

# THE SERAPH

October 2018

Vol. XXXIX No. 2



*St. Francis of Assisi*

# The Seraph

Vol. XXXIX No. 2  
OCTOBER 2018

PUBLISHED WITH EPISCOPAL AUTHORIZATION

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FOREIGN: Air Mail - \$40.00 per year.

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Publishers:

Order of St. Francis of Assisi, Inc.  
Rochester, New York 14616 USA

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# WE MUST OBEY THE POPES

*Bishop Giles, OFM*

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Is the “pope” truly the pope? This has caused a great deal of confusion for many who take the Catholic faith seriously. There are many who reason that, one may have a bad father, but he remains, nonetheless, his father. The same they suggest should be applied to a pope. There is an element of truth in this because we have had good and bad popes throughout history. However, we are left to consider what constitutes a true father. Does simply contributing half of the genetic material contained in a child make someone a father? There is no doubt that there are many men who have biologically reproduced, but are not true fathers. At the same time, there are many men who may have never biologically reproduced, but are nonetheless, true fathers. All of this in spite of the goodness or the badness of any individual.

It is a defined doctrine that the pope is infallible when teaching in matters of faith and morals for the entire

Church. This doctrine must be believed by every Catholic. This does not imply that the pope must be without sin (impeccable). Popes are men and are sinners like the rest of men. However, the Holy Ghost watches over a true pope and protects him from error in instructing the Church. For example: a true pope can fall into the sin of adultery, but the Holy Ghost will never allow him to teach the Church that adultery is good, or even that it is permitted.

We next must take into consideration that, in our modern world, there is very little that is private or personal in the life of anyone, but especially those who are followed closely by the media. Social media and the ever present cameras leave very little of life unrecorded. Along with this is the inclination of people to put a negative interpretation upon some of the most innocent events or comments. As strange as it may seem, the more that is recorded, the less truth is to be

found. Very much is taken out of context and presented in the worst light possible. This applies to everyone, not just celebrities. Most, who are familiar with social media, have seen or experienced this personally. This is nothing new, the Gospel shows us that the Scribes and Pharisees, were always doing this to Jesus.

Taking all this into consideration, there are still many things that are publicly said and done by the “popes” of the Novus Ordo, that are undoubtedly wrong, erroneous, and even heretical. That which is heretical should be clear enough to any minimally educated Catholic as a denial of the Catholic Faith. A heretic by definition is cut off from the Church; he is excluded from the Mystical Body of Christ. Logically, an excised member is no longer a member – especially not a head.

Many well-intentioned people have taken the position to: “take what is good and reject what is bad.” They desire to hear only the truth that comes out of the mouth of a man

presenting himself to the world as the pope, and to reject all of the heresy, falsehood, or error that he may speak. Yet, barely have they spoken these words, when they tell us that they cannot judge the pope!? They cannot bring themselves to say that this man is not the pope even while they accuse him of heresy. They seem to fail to comprehend that they have become thinly veiled Protestants that believe only what appeals to themselves and reject everything else. It is quite appealing to say that they follow the pope, while they pick and choose like Protestants. They seek the “best of both worlds” where they can claim to be good Catholics while they live as Protestants.

Hypothetically, if Bergoglio (“Pope Francis”) is the true pope, then every Catholic is bound in conscience to obey him in all Church matters. Laity, priests, and bishops, must obey him in all that is not sinful. No Catholic has any right, privilege, and even less so - obligation; to establish any “parish,” “church,” “chapel” etc. without his

approval and that of the local “bishops” united with him. Traditionally, Catholics were not permitted to jump from one church to another. Every person attended the parish church where he lived, and he was not free to go to any other church. True Catholics do not attend the “church of their choice,” that is Protestantism. Catholics accepted the priest appointed to their location by the bishop; and they accepted the bishop assigned to them by the pope. Today we find that the New Order Church (Novus Ordo) is permitting or at least tolerating this instability of church changing like the Protestants. Tragically, we find many “conservatives” and “Traditionalists” have espoused the exact same practice.

The Church was established as a hierarchy by God, it remains, and will always remain a hierarchy. There are heads, and there are members. True members do not go or do as they please but follow the direction or lead of the head. When members go where they please and do what they please, there is no longer a true body, there is no true

unity or oneness. There is simply anarchy. History has shown us this in the Pagan religions, then in the Protestant ones as well as in the Novus Ordo, and strangely it is also a defining trait of “Traditionalism.” It appears that along with the traditions of the Church, the “Traditionalists” sects have also espoused traditional demonic anarchy.

Hence, if “Pope Francis” is the true pope, everyone must obey him and the bishops in union with him. In the absence of this obedience, we must show that his command is sinful, and therefore, we are not bound to obey him. But, if his command is for the universal Church and it is sinful, then we must conclude that the Holy Ghost is not guiding and protecting him. If the Holy Ghost is not guiding and protecting him from error, then either the doctrine of papal infallibility is wrong, or he is not a true pope.

We have taken the position that the doctrine is true, because it has been taught by the Church and accepted by the Church, and the true

Church cannot teach error. We re-affirm this belief every time we make the “Act of Faith.” This leaves us only with the second option. If “Pope Francis” teaches error to the entire world, then he is not a true pope. Hence, we are truly in a state of sede-vacante (the Chair of Peter is empty).

Jesus Christ is the True Head of the Catholic Church. A true pope is only His vicar or representative here on earth. We must not despair because the vicar has died, Jesus Christ

still remains at the helm. True bishops and priests are the remnants of His hierarchy. The visible head has been struck and the sheep have, indeed, scattered. It is our prayer and that of many others, that God give us the grace to persevere in these trying times. In the absence of reversing the Apocalyptic prophesy of the Great Apostasy, given to us by St. John; we are united with St. John in ending our prayer as he did in the book of the Apocalypse – “Come, Lord Jesus, come!”

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# DESIRING GOD

*Bishop Giles, OFM*

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With the current situation in the Church and the world today, we find many souls in virtual spiritual islands. They are isolated from the True Mass and sacraments by great distances. This evil presents many problems of conscience. How do we comply with the Laws of the Church when we are physically so far from the true Church? What do we do when our consciences are weighed down with burdens that can only be removed in the Sacrament of Penance? How can we receive Holy Communion when we cannot attend a True Mass?

It is a teaching of the Church that God accepts the desire for the deed. Also, we note that these laws cease to be binding when they are impossible to observe.

It is clear that Jesus taught us that God accepts the desire for the deed. He shows us that the man harboring hatred in his heart for his fellow man, is already guilty of murder and is deserving of the punishment for murder. He also shows us that the man lusting in his heart

is already guilty of adultery and is deserving of the punishment for adultery. We teach, with the Church, that God also accepts our good desires as if we had already done them.

Those who cannot receive the sacraments should form the desire and spiritually receive them. While this is not truly receiving the sacraments, it opens our souls to receive special graces from God. And, there is no doubt that God is pleased with these desires. Many saints made a habit of practicing frequent “Spiritual Communions” which helped them to advance in grace, virtue, and love of God. We encourage one and all to make use of this means of receiving God's grace. We can also spiritually attend the Sacrifice of the Mass wherever it is being offered.

Our modern-day technology has allowed us to stream the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass over the World Wide Web. This allows those in distant places to follow along and participate in the Mass. It is with great cau-

tion that we encourage this. The danger, that we perceive, is that many will view the Mass as “entertainment” rather than as sacrifice and worship. We desire that those who make use of this opportunity, should dress as if they were physically entering the House of God. That they (as far as they are able) kneel and stand at the appropriate times. This time is sacred, and we should not be checking email or surfing the web, carrying on conversations, etc. while participating in the Mass in this manner – just as we would not do these things if we were physically in the House of God. Those who do not have access to this modern technology are not left abandoned; they still can set aside a time for prayer and to reflect upon the Mass as it is offered – forming the desire to unite themselves with the offering of the Sacrifice of the Mass. There are several prepared methods for doing this, some can be found in old prayer books. *(We have reprinted in pamphlet form one such spiritual Mass and spiritual Holy Communion, and it is available by writing to THE SERAPH. A small donation to cover costs and postage is always appreciated.)*

Many have likely heard of the “Baptism of desire.” This teaching of the Church is often misunderstood and abused. Several saints have written concerning this. St. Augustine has suggested to us that a catechumen who died before he was baptized received the grace of baptism because he truly desired it. The “baptism of desire” is not a sacrament nor is it baptism. It is nothing more than a desire, but it is much more than wishful thinking or a fancy. If there is a true desire of the heart, there is no doubt that God is pleased with this desire and rewards it – just as He is displeased with evil desires and punishes them. The Church does not teach that physical baptism is not necessary because all you need to do is desire it, as many have suggested. The Church clearly teaches that Baptism is essential – only those that believe and are baptized will be saved. Those who truly desire to be baptized are not content saying that they have no need of baptism because they desire it. On the contrary, the desire for baptism moves them to obtain what they desire. The example that St. Augustine gives us of the catechumen shows us that he was studying and preparing

himself to receive the sacrament. This is proof of a real desire. There is no doubt that a true desire is cooperation with the grace of God. God is not only pleased with this cooperation, but He also rewards it – accepting the desire for the deed when it is not physically obtainable.

It takes a very strong faith, to form and maintain these holy desires and to grow in grace and virtue. However, it is the teaching of several spiritual writers that often times these graces are even greater than those received through careless or inattentive physical reception of the sacraments. Also, there are limits to the times or frequency in which we may physically receive the sacraments, but there are no limits to when or how often we may spiritually receive them through holy desire. Some saints have been recorded as making hundreds of Spiritual Communions throughout the day.

In the case of the Sacrament of Penance, we may also form the desire to confess and we can strive to make perfect Acts of Contrition. (A perfect contrition is when we are sorry for having offended God. It is a

sorrow that comes from loving God. An imperfect contrition is when we are sorry because we are deserving of punishment – we don't want to go to Hell, or we do not want to suffer here on earth or in Purgatory.) An imperfect Act of Contrition combined with the Sacrament of Penance is sufficient to absolve us of the sin and the eternal punishment of Hell. We should always strive to have as perfect a contrition as possible. If our contrition is truly perfect, then our sins are forgiven even before we actually receive the sacrament of Penance. (This does not allow us to approach Holy Communion before physically and sacramentally confessing mortal sin. We must confess as soon as we physically can.) If we were to die before we could physically receive the Sacrament of Penance, then a perfect act of contrition would wash away our sins and we could enter into Heaven. This grace is in essence a grace of desire – and we see that God accepts the desire for the deed.

We have permitted Catholics to receive absolution over the phone. However, we must understand that this is not actually a sacramental confession; it is

more a confession of desire. The priest simply asks the person to make an act of contrition as he says the words of absolution over them. It is similar to a tragic event when a priest may give a general absolution to everyone on a sinking ship. He cannot hear each individual confession, but he can have all make an act of contrition and give a general absolution to those who are truly repentant. Over the phone lines, as this is not secure or private, penitents are not asked to confess their sins. Without the confessing of sins there is no sacrament – only the holy desire and the graces of this desire. If those who have received a general absolution on a sinking ship survive, they must later confess their sins in the physical sacrament of Penance. Similarly, those who have received absolution over a distance without

confessing, should actually confess when the opportunity presents itself. The law is not binding upon us when it is impossible for us to keep it, but it becomes binding upon us the moment the impossibility ceases and we are then able to comply with it.

A truly devout life is brought about through many of these holy desires. It is the burning desires of the heart for God that takes our souls through the various degrees of the spiritual life. Every Catholic should seek to fill their days and lives with holy desires for God and the sacraments. This need not prevent us from any of our other duties or obligations. These desires of the heart can be made while we are engaging in any lawful activity without any detriment to the task at hand.

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# A CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

*Fr. Anthony Lentz, OFM*

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*(Note: This series of articles was originally two papers written for my Pedagogy [the science or profession of teaching children] course while I was in the seminary. The content is extremely necessary for a priest to know and understand because the education of children is a major part of his priestly work. This knowledge is not exclusively for the pastor, but it is also very important for parents. The primary duty of parents is to provide for the physical, intellectual, and spiritual needs of their children. Even though these needs are not all equal, the spiritual being the most important, they are so intertwined that you cannot really excel at one and fail in the other – they all go hand in hand! All who take part in the education of children, priests, parents, and teachers, must have a clear understanding of a true Catholic philosophy of education.*

*I should also add that I know of some people who believe that the science of Pedagogy is evil. This is understandable,*

*because our atheistic government (even though we are told it is a Christian one) uses this science or profession to brainwash children. A godless system of education has but one purpose – to create a godless society! the quality of education is being watered down! Since the quality of education in this country is dwindling at an alarming rate, it is clear that our government does not want to develop virtuous, logical, free thinking, and loyal citizens, but simply wants to have drones, who will jump on command! A science is not evil in itself. The very word “science” comes from the Latin word “scire,” which means “to know.” We are meant by God to learn, to know and to develop, for how could we ever ascend closer to Him if we could not? Remember the simple principle: Nothing that God has made is evil, it is man that makes it evil! Pedagogy is no different. I truly hope these articles will clear up any misunderstandings and will be a helpful reference for all who want to have understanding of the Catholic philosophy of education and the Catholic philosophy of life!)*

Pedagogy is the science or profession of teaching children. This subject is one of the required courses for Catholic seminarians, as they prepare for the priesthood. Since two of the primary duties of a priest are to preach and to catechize, it is no wonder why Holy Mother the Church would insist upon pedagogy being studied. Understanding the importance of education and its final purpose can and should be one of the greatest incentives for the teacher to teach and for the student to learn. It is very seldom that the idea of studying for the sake of studying amounts to much motivation. The thing that makes any journey worthwhile is to have an idea of the destination, even an imperfect one, and the journey of education is no different.

In the book *A Catholic Philosophy of Education*, Drs. John D. Redden and Francis A. Ryan touch upon the need and importance of a proper philosophy of education which stems from a proper philosophy of life. Since the purpose of philosophy is to discover the ultimate causes, reasons, and principles of being, it makes sense that a “proper philosophy of education” has to be a *true* philosophy of education. A philosophy of education is true when it possesses the correct concept of three important

ideas: the correct idea of God, the correct idea of man’s nature (fallen nature), and the correct understanding of the role of supernatural revelation. This last idea is what makes this truly a “Catholic” philosophy of education because it recognizes that man must have an understanding of his supernatural end and the means to obtain it. To disregard the supernatural would be like trying to complete a puzzle without having all the pieces and it would eventually lead to a denial of God Himself.

This book was published back in the 1950’s and already during that time, there was a great need for a proper philosophy of education. Society was changing, economically and socially. Society is still changing, and we have now become overly accustomed to those everyday conveniences of life, such as cars, televisions, the internet, etc. We have also been impregnated with so many false philosophies and ideologies that most people have not the ability, or in some cases, the desire, of discerning the truth. Most people, in general, have lost the idea of obligation, duty, and self-sacrifice and now they seek only to gratify their individual self-interests. With all these obstacles it is very important to have a true understanding of what is required for a true Cath-

olic Education, stemming from a truly Catholic philosophy of life.

The goal of this present paper is to touch upon the more salient points covered by Drs. Redden and Ryan, which are vital for properly understanding and educating a child, based upon Catholic principals.

### THE BASIC CONCEPTS OF A CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

Before a person can adopt a philosophy of education, he must first adopt a philosophy of life. This must not be done haphazardly but must be done with caution and prudence. This being the case, it will be wise to understand what is meant by education, and philosophy, and their relationship. The word education has adopted a variety of definitions, depending on how it is meant to be interpreted. The type of education which is the main focus of this paper is that of formal education. It may be given this descriptive definition as: *a deliberate and systematic influence exerted by the mature person upon the immature through instruction, discipline, and the harmonious development of all the powers of the human being, physical, social, intellectual, moral, aesthetic, and spiritual, according to their essential hier-*

*archy, by and for their individual and social uses, and directed toward the union of the educand (the student) with his Creator and the final end.* This useful definition makes it clear that education is not simply the memorization of facts and the acquiring of information. It is meant to form and to mold the minds and wills of young persons, so they may achieve full development and understanding of their natural powers and acquire their ultimate end. Education is, therefore, not an end in itself, but a means to an end. It must have its foundation on fundamental principles. These fundamental principles never change and are the basis of all reality, that is, the basis of all truth. The discovery of truth is the goal, nay, the purpose, of philosophy.

Philosophy, like education, had adopted a variety of accidental meanings. The discovery of truth, as it has already been stated, is the purpose of philosophy, but truth has both an intellectual and moral (practical) application. Intellectual philosophy is more concerned with understanding the ultimate principle, reasons, and causes of being by the means of human reason alone; whereas moral philosophy is concerned with man's conformity with the truth – his conformity will determine whether

or not his actions are morally good or moral evil. There can be only one truth and therefore there can be only one true philosophy, which governs man's thoughts and actions. This truth is the Eternal Truth – God.

God has revealed Himself to His intellectual creatures through two sources: the created universe and divine revelation. Philosophy, in general, looks for the answers to the universe without the aid of any extra-mundane source – such as God. But a true philosophy must also accept the reality of divine revelation for two reasons: 1) the historical fact and eye-witness accounts of miracles are too many and too accurate to be simply dismissed and 2) there is no intrinsic force which prevents God from revealing Himself directly to man. There may be many philosophies which have a solid foundation in some of those fundamental unchanging principles, but it is only Scholastic Philosophy which wholly accepts Divine revelation as an objective fact and not merely as speculation. This is why this system of philosophy has been adopted by the Catholic Church, the keeper and guardian of the whole Deposit of Faith.

It should be noticed that the connection between the philosophy of life and philosophy of educa-

tion is both natural and logical. A philosophy of life is the moral (practical) application of intellectual philosophy, which is based upon solid principles. Philosophy of education is the method by which one is instructed in those principles, so that his life may be conformed to them. Since it is the Catholic philosophy of life which is the true philosophy of life, it will be important to list the basic principles of both Catholic life and education. These principles are given in the order as they are found in the book, *A Catholic Philosophy of Education*, and they are as follows:

*“(1) The universe was created by almighty God and is governed by His Providence.*

*(2) Man is a creature composed of body and soul, created by God for the purpose of serving Him on earth and attaining eternal happiness with Him in heaven.*

*(3) Man, being endowed with a conscience and a free will is responsible for his conduct, the norms of which are predetermined by the eternal principles of the moral law. This moral law is immutable and is independent of man.*

*(4) Man received from God the power to learn certain truths in*

*the natural and supernatural order; and God has revealed to all men truths in the supernatural order which, because of man's limited capacity to learn, could not be learned otherwise.*

*(5) God bestowed upon man certain supernatural aids to conducts, such as grace, that operate beyond man's natural powers.*

*(6) As a consequence of original sin, man has an intellect less able to attain truth, a will less able to seek good, and a nature more inclined to evil. Original sin did not affect the nature of human intellect and will but deprived them of especial and powerful aids.*

*(7) Through Baptism, certain supernatural gifts are restored to man; but the effects of Original Sin in respect to man's intellect, will and nature remain.*

*(8) Man, by his very nature, is a social being, having obligations to society and, in turn, being affected by society.*

*(9) Education, which is at one and the same time essentially an individual and a social process, must embrace the systematic formation, development, and guidance of all the legitimate powers of man, in conformity*

*with his true nature and according to their essential hierarchy.*

*(10) The ultimate aim of creation is so to direct man that he may attain the end for which he was created. This ultimate end may be, at least partially, attained by the promotion of: a) A sound moral and religious training in Christian principles; b) an intellect disciplined and enlightened by truth, and guided by the teachings of religion; c) a disciplined will which, through the achievement of self-control and a firm adherence to moral principles, strives to attain the maximum level of human excellence; d) an appreciation of the duties, obligation, and rights of man and society, as ordained by the Creator; e) a recognition of the order and harmony of the universe applicable to man, nature, and society; f) a love of truth, virtue, and justice; g) and the acquisition of a fitness to earn a living and making that living livable and truly Christian."*

Guided by these principals, Pope Pius XI states in his Encyclical Letter *Divini Illius Magistri* that: "The great, and wouldn't it be too much to say, the sole, purpose of Catholic education is simply this – **the development of other Christs**. Christ came not to teach us the way to die, merely; but to teach us the way to live.

*That is platitude, of course; but the educated Catholic is merely a man who has learned how to live. And there is no way of Christian living except in imitation of Christ, the Son of God, and the most perfect of men ...”*

Another way to put it is that the purpose of education is to produce the most perfect type of manhood and womanhood; a person of character who will know and preserve in his life and conduct the proper order of things laid down by God and natural reason – harmonious development. A true, meaningful, and God-based education does not make the child into a mindless superstitious drone, as some may believe. On the contrary, through a truly Catholic education based on sound principles, and properly executed, a child will acquire initiative, self-reliance, and self-realization. He will develop social virtues such as obedience, sharing of interests, cooperation, self-discipline, and self-sacrifice. The individual child learns to subordinate his desires to group desires that are of greater worth and value.

Drs. Redden and Ryan sum up the relationship between philosophy and education into four major points: *1) everything in education must be subordinate to and directed towards man’s ulti-*

*mate end – God; 2) the aims of education must always be determined by the aims of life, which philosophy predetermines; 3) education provides the means whereby the aims of life may be realized; and 4) the constant elements of education are the fundamental truths or principles about man’s nature, origin, destiny, and his relation to God.* After providing the relation they supply us with the three essential characteristics of true philosophy of education: *(1) it makes religion the foundation of life and of education; (2) it is universal and objective in its application, regardless of time, place, or social conditions; (3) it is traditionally sound in its principles as proved by the experience of the past, and its comprehensive possibilities for the constructive guidance of the future.*

Following these fundamental and essential truths concerning education are those variable elements including theories, practices, methods of teaching, techniques of administration, etc., which must have their source in and direction from these fundamental truths.

***To be continued.***

***Draw Holiness and Happiness Even from Drudgery***

The first necessity is to find in your soul a respect for your vocation. Once you have this sense of mission, this sense of dedication to a cause more worthwhile than any purely personal claim, the rest can follow. Prayer, self-sacrifice, loyalty, perseverance, and in fact the whole list, come spontaneously to the soul who concentrates upon the vocation immediately present and refuses to look at the vocation over the hill. These virtues come spontaneously—but, of course, this does not mean that they come easily. Temptation comes easily; resisting temptation does not.

Another thing about this “drudgery,” which we are all so afraid of and so eager to avoid: it can promote not only holiness – in fact that is what it is for - but happiness as well. By taking it up, by working ourselves into the rhythm of it, we find the same sort of happiness in it that is found in the performance of the Divine Office. It becomes the apt expression; it brings peace. If only people searched harder for the dignity that is hidden in labor, and worried less about the drudgery that inevitably accompanies it, they would have time to look about them and see what kind of a happiness it can be made to bring.

Oh yes, I know all about monotony, stress, exhaustion, and all the other horrors. But these are only some of the accidental effects of any given vocation. What you need to get hold of, and examine, and pray about, and give thanks to God for, and not allow to go to waste, is the *substance*. It is the vocation itself about which you must be sure: when you have got the cause right, you will not have nearly so much difficulty in squaring up and sanctifying the effects. You will begin to see a pattern about your life. It will not be a muddle of dreary duties that are mercifully interrupted every now and then by pleasures: it will be a related whole; it will have a unity.

*Continued on page 19*

# THE NEED TO BE HOLY

*Fr. Joseph Noonan, OFM*

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When a Catholic child is catechized from an early age they are taught the most basic purpose of this life - their sanctification. This purpose is conveyed in one of the first catechism questions he will be asked. *Why did God make me?* God made me to show forth His goodness and to be happy with Him in Heaven. It sounded simple enough when you were a child, but what does it really require?

The simple answer is that one must become a saint. You must be holy at the time of your death in order to go to Heaven. Not including the holy, innocent child who dies at an early age, the process of becoming holy requires supernatural heroic virtue over many difficult years.

If one always cooperated with the available supernatural grace, obtaining Heaven would be considerably easier. Yes, each person is their own worst enemy! One allows his rebellious fallen nature to get in the way of the graces which flow from the Holy Sacrifice and the Sacraments. One may not know

how much grace is wasted or rejected (as if one could quantify it!), but it is quite clear that it would make the road to the Beatific Vision less burdensome.

It is an unfortunate fact that so few understand that their sanctification resides in the will. The Church rightly puts a great emphasis on the proper education of the Catholic. This education is important, especially at this time. How often has it been noted that Catholics are fooled by the enemies of the Church because of their ignorance? This is so true today.

Once a Catholic has been educated in the Faith, it is now up to the person to do what is right. This decision must be based on objective facts, not his own whims or desires. The Catholic Faith is not a religion based on feelings or emotions but theological facts based on right reason. This is why the doctrine of the Church does not change. It is based on the unchanging mind of God, not an ever-evolving, impulsive mind of the gullible masses.

To state this in another way, man was created with a soul

which possesses a memory, intellect, and will. The memory and intellect provide the information so the will is able to make an informed decision. At times this process is carried out well. The person will depend upon the received information to make a correct decision. Too often though, the information is incomplete or biased which has an effect on the decision-making process. Still, others make a decision based on their feelings or emotions or those of others. If you have ever wondered why people make such bad decisions perhaps this is the reason. Emotion and reason usually do not mix!

When decisions have a direct moral effect upon the person it can mean the difference between salvation or damnation. Let us take the example of siblings in a Catholic family. They are raised by two parents who are in agreement about how they want their children raised. They desire to send them to schools which teach the Catholic Faith. (This example is hypothetical so do not be concerned about the Modernists.) All five children go to the same parochial, high school and university. They take the same religion courses and are taught by the same teachers. The children

are given the best possible Catholic education. They have been given excellent spiritual guidance throughout the sixteen years of education. All received the Sacraments at least weekly. Their grades were above average but not necessarily straight A's.

The picture is quite clear concerning their formal Catholic education. A Catholic parent could not ask for more in this world.

In the years which follow their education, the oldest son is ordained a priest in the Dominican Order. The second child, a son, enters the military where he will spend the next twenty-five years of his life. The third child, a daughter, marries a practicing Catholic and they go on to have eight children. The fourth child, a daughter becomes a schoolteacher and goes to the Catholic Missions in Africa. The youngest of the five, a daughter, enters a Carmelite Monastery.

Please note that all have made good and honorable decisions. All is well for the first five years. The son in the military, though, begins to be affected by sinful fellow officers who frequent the bars, etc. Within five years he stops practicing the

Faith and is now living with a woman outside of marriage. The schoolteacher meets a Lutheran missionary in Kenya and marries outside of the Church. They only have two children because they use artificial contraception.

Three of the children maintain their Faith, die in the state of grace, and go to Heaven. The serviceman and the school teacher die outside of the Church and go to Hell.

What was the difference between the three children who went to Heaven and the two who went to Hell? It was not a lack of Catholic education. They all received sixteen years of excellent Catholic education.

The religious and housewife maintained a regular prayer life, received the Sacraments daily and conformed their wills to the Divine Will. The serviceman allowed human respect to creep in, became inconsistent in his prayer life, received the Sacraments only four or five times a year, became a regular drinker but not an alcoholic. He was quite lonely which led to his worst decision - living with a divorced woman outside of wedlock.

The schoolteacher was a good practicing Catholic until she

met a Lutheran missionary. He began to influence her concerning religious indifference. She had witnessed several Protestant sects working in Africa and wrongly concluded all of them were doing good work. She became smitten with this handsome man and agreed to marry him in the Lutheran Church. Over time she became indifferent to the Catholic Faith. She agreed to use contraception after falling for the "we cannot afford more than two children" lie as well as the overpopulation nonsense.

Satan does not care how he destroys the faith of the Catholic. He usually uses the weaknesses of the person to do it. The serviceman fell because of human respect and drinking which led to adultery. The schoolteacher fell because she fell for the lie of religious indifference and the sentimental emotion associated with infatuation.

One must understand the hypothetical situation which was just described occurs in real life. Catholics should pray each day for the supernatural gift of faith and final perseverance. No one has a guarantee of salvation because they are Catholic or that they have received an excellent Catholic education. The gift of faith must be supernaturally

nurtured through prayer and the Sacraments. One must have the desire to be holy regardless of his faults. The saints should not be empty role models.

Prayer is one of the basic duties of Catholics, but must be humble, sincere and persevering. It must be said to first adore God. He commands that one recognizes Him as the Almighty and Eternal God in Heaven. Thanksgiving is the second purpose of prayer. Do not take anything for granted. Always thank God for your spiritual and ma-

terial blessings. Making up for your sins is the third reason to pray. Never assume you have removed all temporal punishment from your soul. Prayer is one element to help cleanse the soul. The fourth reason is to ask for answers to prayers. Most people are familiar with this purpose for it is the only one they use to their own disappointment.

Pray and act to become a saint. With God's grace and your perseverance, it will be done.

### *Sister Agnes' Favorites*

*Continued from page 15*

The greatest pleasures in life are not those that are superimposed — anymore than they are those that represent escapes. The greatest and most lasting pleasures are those that emerge out of life itself. They are those that come in virtue of the vocation, not in spite of it. The taste of a fruit is not the sugar you put on it. Admittedly — to anyone who wants to press the analogy - if the fruit is really bitter, there is no satisfaction to be from eating it. Thus, if your state in life is really the wrong one for you, you will never find happiness in developing it. But here we are considering this state of life as being the right one for you - and as being insufferable or uncongenial only in its ramifications. *As a rule, it is not that the fruit is bitter, but that we have a wrong idea of sweetness.*

*Excerpt from Holiness for Housewives and Other Working Women  
Chapter 1, Pages 19-21*

# THE GIFT OF ONESELF

*From the French of  
THE REVEREND JOSEPH  
SCHRYVERS, C. SS. R.*

*Translated by a Religious of Carmel,  
Bettendorf, Iowa*

## PART ONE

*The Principles of Self-Surrender*

## CHAPTER TWO

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### *Article 1*

#### **GOD CONCERNS HIMSELF WITH THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE SOUL THAT IS GIVEN UP TO HIM**

To give oneself to God is to surrender to Him all one's being by an ardent act of love; it is then to forget oneself, to relinquish all concern for self and to leave it to God to provide for everything. It is complete abandonment to God.

Oh, I know that at this word "abandonment" human wisdom cries out; human wisdom



would make reserves, exact guarantees, lay down conditions for God! Does it not seem that it would make the affair of sanctification a bargain to be arranged between God and the soul, a bilateral contract in which the parties seek above all to secure their personal interests?

Far from us be these mean ideas. It is the prudence of the flesh that inspires them. To surrender oneself body and soul to God, to cast oneself upon Him as a child hastens to embrace its mother, to love Him, and to tell Him so, and to keep repeating it to Him, that is perfection, that is the secret

of the Saints, that is the way to delight the Heart of God.

Jesus does not will that souls, His spouses, concern themselves with anything else than loving Him and showing Him their love. In His palace, He has very many servants. If there are cares to be attended to, tasks to execute, a future to provide for, evils to prevent, He charges His servitors with all these. The queen ought not to leave her spouse. Her proper office is to charm him by the purity of her intention and by the tenderness and the fidelity of her love.

Is the King of kings perhaps lacking in power, wisdom or goodness, so that the soul needs to be fearful for her future? Seeing the inquiet solicitude of certain souls, one might believe it.

O adored Master! from all eternity Thou hast resolved to sanctify me; Thou hast created the world only to save me. As soon as the last of the elect has attained the degree of love which Thou hast destined for him, the universe shall be dissolved, just as a skillfully constructed machine which has become useless is taken apart.

And of what consequence in God's sight is this machine, this world, however perfectly fashioned it may be? Without trouble He can make a thousand others mightier and more beautiful. His thoughts are concerned with souls. The events which absorb the attention of men, revolutions, disorders, the succession of empires, are, in God's sight, only as child's play. Innocence preserved or recovered, an act of charity, a resolution to belong to Him, a sigh to His Heart, a prayer, these are the things which move Heaven.

Jesus has said to a saint: "I am ready to endure all the sufferings of My Passion as many times as there are lost souls; but, alas, they are no longer capable of redemption." And thou, my soul, who dost give thyself to Jesus in a transport of love, dost thou fear? Will the mother who is supporting the first steps of her child allow him to fall in the dust? And thou, who holdest out thy hand to Jesus, thou fearest that He will forsake thee on thy way!

God desires to sanctify souls. Therefore, He permits society

to exist in spite of the worm which devours it; for the sake of souls He tolerates those who blaspheme His Holy Name, those who deny His Providence, those who provoke His Divine Justice. The good grain must not be injured for the sake of rooting up the cockle.

For the sanctification of souls, God governs the world, rules the succession of seasons, sends His rain upon the field of the just as well as upon that of the sinner.

"The Lord is great and worthy of all praise." In the entire universe, He has made no creature, permitted no event, tolerated no evil, which does not contribute to the good of souls.

Come, my heart, no more cowardice! Trust in God, close thine eyes, and abandon thyself in His Arms. Has not Jesus said: "No man shall snatch from My Hand those whom My Father hath given Me"? Love thy God, do all for love, receive all from His Hand; then go on without fear; thou shalt surely arrive at sanctity.

## *Article 2*

### **GOD PLACES HIS WISDOM AND HIS POWER AT THE SERVICE OF THE SOUL THAT IS SURRENDERED TO HIM**

God desires thy sanctification. But perhaps He does not know what befits thy soul? Must thou not aid His Wisdom with thy light? O man! dispense thyself from this superfluous care. Thou knowest not whence thou hast come nor whither thou goest.

When Divine Wisdom mapped out the universe, when He traced the way of the stars, and said to the waves of the sea: "Go no farther," wert thou present? When He created immortal souls by the breath of His Mouth, and stamped them with His Likeness, did He call thee to His counsel?

To form the resemblance of God in a soul, this is a work which surpasses created light. God has reserved this task for Himself. Fear to trouble His action.

Thy soul is a masterpiece of perfection and of beauty. Feeling, reason, will, grace,

virtues, skill, inspirations, all are arranged in a striking manner. A grain of dust might disturb the operation of this marvelous machine. Dost thou wish to interfere by giving advice to Him Who has so delicately constructed it? Thou art blind, and thou dost desire to direct thyself! Thou dost anxiously observe God's conduct toward thy soul; thou findest fault with the action He requires of thee and the repose He allows thee. Senseless one! thou hast not even seen the soul thou wouldst govern. Leave to God this difficult task. He requires of thee one thing which is quite easy, one alone, to love Him. He has reserved for Himself the hard part of the work. Be content with thy part; God will do the rest. He is wanting neither in wisdom nor in power.

His action extends from one end of the world to the other. It penetrates the marrow, the essence of every creature. It is this action which has created them, which sustains and moves them. This Divine action upholds the universe. It is true that it is mysterious and hidden; it is also true that faith

alone discovers it; but is this action therefore less real or less effective?

What the Goodness of God has decreed for the sanctification of souls, what His Wisdom has ordained for the attainment of this ideal, His Power executes.

Pious souls, God is occupied with your sanctification. His Power is exercising itself at this very moment. Yield yourselves to His omnipotent action. All events interior and exterior become chisels to shape you, artist's-brushes to beautify you. Your joys and your griefs, your successes and your failures, your consolations and your aridities, your hopes and your fears, all are transformed into instruments in the Hands of this skillful Worker.

He Himself chooses His assistants for this divine task. If a soul needs such and such a counsellor to speak the necessary word, God will cause this man to come from the ends of the earth. He will make the mountains as plains before him; He will still the waves of the sea; if necessary,

He Himself will transport him, as of old He lifted Habacuc and set him near the lions' den. The soul which has need of this aid will not be disappointed in its expectations, although in order to content it the universe must needs be overthrown.

God's action in sanctifying souls of good will knows no limits. No creature may prevent it nor even delay it. It makes light of difficulties, turns obstacles aside or breaks them, forces its enemies to serve as its instruments. Violence exhausts itself before the patience of a soul that is surrendered to God; deceit is entangled in its own nets before this soul's simplicity; falsehood is disturbed before the soul's artless candor. What

is intended to be the ruin of a simple soul becomes its salvation; what has been most cleverly planned to surprise its virtue only strengthens it in good. Before it, barriers are opened, mountains are brought low, valleys are filled, precipices are changed into a wide, smooth path. How can anyone harm a soul that is given up to God, or cause the fall of one who walks leaning upon the Arm of Jesus?

My soul, surrender thyself to God; love Him without returning to thyself; forget thyself. God is good; He is wise; He is powerful. *Jacta super Dominum curam tuam et ipse te enutriet.* (Ps. 54:23). Cast thy care upon the Lord; and He will sustain thee.

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# FRANCISCAN SAINTS

OCTOBER 5TH

**Blessed Felicia of Meda**

*Virgin, Second Order*

Felicia was descended from the very distinguished and wealthy family of the Meda. She saw the light of day at Milan in Lombardy in 1378. She had good parents, who reared the pious and gifted child in the fear of God and left nothing undone that could be of advantage in her spiritual development. In a very short time, she acquired a remarkable command of the Latin language.

She lost both father and mother at a very early age, and thereafter united herself still more intimately with God. When she was twelve years old, she made a vow of perpetual chastity, and then entered the convent of the Poor Clares at St. Ursula in Milan.

The devil endeavored to make convent life miserable for her by subjecting her to severe temptations and frightful apparitions. But Felicia did not permit herself to be overcome. With fervent prayer and the words of the Psalmist: "O God, come to my assistance! O Lord, make haste to help me!" she put

the spirits of darkness to flight and persevered steadfastly in her vocation.

When the abbess of the convent died in 1425, the community unanimously chose Felicia for her successor. In this position she did her utmost with word, deed, and example to promote the true religious spirit in her community, so that its good name spread far and wide, even reaching Pope Eugene IV. It induced the pope and the minister general of the Franciscans at that time, St. Bernardine of Siena, to entrust her with the establishment of a new convent of Poor Clares at Pesaro.

Despite her advanced age, Felicia and seven companions made the journey from Milan to Pesaro on foot. When the foundress of the convent, the Princess of Montefeltro, offered her the carriage in which she had come out to meet the new community, Felicia humbly declined the offer and entered the town on foot with the rest of her companions.

Felicia spent four years in this new foundation, received a great number of new members, and reared and strengthened them in the spirit of our holy Father St. Francis. She died in the odor of sanctity in 1444, and many miracles were wrought by God in testimony of the holiness of His servant. Her body was laid to rest in the convent she had founded. Four hundred years later it was transferred to the cathedral of Pesaro. Pope Pius VII and later Pope Pius IX solemnly enrolled her among the blessed of the order.

### ON OUR CONDUCT IN TEMPTATIONS

Consider that temptations such as Blessed Felicia experienced in the beginning of her religious life are the lot of all who are sincere in their purpose to serve God. The Holy Ghost Himself tells us: "Son, when thou comest to the service of God stand in justice and in fear and prepare thy soul for temptation" (Ecclus. 2:1). And St. Paul writes: "And all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution" (2 Cor. 3:12). Sometimes these temptations come from the devil, sometimes from the world, sometimes from our flesh. Only God can help us at such times. Imitating Blessed Felicia, we must call upon God for help with the plea: "O God, come to my assistance; Lord, make haste to help me!" We may also say with

childlike confidence: "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." God is powerful enough to help us even if the whole world and hell with all its cohorts should rise up against us. Moreover, He will help us, because He has promised to do so and He is faithful. The infernal tempter has been a liar from the beginning, and as a liar we should resist him when he tortures us with all kinds of anxiety. — Because of lack of confidence in God, have you not sometimes given temptation too much latitude?

Consider that along with confidence in God, the knowledge of our unworthiness and weakness must constantly increase if we wish to retain our balance in temptation. Once when the holy hermit Anthony saw the whole world covered with the snares of the devil, he sighed and asked: "Who can safely pass through this?" He received this answer: "Humility alone can do it." Be humble, therefore, in your judgments of others even when they have had the misfortune to fall into sin. Likewise, be humble in your judgment concerning yourself; temptations show you just what you can do if God does not support you. But to the humble He will lend His assistance and preserve them from harm. — Examine yourself. Is lack of humility perhaps the reason why you are so variously tempted?

Consider that when our Savior once cured a demoniac. He said: "This kind can go out by nothing but by prayer and fasting" (Matth. 9:28). In certain temptations, it may be necessary to add acts of mortification to our confidence in God and our humble prayer for assistance. At times we may have to bring the rebellious flesh under the subjection of the spirit by fasting and chastisements. And always it is necessary to place a check on the tongue in speaking, on the ears in hearing, on the eyes in seeing, if we do not wish to expose ourselves to numerous temptations. — Watch over your senses, and

sometimes think of the souls who are now suffering the pains of purgatory because of their lack of watchfulness.

### PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

*O God, who didst put the virgin Blessed Felicia to the test, by permitting her to be assailed by many temptations, and didst strengthen her with the spirit of fortitude, grant, at her prayers and intercession, that we may mercifully be freed from all the snares of the enemy. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*



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# A Chance to Live

Monsignor John P. Carroll-Abbing

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## VI

### THE BOYS' REPUBLIC

**"The two corner-stones:  
Love and Trust"**

*Continued*

It was true. The citizens were there, full of life and sincere, for the trust, we had placed in them urged them on toward better things. Rough, violent, they slowly began to adapt themselves to the new mode of life. They were encouraged to elect a mayor and he presided daily at the assembly which convened to discuss problems and suggestions.

These problems were carefully considered along with the suggestions, put to a vote, and either approved or rejected. The adults in the Village were allowed to take part and present their views, which were discussed and considered as any of the others.

There was not what is called the authority of the principal, or of a teacher, but the advice of a brother. A brother, whose words were listened to, with open minds and hearts and lacking entirely in any

feeling of animosity. In these free discussions, it was possible to follow the line of reasoning of each one and to obtain an ever-growing knowledge of the individual's characteristics. The aim of self-government was, of course, to make the boys themselves their own best collaborators in their growth toward better and greater achievements.

The written law did not yet exist, but it did not take long for the boys to feel the need for it, that their collective living might proceed in a more orderly manner. And the law was written.

The mayor was to be elected by secret ballot. He was then empowered to select his aides: commissioners in charge of finance, public works, education, public health. The assembly ratified the nominations. The commissioners were to see that the individuals carried out certain regulations, and to supervise the working of their own particular departments. The judge took care of the proper application of the law and any eventual punishment that might have to be applied for its infringement.

The penalties were accepted and carried out in a serious mood. Sometimes it happened that the citizen would resent the humbling of his pride, but somehow he succeeded in keeping away from the football field for a couple of days, or he would patiently wash the restaurant windows, in order to show respect for the law he himself had helped to make. If, however, the defendant thought the imposed penalty unjust, he had the right of appeal at the court of appeals and, if still not satisfied, he could go to the supreme court.

There was a sense of justice, primitive perhaps, even from the beginning, and although the penalties seemed rather strange to the adult mind, they held a value toward building up better characters. It was to be noted, also, that the majority often tried to find every reasonable excuse for a first offender, so as to mitigate the punishment.

"He's only been here a short time and we were just like him and even worse," one would say. "If we give him a hand he'll soon act differently."

And so, justice and charity joined hands into a harmonious, astonishing whole, astonishing for us especially who knew from what a world of violence and confusion

they had come. A sense of responsibility toward others was slowly developing.

A boy who had arrived at the Village only a short time before approached some picnickers who were eating their lunch on the beach and asked for a piece of cake. He received it. He was heard to say, obviously as a pretext for his request, that at the Village he was not given enough food. A storm of protest broke loose. He was called before the court.

"Can't you understand that not only did you cut a poor figure, but that you have brought disgrace on all of us?" asked the judge.

"What do I care?" snapped the accused. "I wanted something and I got it . . . that's all that matters to me."

A boy rose to his defense. "We're free, aren't we? And so if we are, why couldn't he say what he liked to those people?"

The meeting became more and more heated after that. Everyone wanted to have his say, to give his opinion. Finally, the judge called for order.

"Listen, fellows," he said, "do you think that we have the right to speak against our own country

to strangers? I don't think so. In fact, we ought not to do it. It's the same thing here. We can speak against the Village, but we shouldn't because it isn't right and it isn't fair."

As he finished, his fists clenched and under the stress of emotion, he burst into tears. Everyone was so stunned and moved by the outburst that not another dissenting word was said.

Talk about reproofs, sermons, and a teacher's admonitions! The words of a boy and his tears held one simple, evident truth: free yes, but free to act the right way, not to follow the wrong.

Freedom of action, but a freedom that never forgot that that of others was another aspect of the same question defined on another occasion.

One of the citizens complained at one of the assembly meetings that for several nights at a stretch he had not been able to sleep because one of his roommates on coming home made enough noise to awaken the dead.

"So I want to make a noise," shouted the accused as he shot to his feet, "so what? S'posing I want to? Who's go'ne stop me?"

"I ask for the floor," put in one of the members, "you're right, you are free to make all the noise you

like, but Gino is free to sleep when he wants to . . ."

Discussions of points, questions, answers, a proposal, a vote and then came the decision. A new rule had been passed. Silence in the dormitories. No more noise, no more pranks.

In some a feeling for the right was natural, in others it developed slowly, but results were acquiring a positive quality and the hardest characters were gradually becoming docile.

Notwithstanding the fact that the boys seemed more sure of themselves, the security they felt was more apparent than real. The scorn to which they had become accustomed, the hardships they had encountered in their adventurous lives, the lack of personal security during so many years of battle to obtain even the least of their needs had led them to undervalue their possibilities, to lose faith in themselves, to think of themselves as inferior beings. To accentuate this lack of confidence was added the contact they had with their classmates from the neighborhood who had shown them how great was their ignorance. With the passing of time, some of the old harm was eliminated by the affection and understanding they received, but the roots still remained deep-buried in their hearts. And this came to the fore whenever talks

drifted toward a discussion of their future. They still had the impression that they were capable of doing little or nothing that would enable them to live.

I was sitting in the garden one afternoon, sketching some of the boys playing around me. One of them came to sit on the arm of my chair and watched my pencil as it moved along the paper.

"Do you like to draw?" I asked him.

"How should I know?"

"Want to try?"

"But I'm no good at it."

"How do you know, if you haven't tried?"

He gave in. He took a pencil I handed to him and a sheet of paper and made an attempt at it. He tried his best to put down a nose, a pair of eyes, a mouth. No use. He gave it up and turned to me.

"You see, Father, it looks like nothin' . . . not a man . . . not even like a melon. You see I'm no good . . ."

It had taken only five minutes for him to feel discouraged. But the next day I discovered him in a corner trying his best with pencil and paper. He proudly showed

me what he had accomplished, happy at discovering that he was capable of doing something with his own two hands.

This need for self-expression made it urgent that we build laboratories. We had one, the small carpenter's shop, and it was giving a good account of itself. For a long time, I had been playing with the idea that it might be possible to put up a laboratory where the boys could learn the art of ceramics. I spoke to a good friend of mine who owned a ceramic factory and he agreed with me that mine was a good idea. With his help, the plans were drawn. We obtained the services of an excellent teacher, but what about the money for the building and the equipment?

I cannot lengthen my story too much by giving the details of how a committee of citizens from Baltimore came to our assistance in this new undertaking, otherwise I should have to do the same for all the other American committees that made possible each new cottage, each school building, and laboratory, or provided the furnishings and equipment that went into them. It would be a long tale — a tale that someday I shall tell. Here I shall only say that although the fulfillment of this dream cost many sleepless nights, it also brought the joy and satisfaction of making me ac-

quainted with a host of loyal and generous friends, ever ready to share with me the weight of this great responsibility.

The immediate success of the new laboratory encouraged the erection of others. Not so long after, on Industry Square rose a much larger carpentry shop, the machine shop, the mechanic's shop and the shoe factory. A space was left for the future building of a printing shop and for other industrial plants. The nucleus of these constructions was the reason for giving the first village the name of Industrial Village, so as to distinguish it from the other two that were beginning to take shape at the same time.

As far back as 1945, I had been faced with one big problem. I realized it would be necessary to give a home to a large number of boys, to justify the construction of work-shops and of elementary

and professional schools. At the same time, I feared that a big increase in the number of our citizens would tend to diminish and finally to destroy that family quality, which is so characteristic of smaller groups. I was furthermore convinced of the utter impossibility of applying the theory of self-government to too large a community.

The solution was reached by building other villages in close proximity to the first. Although the boys of the different villages could use the same schools and central work-shops, and benefit by the same medical facilities, they lived their own lives in more autonomous groups.

The first village was well on its way. The time was ripe for thinking of a second one. At first, I thought of building it on a hill overlooking the first, but a walk changed my plans.

*To be continued.*

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