spiritually at almost every hour of the day, and through the practice she felt so wonderfully strengthened that she sometimes cried out: "O my God, if the mere desire for Thy most holy

Body has such marvelous effects, what strength must the actual reception afford!”

But she was also to stand in need of this strength. She had to endure much hostility and ill-treatment from her fellow sisters. True, later all of them recognized their injustice, and upon the death of the abbess, they unanimously elected her superior. But even in that position, though she greatly promoted the spiritual and temporal welfare of the convent, she met with such vehement opposition, within and without the convent, that she was deposed, until it was recognized that the complaints against her were calumnies and she was reinstated. Jane was also visited with severe physical sufferings; but that seemed to be her one desire, since she always prayed for more suffering.

Christ Our Lord rewarded the fidelity of His true spouse with extraordinary graces. She saw her guardian angel visibly at her side and constantly received counsel and comfort from him. She was gifted with wonderful insight into the mysteries of our holy religion, and discoursed on them in a manner that astonished the most learned men. Cardinal Ximenes, archbishop of Toledo, often came to the convent and manifested the greatest respect for her.

Our Lord once rewarded her love for the Blessed Sacrament with a marvelous miracle. She

was going to church in order to adore the Blessed Sacrament at elevation, which was just about to take place. But the signal for elevation was given while Jane was still in the cloister hall. Promptly she knelt down, and, marvelous to say, the wall of the church seemed to part so that Jane could see the Blessed Sacrament. After the priest replaced the chalice with the Blessed Sacrament on the altar, the gap closed, but a mark of the marvelous opening was left on the wall. King Philip III himself came to the convent later to witness this miracle.

In the fifty-fourth year of her life Jane learned from her guardian angel that she should now enter the celestial vision, and also that she would die in the shadow of the cross. On the feast of the Finding of the Cross, May 3, 1534, she departed after a prolonged ecstasy. God almighty glorified her after death with numerous miracles, which were examined and approved by the Church.

CONCERNING SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

1.) Consider that Venerable Jane knew how to use spiritual Communion to advantage. In following the practice she preserved obedience to her confessor, avoided singularity, and yet fulfilled the ardent desires of her heart for union with her Divine

Savior. Spiritually she could communicate more frequently than was possible sacramentally. For this reason God almighty, who accepts the desire for the deed, strengthened her so marvelously. It is good to follow her example. Thomas a Kempis (4:10) says: "If at times a person is lawfully hindered, he should yet always have the good will and the pious intention of communicating, and so he will not be without the fruit of the sacrament." — Do you often communicate spiritually?

2.) Consider how one goes about receiving spiritual Communion. The holy Council of Trent says that faith and love dispense the fruit and the effects of the Holy Sacrament to those who long for the Heavenly Bread in Spiritual Communion. A person must therefore excite in himself a lively faith in the presence of Christ in the Holy Sacrament, be heartily sorry for all his sins out of

love for God, and then express to God the loving desire to receive Him in the Holy Sacrament. Thus one communicates spiritually; and one ought never to omit the practice in holy Mass at the Communion of the priest.

3.) Consider especially that Spiritual Communion is a great help in the real reception of Holy Communion. It is the best preparation for it, so far as it nourishes our desire for the Bread of Heaven, and thus disposes us better for the graces of Holy Communion to take effect. And after Holy Communion it keeps alive in us the grateful remembrance of Holy Communion, so that the strength of the Holy Sacrament continues to produce its effects in us. Thus through Spiritual Communion the Holy Eucharist proves to be not only the daily but even the hourly food of our souls.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

O GOD, WHO IN THIS WONDERFUL SACRAMENT HAST LEFT US
A MEMORIAL OF THY PASSION, GRANT US, WE BESEECH THEE,
SO TO VENERATE THE SACRED MYSTERIES OF THY BODY AND
BLOOD, THAT WE MAY EVER PERCEIVE IN US THE FRUIT OF THY
REDEMPTION. WHO LIVEST AND REIGNEST FOREVER AND EVER.
AMEN.

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