

# Ad Veritatem

Volume 14 Issue 2

St. Thomas More Society of Orange County

FEBRUARY 2009

## A SPECIAL THREE PART LECTURE SERIES

### at the February, March & April Monthly Meetings

**Note: The lectures are 1 hour starting promptly at Noon.**

**The Society requests a \$20 donation to cover its costs.**

### FEBRUARY MEETING:

**WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2009 NOON**

**SPEAKER: RENOWN APOLOGIST TIM STAPLES**

**TOPIC: "CATHOLICISM FOR SKEPTICS" (PART 1)**

*DETAILS ON PAGE 3*

"Ad Veritatem" is Latin for "Toward the truth."



## WHO WE ARE

In 1966, the movie *A Man For All Seasons* inspired the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to recognize this film as the Picture of the Year. This was one of the few occasions in the history of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences where the life of a religious figure won the hearts of the motion picture industry's elite. The central figure portrayed in *Man For All Seasons* was, of course, St. Thomas More, the great lawyer, statesman, apologist, husband, father and faithful Catholic. In 2000, St. Thomas was honored as the Lawyer of the Millennium by a secular panel of historians for the British Commonwealth. Shortly thereafter, John Paul II declared St. Thomas as the Patron Saint of Statesmen.

Inspired by a homily given by Bishop Norman McFarland at the 1995 Red Mass of Orange County, five "fearless" members of the Orange County bar met shortly thereafter at the law offices of Rutan and Tucker in Costa Mesa. These lawyers all shared the realization that the legal practice takes a severe toll on the personal and spiritual lives of those involved in it and that many in the legal profession had become too focused on the material life with the natural consequence being the de-emphasis on their spiritual life. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the formation of a new organization for lawyers and judges in the County of Orange with its mission being to publicly support and encourage the spiritual development of its members in their Catholic faith. The group chose as its patron St. Thomas More, the greatest lawyer of his time, who was a dedicated husband and father with a deep and profound commitment to his Catholic faith, his profession and his fellow man. Thus the St. Thomas More Society of Orange County was born.

Attendance at the monthly meetings in the early years was sporadic. Our spiritual director, Fr Hugh Barbour, wisely advised us not to worry about numbers because it was more important "to be than to do or say." He encouraged the virtues of patience and perseverance. His sage advice, together with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and St. Thomas More, has led us to our current level of a fourteen member Board of Directors of lawyers and judges and a mailing list for the monthly newsletter of over 970.

The goal of the Society is to inspire and lift up the minds and hearts of the legal community of Orange County to follow the example of St. Thomas More by integrating God in every aspect of their professional and personal lives. The Society seeks to accomplish this goal through inspirational speakers at monthly meetings, this newsletter, the Red Mass, a website, an annual spiritual retreat and other events. The St. Thomas More Society also seeks to provide a haven where those who are committed to their Catholic faith as well as those who are seeking to learn more about the Church, can find fellowship and encouragement in the face of overwhelming media and cultural forces working against that pursuit.

*St. Thomas More, please pray for us. ☩*

### FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

Don Hunsberger at (714) 663-8000 or email to [dah@hunsbergerlaw.com](mailto:dah@hunsbergerlaw.com), or

Judy Patno at (714) 871-6655 or email to [jpatno@patnolaw.com](mailto:jpatno@patnolaw.com).

VISIT OUR WEBSITE at [www.stthomasmore.net](http://www.stthomasmore.net)

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**AD VERITATEM EDITOR**  
**ANNE LANPHAR**

**FEBRUARY**  
**MEETING**

**APOLOGIST TIM STAPLES**  
***PART 1: "CATHOLICISM FOR SKEPTICS"***

**WHEN:**  
**NOON**  
**Wed. Feb 18**

**WHERE:**  
**First American**  
**Trust Bldg.**  
**5 First American**  
**Way, Santa Ana**

**FOR DIRECTIONS**  
**(714) 250-3000**

**COST:**  
**Lunch: \$15**  
**Donation: \$20**

**TIM:** Tim Staples was raised a Southern Baptist. Though he got away from the faith of his childhood during his teen years, he came back to faith in Christ in his late teens through Christian television and some friends in the Assemblies of God. Tim decided to join the Marine Corps and during his four-year tour, he got involved in ministry in various Assembly of God communities. Immediately after his tour of duty, Tim would become a Youth Minister in an Assembly of God Community and later enroll in Jimmy Swaggart Bible College. During his final year in the Marines, Tim met a Marine who really knew his Faith and challenged Tim to study Catholicism from Catholic and historical sources. Having been challenged, Tim was determined to prove Catholicism wrong and ended up studying his way to the last place he thought he would ever end up... the Catholic Church. Since his conversion in 1988, Tim spent six years in formation for the priesthood earning a degree in Philosophy from St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Overbrook, PA. He then studied theology on a graduate level at Mt. St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md. for two years. Deciding that his calling was not to the priesthood, Tim left the seminary in 1994 and has been working in Catholic Apologetics and Evangelization ever since.

**TIM'S TALK:** Tim will take you from no faith at all to the four marks of the Church. Whether you are a skeptic yourself or if you want to learn how to share your faith with someone who does not believe, this talk is for you. Tim will show you how you can demonstrate the existence of God using good philosophy and good science, as well as how you can prove "beyond a reasonable doubt" the natural immortality of the human soul, Natural Law, the necessity of divine revelation, and the Catholic Christian Faith as the fullness of that divine revelation. This talk will empower you to be able to present the only antidote to what Pope Benedict XVI calls "the dictatorship of relativism" which is the absolute truth.

For questions, call Don Hunsberger (714) 663-8000 or Anne Lanphar at (714) 250-1453. †

**STM MONTHLY MTGS:**  
**3RD WEDNESDAY OF MONTH:**

**MARCH 18**  
**APRIL 15**  
**MAY 20 †**

**STAPLES SERIES**

**TIM STAPLES WILL SPEAK AT OUR**  
**FEBRUARY, MARCH & APRIL MEETINGS.**  
**EACH IS 1 HOUR STARTING AT NOON.**  
**A \$20 DONATION IS REQUESTED. †**

**CALENDAR**  
**REMINDERS**



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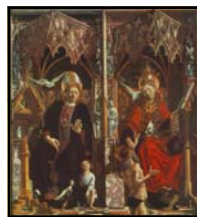
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**A  
MESSAGE  
FROM  
OUR  
CHAPLAIN**



**THE PENANCE OF  
ST JEROME**

*Piero della  
Francesca*

(1450)

## *Penance—Is There a Limit?*

**FR. HUGH BARBOUR, O. PRAEM, PH.D.**

**QUESTION:** I've read some amazing things about the penances performed by the saints. Sometimes they go beyond what seems reasonable; not just fasting or keeping silence, but flogging themselves, wearing hairshirts, spiked belts, and so on. How can such things be justified, especially in the light of St. Paul's teaching in 1 Cor 6:19 that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit?

**ANSWER:** Further on in the same epistle St. Paul says, "I chastise my body and bring it into subjection, lest perhaps when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway" (1 Cor, 9:27). Our Lord Himself fasted and kept vigils, even though He was sinless. His penances merited for us the grace to do penance for our sins, as He reminds: "Those whom I love, I rebuke and chastise. Be zealous, therefore and do penance" (Rev. 3:19). The saints longed for the coming of the kingdom, and by their sometimes severe penances they tried to hasten its appearance in themselves and in others. The trouble is not that some saints may have exaggerated this penitential spirit, but that we, with all our sins, do so little penance. We may not have to perform the hair-raising feats of some of the saints, but all of us can show that we share in a Christ-like love by chastising and mastering our bodies through penances compatible with our duties and station in life. Christian penance is not an expression of a belief that the body or its pleasures are evil. Rather penance is a kind of "house cleaning" of the temple of the Holy Spirit. Sin, even when it has been forgiven, still has an effect on the soul, leaving a scar or residue, like the mess left behind after the storm is over and the sky has cleared. Theologians speak of a residue left by sins called "temporal punishment," the debt owed in justice to God who has been merciful in forgiving our sins and remitting (eliminating) the eternal punishment they deserve. Nothing we could do could repair for the debt of eternal punishment, so we can't do penance for that. Only Christ could do that. But being a wise Father, God wants His children to do what they can, and since we can perform penances for the remission of temporal punishment, He requires this of us. God is just as well as merciful. There is also the so-called "kindling" in our souls, left by past sins, that can easily ignite the passions and result in more sins. The Latin term for this used by theologians is the *fomes peccati* (think of the verb "to foment" something, and you'll have a feel for the force of the phrase). By practicing virtue "acts that go against our sinful inclinations," we can weaken sin's hold on us. If we're lazy, we can sleep a little less, if gluttonous, we can fast, if lustful, we can abstain for a time (with the consent of one's spouse). These actions are all types of fasting. It is precisely because our bodies are meant for God's service that we do penance, to make up for our abuse of the body which is really meant for His use and His dwelling. In doing penance we will also remind ourselves of the fact which Our Lord most often related to penance: We are not made for this world, but for the kingdom of heaven, as He said, "Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17). After telling us that we are the temples of God in whom the Holy Spirit dwells in 1 Corinthians 6:19, St. Paul says, "You are not your own. For you are bought with a great price. Glorify and bear God in your body." Performing acts of penance reminds us that we are not our own property, but God's, members of Christ's Body and citizens of the kingdom. †



## ABOUT HONORABLE BEHAVIOR

BISHOP NORMAN MCFARLAND

ORIGINALLY PRINTED IN JULY 1997

Even when conscientiously trying to attend to the Lord's mandate of charity, most of us will probably cringe at being cornered by the egocentric boor whose unremitting self-absorption threatens to engulf everyone around him. We mean the kind of narcissism that prompted the painter James McNeil Whistler to mutter at a dinner, "If other people are going to talk, conversation becomes impossible!" This was the same Whistler who when a flatterer told him "There are only two great painters, you and Velázquez," responded, "Why drag in Velázquez?"

While admittedly not so engaging when encountered, this sort of thing can yet be uproariously funny when recounted; for the essence of humor is really rooted in the incongruous. Like King Louis XIV's complaint after a setback, "How could God do this to me after all I have done for him?" Or Gertrude Stein's "Yes, the Jews have produced only three original geniuses: Christ, Spinoza and myself." Or the French poet Alfred de Musset's self-appraisal: "How glorious it is, but how painful it is also, to be exceptional in this world." (The quotations, incidentally, come from a mini-review in America Magazine of a new handbook entitled *I Am a Most Superior Person*, a volume I just may have to buy).

One indeed meets this sort of egomania in all sectors of society, but I am more prone by occupation to notice its pungent—and not so amusing—presence within the Family of God. Just read my mail. A good deal of it gratuitously offers to catechize me about one or the other article of the "true faith" and suggests (not always in the most irenic fashion) what I as Bishop should be, or should not be, doing about the matter; or which reports Father Pastor for being insensitive to the exigencies of modern living with his outdated perspective of the Church; or another constituency being heard from—castigates us for betraying our teaching responsibilities if we do not articulate the faith in the precise cadences of treasured memory. Some Catholics fear that if we lose any of the customs with which we grew up, we will end by losing the faith itself. So they want to hold onto everything without asking whether a given custom is something crucial or something much less than essential, whether it is something that still helps or something that has begun to hinder. To cling blindly to past customs in this way is to ask for trouble, just as parents do who never allow their children to grow up. On the other hand, there are Catholics who not only confuse core Catholic teaching with practices that may truly be transient in nature, but who appear to be ashamed of the piety and customs of their childhood, which they regard as naive and exaggerated and to express sentiments not acceptable in our society today. This is sad—like being embarrassed to have people meet one's immigrant grandfather because he speaks English badly and embraces everybody. And so I get letters, written in accents that exude great self-confidence in the positions taken. These people may in all humility admit to having their faults; the possibility of being wrong, however, is apparently not one of them.

Aside from the self-appointed intermediaries of the Holy Spirit who speak from



***"But the special reason for bringing this up at the present time is again to note that the derogatory expressions of factionalism that have invaded some parts of the Catholic community are a scandal to those who are not of the Household of Faith, and certainly not at the service of evangelization."***

*Honorable Behavior* (Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5) *Honorable Behavior*

untutored isolation, there are also those strident voices with access to the media and in consort with organized groups that are attempting to rally the troops either to enshrine all the ecclesiastical accoutrements of the past, or to refashion the Church completely in New Age raiment. Both factions, to my mind, are not only causing great mischief in the Church but—a most important concern—are giving scandal to those outside the Church. And this not only because of their diverse agendas, but because of their arrogance and vitriolic expressions of contempt for those who do not share their wisdom—especially those in authority and not excluding the Holy Father himself. It is with continuing pain these days that one turns the pages of certain allegedly Catholic publications finding nothing but scorn, mockery and ridicule being poured out upon the Institutional Church and its highest representatives.

Cardinal John Henry Newman a century ago offered some eloquent advice in this respect. “Trust the Church of God implicitly even when your natural judgment would take a different course from hers and would incline you to question her prudence or correctness. Recollect what a hard task she has; how she is sure to be criticized and spoken against, whatever she does; recollect how much she needs your loyal and tender devotion; recollect too, how long is the experience gained in 1800 years; and what a right she has to claim your assent to principles which have had so extended and triumphant a trial. Thank her that she has kept the Faith safe for so many generations and help her to transmit it to generations after you.” In the same tenor, a sound-byte from Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger’s recent book, *Called to Communion: Understanding the Church Today*, is worth pondering: “Today, as always the will to take action in regard to the Church must find the patience first to ask about her nature, her origin, her destination.” One recognizes here the echo of that familiar saying, “Before tearing down a wall, you should know why it was erected in the first place.”



ALTARPIECE OF THE  
CHURCH FATHERS:  
ST AUGUSTINE  
& ST GREGORY

*Michael Pacher*

(1483)

But the special reason for bringing this up at the present time is again to note that the derogatory expressions of factionalism that have invaded some parts of the Catholic community are a scandal to those who are not of the Household of the Faith, and certainly not at the service of evangelization. What *occasioned* the notice is a passage I recently read in a letter of the first Pope: *Your life amidst the Gentiles must be beyond reproach . . . you must let them see, from your honorable behavior, what you are . . . free men, but the liberty you enjoy is not to be made a pretext for wrongdoing.* What Peter is thinking about here is the edification or disedification which Christians will give, by their conduct, to the world around them. And he puts his finger on the nerve of the problem. As does Saint Paul repeatedly, Peter describes Christians as *free men*; and at once he adds the same caution that is flouted in our day by so many partisans in so many ways: *but the liberty you enjoy is not to be made a pretext for wrongdoing.* No doubt the fiery zealots, standing amid the wreckage they have made, will boldly protest: “What we are doing is not wrong, but right!” But destruction is a curious form of construction. Hatred is a singular parody of love. Mockery is a most puzzling implementation of Christ’s emphatic directive: *This is my commandment, that you should love one another, as I have loved you.*”

My brothers and sisters of the Family of God, unite—in *honorable behavior*.✠

# THE DECLINE OF CONTROVERSY

ARCHBISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN  
1895-1979

Once there were lost islands, but most of them have been found; once there were lost causes, but many of them have been retrieved; but there is one lost art that has not been definitely recovered, and without which no civilization can long survive, and that is the art of controversy. The hardest thing to find in the world today is an argument. Because so few are thinking, naturally there are found but few to argue. Prejudice there is in abundance and sentiment too, for these things are born of enthusiasms without the pain of labor. Thinking, on the contrary, is a difficult task; it is the hardest work a man can do that is perhaps why so few indulge in it. Thought-saving devices have been invented that rival labor-saving devices in their ingenuity. Fine-sounding phrases like "*Life is bigger than logic*," or "*Progress is the spirit of the age*," go rattling by us like express-trains, carrying the burden of those who are too lazy to think for themselves.

Not even philosophers argue today; they only explain away. A book full of bad logic, advocating all manner of moral laxity, is not refuted by critics; it is merely called "*bold, honest, and fearless*." Even those periodicals which pride themselves upon their open-mindedness on all questions are far from practicing the lost art of controversy. Their pages contain no controversies, but only presentations of points of view; these never rise to the level of abstract thought in which argument dashes with argument like steel with steel, but rather they content themselves with the personal reflections of one who has lost his faith, writing against the sanctity of marriage, mad of another who has kept his faith, writing in favor of it. Both sides are shooting off fire-crackers, making all the noise of an intellectual warfare and creating the illusion of conflict, but it is only a sham battle in which there are not casualties; there are plenty of explosions, but never an exploded argument.

The causes underlying this decline in the art of controversy are twofold: religious and philosophical. Modern religion has enunciated one great and fundamental dogma that is at the basis of all the other dogmas, and that is, that religion must be freed from dogmas. Creeds and confessions of faith are no longer the fashion; religious leaders have agreed not to disagree and those beliefs for which some of our ancestors would have died they have melted into a spineless Humanism. Like other Pilates they have turned their backs on the uniqueness of truth and have opened their arms wide to all the moods and fancies the hour might dictate. The passing of creeds and dogmas means the passing of controversies. Creeds and dogmas are social; prejudices are private. Believers bump into one another at a thousand different angles, but bigots keep out of one another's way, because prejudice is antisocial. I can imagine an old-fashioned Calvinist who holds that the word "*damn*" has a tremendous dogmatic significance, coming to intellectual blows with an old-fashioned Methodist who holds that it is only a curse word; but I cannot imagine a controversy if both decide to damn damnation, like our Modernists who no longer believe in Hell.

The second cause, which is philosophical, bases itself on that peculiar American philosophy called "*Pragmatism*," the aim of which is to prove that all proofs are useless. Hegel, of Germany, rationalized error; James, of America, derationalized truth. As a result, there has sprung up a disturbing indifference to truth, and a tendency to regard the useful as the true, and the impractical as the false. The man who can make up his mind when proofs are presented to him is looked upon as a bigot, and the man who ignores



CHRIST  
BEFORE PILATE  
*Tintoretto*  
(1556)

(Continued from page 7) *The Decline of Controversy*

proofs and the search for truth is looked upon as broad-minded and tolerant.

Another evidence of this same disrespect for rational foundations is the general readiness of the modern mind to accept a statement because of the literary way in which it is couched, or because of the popularity of the one who says it, rather than for the reasons behind the statement. In this sense, it is unfortunate that some men who think poorly can write so well. Bergson has written a philosophy grounded on the assumption that the greater comes from the less, but he has so camouflaged that intellectual monstrosity with mellifluous French that he has been credited with being a great and original thinker. To some minds, of course, the startling will always appear to be the profound. It is easier to get the attention of the press when one says, as Ibsen did, that "*two and two make five*," than to be orthodox and say that two and two make four.

The Catholic Church perhaps more than the other forms of Christianity notices the decline in the art of controversy. Never before, perhaps, in the whole history of Christianity has she been so intellectually impoverished for want of good sound intellectual opposition as she is at the present time. Today there are no foe-men worthy of her steel. And if the Church today is not producing great chunks of thought, or what might be called "*thinkage*" it is because she has not been challenged to do so. The best in everything comes from the throwing down of a gauntlet—even the best in thought.

The Church loves controversy, and loves it for two reasons; because intellectual conflict is informing, and because she is madly in love with rationalism. The great structure of the Catholic Church has been built up through controversy. It was the attacks of the Docetists and the Monophysites in the early centuries of the Church that made her clear on the doctrine concerning the nature of Christ; it was the controversy with the Reformers that clarified her teaching on justification. And if today there are not nearly so many dogmas defined as in the early ages of the Church it is because there is less controversy--and less thinking. One must think to be a heretic, even though it be wrong thinking.

Even though one did not accept the infallible authority of the Church, he would still have to admit that the Church in the course of centuries has had her finger on the pulse of the world, ever defining those dogmas which needed definition at the moment. In the light of this fact, it would be interesting to inquire if our boasted theory of intellectual progress is true. What was the Christian world thinking about in the early centuries? What doctrines had to be clarified when controversy was keen? In the early centuries, controversy centered on such lofty and delicate problems as the Trinity, the Incarnation, the union of Natures in the Person of the Son of God. What was the last doctrine to be defined in 1870. It was the capability of man to use his brain and come to a knowledge of God Now, if the world is progressing intellectually, should not the existence of God have been defined in the first century, and the nature of the Trinity have been defined in the nineteenth? In the order of mathematics this is like defining the complexities of logarithms in the year 30, and the simplification of the addition table in the year 1930. The fact is that there is now less intellectual opposition to the Church and more prejudice, which, being interpreted, means less thinking, even less bad thinking.

Not only does the Church love controversy because it helps her sharpen her wits; she loves it also for its own sake. The Church is accused of being the enemy of reason; as a matter of fact, she is the only one who believes in it. Using her reason in the [First] Council of the Vatican she officially went on record in favor of Rationalism [meaning, here, the proper use of reason], and declared, against the mock humility of the Agnostics and the sentimental faith of the Fideists, that human reason by its own power can know something besides the contents of test-tubes and retorts, and that working on mere sensible phenomena, it can soar even to the "*hid battlements of eternity*," there to discover the Timeless beyond time and the Spaceless beyond space which is God, the Alpha and Omega of all things.

The Church asks her children to think hard and think clean. Then she asks them to do two things with their thoughts. First, she asks them to externalize them in the concrete world of economics, government, commerce, and education, and by this externalization of beautiful, clean thoughts to produce a beautiful and clean civilization. The quality of any civilization depends upon the nature of the thoughts its great minds bequeath to it. If the thoughts that are externalized in the press, in the senate chamber, on the public platform, are base, civilization itself will take on their base character with the same readiness with which a chameleon takes on the color of the object upon

*The Decline of Controversy* (Continued on page 9)



(Continued from page 8) *The Decline of Controversy*

which it is placed. But if the thoughts that are vocalized and articulated are high and lofty, civilization will be filled, like a crucible, with the gold of the things worthwhile.

The Church asks her children not only to externalize their thought and thus produce culture, but also to internalize their thoughts and thus produce spirituality. The constant giving would be dissipation unless new energy was supplied from within. In fact, before a thought can be bequeathed to the outside, it must have been born on the inside. But no thought is born without silence and contemplation. It is in the stillness and quiet of one's own intellectual pastures, wherein man meditates on the purpose of life and its goal, that real and true character is developed. A character is made by the kind of thought a man thinks when alone, and a civilization is made by the kind of thoughts a man speaks to his neighbor.

On the other hand, the Church discourages bad thinking, for a bad thought set loose is more dangerous than a wild man. Thinkers live; toilers die in a day. When society finds it is too late to electrocute a thought, it electrocutes the man. There was once upon a time when Christian society burned the thought in order to save society, and after all, something can be said in favor of this practice. To kill one bad thought may mean the salvation of ten thousand thinkers. The Roman emperors were alive to this fact; they killed the Christians not because they wanted their hearts, but because they wanted their heads, or better, their brains--brains that were thinking out the death of Paganism.

My conclusion is yes, there is a great struggle for the soul of the Church, and all methods of battle are necessary in order to win it. †

**Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem\***  \*Latin for "To turn truth into laughter"

## **DON'T MESS WITH WOMEN!**

A woman and a man are involved in a car accident on a snowy, cold Monday morning; it's a bad one. Both of their cars are totally demolished but amazingly neither of them are hurt. God works in mysterious ways.

After they crawl out of their cars, the man is yelling....about women drivers; the woman says, "So you're a man. That's interesting. I'm a woman. Wow, just look at our cars! There's nothing left, but we're unhurt. This must be a sign from God that we should meet and be friends and live together in peace for the rest of our days."

Flattered, the man replies, "Oh yes, I agree with you completely; this must be a sign from God! But you're still at fault...women shouldn't be allowed to drive."

The woman continues, "And look at this, here's another miracle. My car is completely demolished but this bottle of wine didn't break. Surely God wants us to drink this wine and celebrate our good fortune."

Then she hands the bottle to the man. The man nods his head in agreement, opens it and drinks half the bottle and then hands it back to the woman. The woman takes the bottle and immediately puts the cap back on, and hands it back to the man.

The man asks, "Aren't you having any?"

The woman replies, "No, I think I'll just wait for the police...." †





# Daniel's Inn 14th Annual Conference



Enjoy breakfast and spend a morning with fellow legal professionals and discover **“You Are Not Alone”** in the “burn out” & tribulations of the Practice of Law. Learn from the personal experiences of others, the great inspiration & strength found in doing God’s Will in the Practice of Law.

DANIEL’S INN IS A NON-DENOMINATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE ON THE CONTINUING THEME OF “YOU ARE NOT ALONE.” YOU’LL HAVE THE CHANCE TO SHARE EXPERIENCES, DISCUSS TOUGH ISSUES AND DISCOVER GOD’S SOLUTIONS. PROMINENT ATTORNEYS AND JUDGES FROM VARIOUS FIELDS WILL SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES IN STARTING TO LIVE OUT GOD’S WILL IN THEIR OWN PRACTICES AND COURTROOMS.

## Guest Speakers

ATTORNEY JULIE PIERCE

ATTORNEY MAURY EVANS

JUDGE DONALD GAFFNEY

JUDGE GREGG PRICKETT

DATE: SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2009, TIME: 8:30 AM TO 12:00 PM

LOCATION: ST. JOSEPH’S CENTER, MULTIPURPOSE ROOM

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## SPIRITUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE

FATHER JOHN MCCLOSKEY

At the beginning of this century, Msgr. Robert Hugh Benson, a noted Anglican convert to Catholicism, wrote two intriguing books entitled respectively *Lord of the World* and *The Dawn of All*. In the former, he prophesies a future world where secular humanism has almost completely triumphed and Catholicism is a negligible cultural force with only a remnant of adherents. He also foresees air travel, nuclear weapons, and the emergence of two great superpowers in the East and West, not to mention the coming of the Anti-Christ through world government. In the latter volume, written in reaction to critical comments made regarding the first, he portrays a world where a new Christendom has been established with a wonderful harmonizing of the teachings of the Church with medicine, science and politics.

In the 21st Century, the beginning of the third millennium to which the Holy Father has so often referred in the course of his pontificate, one of these visions could very well come about.

I tend towards the more optimistic view and it is my thesis that a new re-evangelized world, at least in the case of the West, will come about precisely due to the flowering of authentic lay spirituality in the professions and the workplace.

One does not have to be a particularly insightful historian of the Church to see that we may very well be coming to the end of a 2000 year cycle. The spirituality of the first Christians was rooted in the secular world, in family and civil life, and in the workplace. Although, some early Christians undoubtedly dedicated themselves totally to apostolic works, there is relatively little mention of monastic life until the end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth. Ironically, the fleeing from the world by tens of thousands to the desert of the Thebaid of Egypt came at precisely the time when Christianity was about to receive religious toleration through the Edict of Milan, and, with time, their moral life was to be incorporated into the law of the Roman empire. This is when it became the common opinion that in order to seek sanctity seriously, one had to abandon the world, and the best the laity could aspire to was a second-class sanctity due to the "distractions" of commerce, family, and social life, etc. However, listen to a description of Christian life in the second century prior to the emergence of monasticism:

Christians are indistinguishable from other men either by nationality, language or customs. They do not inhabit separate cities of their own, or speak a strange dialect, or follow some outlandish way of life. Their teaching is not based upon reveries inspired by the curiosity of men. Unlike some other people, they champion no purely human doctrine. With regard to dress, food and manner of life in general, they follow the customs of whatever city they happen to be living in, whether it is Greek or foreign.

And yet there is something extraordinary about their lives. They live in their own countries as though they were only passing through. They play their full role as citizens, but labor under all the disabilities of aliens. Any country can be their homeland, but for them their homeland, wherever it may be, is a foreign country. Like others, they marry and have children, but they do not expose them. They share their meals, but not their wives. They live in the flesh, but they are not governed by the desires of the flesh. They pass their days upon earth, but they are citizens of heaven. Obedient to the laws, they yet live on a level that transcends the law... (*Epistle to Diognetus*, Nn. 506; Funk, 397-401).

The development of religious life from the hermits of the desert through the monasticism of Benedict and Columba, continuing with the founding of the mendicant orders

*Spirituality in the Workplace* (Continued on page 12)



**SAINT PREACHING  
(PANEL)**

*Jorge Ingles*

(1455)

(Continued from page 11) *Spirituality in the Workplace*

of the 13th century and the emergence of the missionary congregations of the 16th century, reveals a constant evolution of the consecrated religious life towards greater involvement in the world. The most lay people could hope for was a derivative "third-order" spirituality which was religious.

It is clear that the Holy Spirit is working in a special way in the Church most particularly through the Second Vatican Council in placing an emphasis on the work of the laity in the transformation of the world of Christ. As Christopher Dawson puts it:

We need a new asceticism suited to the conditions of the modern world -- a strenuous training of body and mind in the new life....The position of the laymen is inevitably more difficult since the external forms of life are determined by economic forces which take small account of religious consideration. And not only is religion confined to the inner life but that life itself is exposed to multiple distraction.... It calls for a heroic effort like that which converted the Roman Empire. I believe myself that the need produces the man and that the coming age of the Church will see a new outpouring of spiritual energy manifested in the Christian life....The saint, like every other great man, is the organ of a social purpose, and the success of his mission depends on the reserves of faith and spiritual will that have been accumulated by the anonymous activity of ordinary imperfect men and women, each of whom, has made an individual contribution, however minute it may be, to a new order of Christian life (*Enquiries*, 1933, pp. 308-310).

In this paper, I want to focus on a few themes that are highlighted in the Holy Father's post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *The Laymembers of Christ's Faithful People (Christifideles Laici)*. I will try and limit myself to the given topic although the document contains much, much more. *Christifideles Laici* contains the best synthesis of the Church's recent teaching on the laity. The Holy Father quotes liberally from *Gaudium et Spes*, *Lumen Gentium*, and *Apostolicam Actuositatem* from the Second Vatican Council and also from his important post-conciliar documents, *Familiaris Consortio* on the family, and *Laborem Exercens* on work, two areas where the laity must sanctify and be sanctified.

The Holy Father begins by putting the stress on the divine calling by the Lord, man's vocation, by citing the parable of the vineyard. The laity are all called to labor in the vineyard, and the vineyard is the world and there is no excuse not to be involved. The laymen not only form part of the Church, they are the Church -- the Church which is referred to as "the universal sacrament of salvation" (*LG* #48). This clarifies the conciliar teaching that the laity are not simply instruments of the hierarchy or of religious congregations but rather free and responsible members of the Church called directly to evangelization in the vineyard of the world. He underlines the urgency of the task in this historical moment:

For faith throws a new light on all things and makes known the full ideal to which God has called each individual and thus guides the mind towards solutions which are fully human.... It is necessary then to keep a watchful eye on this our world, with its problems and values, its unrest and hopes, its defeats and triumphs: a world whose economic, social, political, and cultural affairs pose problems and gave difficulties in light of the descriptions provided by the Council (*CL* #3).

He communicates a sense of adventure, even of crusade. What is emphasized is the secular nature (in the world) of this mission, making reference to avoiding:

The temptation of being so strongly interested in Church services and tasks that some fail to become actively engaged in their responsibilities in the professional, cultural and political world: and the temptation of legitimizing the unwarranted separation of faith from life, that is, a separation of the Gospel's acceptance from the actual living of the Gospel in various situations in the world (*CL* #2, p. 12-13).

The Second Vatican Council makes clear that the laity "have the capacity to assume from the hierarchy certain ecclesiastical functions, which are to be performed for a spiritual purpose" (*LG* #33). This involvement is good and necessary. However, the idea, unfortunately, is indeed widespread in our country, due to a faulty interpretation of the Conciliar documents, that the laity manifests its involvement in the Church chiefly through participation in liturgical functions, parish councils, church positions, etc., rather than in family, work, political, social, and cultural life. In short, in some circles there is an emphasis on sharing "power" rather than service and a concept that somehow the laity become more integrated in the life of the Church the more clericalized their function. Apart from the danger of this clericalization for the identity of the laity itself, this train of thought leads inevitably to a shirking of re-

*Spirituality in the Workplace* (Continued on page 13)

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sponsibility for the state of the world by Catholic laymen; at the same time the enemies of God and the Church will not find any determined opposition to their machinations by committed Catholic laymen. However, totally committed Catholics are needed on the sports field, on Broadway, in the university, in the media, and indeed in all legitimate activities, as well as being involved in liturgical and parochial activities.

The document makes clear that it is the *faith* of the Christian which enables him to see what must be done in this particular moment. The Holy Father speaks of conflicts which must find their resolution in "peace in justice" and that the only answer is Jesus Christ: "The Church knows that all the forces that humanity employs for communion and participation find a full response in the intervention of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of man and the world" (CL #7).

Under the heading of "Who are the Lay Faithful?," the Pope asserts the full identity of the laity with the Church: "I am the vine, you are the branches." Their mission is "to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and ordering them according to the plan of God" (LG #31). And "through Baptism the lay faithful are made one body with Christ and are established among the people of God. They are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ" (LG #31).

Here is the essence of the spirituality of the workplace. They are united to Christ by "the offering they make of themselves and their daily activities" (CL #14). "For their work, prayers, and apostolic endeavors, their ordinary married and family life, their daily labor, their mental and physical relaxation, if carried on in the spirit, and even the hardships of life, if patiently borne -- all of these become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (LG #34). All of this should be united to Christ's offering in the Eucharist.

The laity share in the prophetic mission of Christ through "their ability and responsibility to accept the Gospel in faith and proclaim it in word and deed without hesitating to courageously identify and denounce evil" (CL #14). Finally, they exercise their kingship "above all in the spiritual combat in which they seek to overcome in themselves the kingdom of sin, and then to make a gift of themselves so as to serve in justice and charity" (CL #14). Interesting here is the priority that the Holy Father places on interior struggle and conquering oneself as the battle that must be fought prior to and concurrent with establishing the kingship of Christ on earth.

This calling, this mission, is clearly secular because "the world becomes the place and the means for the lay faithful to fulfill their Christian vocation because the world itself is destined to glorify the Father in Christ" (CL #15). "There they are called by God" (LG #32). Therefore, in the case of the laity, the world is not an obstacle to holiness but a help. It is not a question of contempt or a fleeing from the world but rather ordering the essential goodness of the world to the glory of God and the good of souls while always respecting the legitimate autonomy of the secular order, pointed out in *Gaudium et Spes* (no. 36). This conciliar teaching is radical and has yet to fully sink into the consciousness of many Christians who are accustomed to believe that holiness is reserved for the few. They are called to follow the example of Jesus who spent thirty years of his life working and praying in anonymity; these thirty years that John Paul II refers to in *Laborem Exercens* as "the Fifth Gospel."

"The vocation to holiness, that is, the perfection of charity is the basic charge entrusted to all the sons and daughters of the Church." It is "an undeniable requirement" (CL #16). Only holiness can change the world: "Men and women saints have always been the source and origin of renewal in the most difficult circumstances of the Church's history" (CL #16).

At this point the document mentions a phrase which offers what heretofore has been the missing link between spirituality and the workplace -- unity of life: "The unity of life of the lay faithful is of the greatest importance; indeed they must be sanctified in everyday and professional and social life. Therefore, to respond to their vocation, the lay faithful must see their daily activities as an occasion to join themselves to God, fulfill his will, serve other people, and lead them to communion with God in Christ" (*proposition #5*).

The prayer and sacramental life of the Christian, while prior to the active life, has to be intimately connected with it. Therefore, professional and family life, lived in the presence of God, should be the overflow of the interior life. It is more important to be rather than to do, or as the scholastics would have it, *Agere sequitur esse*. Christopher Dawson tells us:

A Christian has only to be in order to change the world, for in that act of being there is contained all the mystery of the supernatural life. It is the function of the Church to sow this divine seed, to produce not merely good

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men, but spiritual men--that is to say, supermen. Insofar as the Church fulfills this function it transmits to the world a continuous stream of spiritual energy.... A despiritualized Christianity is powerless to change anything; it is the most abject of failures, since it serves neither natural nor the spiritual order (*Christianity & the New Order*, p. 103).

In perhaps the most mystical and beautiful passage of the document, the Holy Father points out, echoing Dawson, that this redemptive work will often pass unnoticed:

The eyes of faith behold a wonderful scene: that of a countless number of lay people, both men and women, busy at work in their daily life and activity, often times far from view and quite unacclaimed by the world, unknown to the world's great personages but nonetheless looked upon in love by the Father, untiring laborers who work in the Lord's vineyard (*CL* #17).

Now we move on to the apostolic mission of the laity, i.e., the apostolate, the witness to others by deeds and words of the saving Gospel of Christ. The Holy Father reiterates:

The apostolate exercised by the individual -- which flows abundantly from a truly Christian life -- is the origin and condition of the whole lay apostolate, even in its organized expression and admits no substitute. Regardless of circumstances, all lay persons are called to this type of apostolate and obliged to engage in it. Such an apostolate is useful at all times and place, but in certain circumstances it is the only one available and feasible (*CL* #28).

Apostolate is primarily individual, one-on-one, so to speak: a personal call and commitment to sanctify others starting with the family, and spreading out in ever widening concentric circles to colleagues, friends and acquaintances. The apostolate is only limited by the lack of interior life or apostolic zeal of the individual: "Such an individual form of apostolate can contribute greatly to a more extensive spreading of the Gospel, indeed, it can reach as many places as there are daily lives of individual members of the lay faithful" (*CL* #28). The identity of the lay faithful is crucial here, since wherever the layperson finds himself, there the Church will be exercising her evangelical mission to preach to the very ends of the earth the gospel of Christ.

Although, as the document points out, not everybody is able to collaborate in lay associations, the Holy Father makes mention of "a new era of group endeavors of the lay faithful." He sees them as means for a "responsible participation . . . in the Church's mission of carrying forth the Gospel of Christ -- the source of hope for humanity and the renewal of society" (*CL* #29). They are works of the Holy Spirit that can be "very diverse from one another in various aspects" but yet show "a profound convergence when viewed from the perspective of their common purpose." The Church recognizes the right of association of all the faithful, yet declares various marks of ecclesiality that show the authenticity of each particular movement. Among these marks are the following: (a) a primacy of the vocation of each Christian to holiness, favoring the connection between faith and real life; (b) a profession of the Catholic faith, following faithfully the teaching authority of the Church; (c) a firm and convinced communion with the Pope and bishops and a mutual respect among all the forms of apostolate in the Church; (d) a participation in the apostolic end of the Church; and (e) a commitment of service to human society by the light of the social doctrine of the Church (cfr. *CL* #30).

At the same time, these movements should show positive fruit as proof of their authenticity. Some of these would include: the care for the liturgical, prayerful and sacramental life; the winning of authentic vocations to Christian marriage, as well as to the priesthood; collaboration with the Church on the local, national, and international level; an involvement in works of catechesis; and fostering of charitable, cultural, and spiritual works to cultivate a spirit of poverty and detachment and to work for the return to the Christian life of alienated Christians (cfr. *CL* #30). The Holy Father promises a list of officially-approved associations composed by the Pontifical Council on the Laity soon.

In speaking of the reality of work, the Church tells us through the Councils and Synods that "the lay faithful must accomplish their work with professional competence, with human honesty, with a Christian spirit, and especially as a way of their own sanctification... (*Prop* #24). Moreover, we know that through work offered to God, an individual is associated with the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, whose labor with his hands at Nazareth greatly ennobled the dignity of work" (*GS* #67). What a powerful, yet simple, message the Church sends us; unfortunately, it has not yet been transmitted in all its force and vigor to the laity who could find in this message their own spirituality.

The penultimate topic is one very close to the heart of the Holy Father -- culture. Christianity does not exist in

*Spirituality in the Workplace* (Continued on page 15)

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a vacuum. We have only to look at the Middle Ages and the Baroque, for example, as two periods where the Christian spirit heavily influenced and we could say were the creators of a culture whose art, music, and literature were strongly sympathetic toward Christianity. Culture is defined as follows:

To humanize social life both in the family and in the whole civic community through the improvement of customs and institutions, to express through its works the great spiritual experiences and aspirations of all peoples throughout the ages, finally, to communicate and preserve them to be an inspiration for the progress of many, indeed of the whole human race... (GS #53). In particular, only from within and through culture does the Christian faith become a part of history and the creator of history (CL #44).

The Holy Father most particularly encourages the faithful "to be present as signs of courage and intellectual creativity in the privileged places of culture, that is, the world of education -- school and university -- in places of scientific and technological research, the areas of artistic creativity and works in the humanities" (CL #44).

In September of 1987, during his second pastoral journey to the United States, the Holy Father spoke directly to the American Bishops regarding this theme:

Primarily through her laity, the Church is in a position to exercise great influence upon American culture. This culture is a human creation. It is created through insight and communication. It is built by an exchange among the people of a particular society . . . But how is American culture evolving today? Is this evolution being influenced by the Gospel? Does it clearly reflect Christian inspiration? Your music, your poetry and art, your drama, your painting and sculpture, the literature that you are producing--are all those things which reflect the soul of a nation being influenced by the spirit of Christ for the perfection of humanity?

The answer is clearly "No," and the Holy Father is telling both the bishops and laity that, until there can be perceived a change in the tone of our culture, we still have not yet put the teachings of the Council and post-Council into full effect.

I believe it very appropriate that the Holy Father closes the document with an examination of the essential element of formation. For without a well-defined formation that is spiritual and theological, any resolution to put the ends outlined in this paper into effect is worthless. He writes: "There cannot be two parallel lives in their existence: on the one hand, the so-called spiritual life, with its values and demands, and on the other hand, the so-called secular life, that is, life in a family, at work, in social relationships, in the responsibilities of public life and in culture" (CL #59). How to avoid this dichotomy is answered very concretely:

To be able to discover the actual will of the Lord in our lives always involves the following: a receptive listening to the Word of God and the Church, fervent and constant prayer, recourse to a wise and loving and spiritual guide, and a faithful discernment of the gifts and talents given by God, as well as the diverse social and historical situation in which one lives (CL #58).

The emphasis on human virtues is of interest, given that they may be precisely that which is needed in order to unite the spiritual with the material in a true unity of life. "The lay faithful should also hold in high esteem professional skill, daily and civic spirit, and the virtues related to social behavior, namely, honesty, a spirit of justice, sincerity, courtesy, moral courage; without them, there is not true Christian life" (CL #60). Without a total formational program, the putting into practice of lay spirituality would be stillborn. Inside the Church, the Pope, bishops, and parishes have the primordial responsibility for this formation along with Catholic schools and universities, and those "lay movements" that have appeared in recent decades.

To summarize, an authentic spirituality for the workplace does exist and is presented in the teachings of the Church, particularly in the Conciliar and post-conciliar documents as summarized in *Christifideles Laici*. This spirituality is deeply secular, based on a commitment to holiness through an interior struggle fed by prayer and the sacraments. The spiritual life is completely integrated and indeed completed in family and professional life. This unity of life inevitably leads to an evangelization not only of individuals through friendship but also extends to entire societies and culture. All of this necessitates a union with the hierarchy of the Church and a willingness to seek out the personal formation necessary to reach the goal of personal holiness.

Let us remember the Holy Father's challenge to the American laity:

The temporal order of which the Council speaks is vast. It encompasses the social, cultural, intellectual, and political life in which all of you rightly participate. As lay men and women actively engaged in this temporal order,

*Spirituality in the Workplace* (Continued on page 16)



**THE  
WRITINGS  
OF  
THOMAS  
MORE**

## MORE ON PRAYING FOR ENEMIES

### *Pro Inimicis\**

*This prayer was written by Sir Thomas More, Knight, while he was a prisoner in the Tower of London, in the year of our Lord, 1534.*

Almighty God, have mercy on N. and N., and on all that bear me evil will, and would me harm, and their faults and mine together, by such easy, tender, merciful means, as thine infinite wisdom best can devise, vouchsafe to amend and redress, and make us saved souls in heaven together where we may ever live and love together with thee and thy blessed saints. O glorious Trinity, for the bitter passion of our sweet Saviour Christ. Amen.

Lord, give me patience in tribulation and grace in everything to conform my will to thine: that I may truly say: *Fiat voluntas tua, sicut in coelo et in terra.*\*\*

The things, good Lord, that I pray for, give me thy grace to labor for. Amen

\* *For Enemies*

\*\* *Let your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* †

SIMPLE TRUTHS



Fulton J. Sheen

**"Many a tree as it stands in the forest looks fair, fine, solid and valuable, but when it is cut down and sawed for use reveals rottenness, cross grain and knots. Social conformity to low standards may give the appearance of goodness, but in the judgment of God the true character is revealed." †**

(Continued from page 15) *Spirituality in the Workplace*

you are being called by Christ to sanctify the world and to transform it. This is true of all work, however exalted or humble, but it is especially urgent for those whom circumstances and special talent have placed in positions of leadership or influence -- men and women in public service, education, business, science, social communications, and the arts. As Catholic lay people, you have an important moral and cultural contribution of service to make to the life of your country. "Much will be required of the person entrusted with much" (Luke 12:48). These words of Christ apply not only to the sharing of material wealth or personal talents, but also to the sharing of one's faith (*JP II in America*, p. 254). †



## THE VIOLINIST IN THE METRO

A man sat at a metro station in Washington DC and started to play the violin; it was a cold January morning. He played six Bach pieces for about 45 minutes. During that time, since it was rush hour, it was calculated that thousand of people went through the station, most of them on their way to work.

Three minutes went by and a middle aged man noticed there was musician playing. He slowed his pace and stopped for a few seconds and then hurried up to meet his schedule.

A minute later, the violinist received his first dollar tip: a woman threw the money in the till and without stopping continued to walk.

A few minutes later, someone leaned against the wall to listen to him, but the man looked at his watch and started to walk again. Clearly he was late for work.

The one who paid the most attention was a 3 year old boy. His mother tagged him along, hurried but the kid stopped to look at the violinist. Finally the mother pushed hard and the child continued to walk turning his head all the time. This action was repeated by several other children. All the parents, without exception, forced them to move on.

In the 45 minutes the musician played, only 6 people stopped and stayed for a while. About 20 gave him money but continued to walk their normal pace. He collected \$32. When he finished playing and silence took over, no one noticed it. No one applauded, nor was there any recognition.

No one knew this but the violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the best musicians in the world. He played one of the most intricate pieces ever written, with a violin worth 3.5 million dollars.

Two days before his playing in the subway, Joshua Bell sold out at a theater in Boston and the seats average \$100.

This is a real story. Joshua Bell playing incognito in the metro station was organized by the Washington Post as part of a social experiment about perception, taste and priorities of people. The outlines were: in a commonplace environment at an inappropriate hour: Do we perceive beauty? Do we stop to appreciate it? Do we recognize the talent in an unexpected context? Do we judge people by their appearance?

One of the possible conclusions from this experience could be: If we do not have a moment to stop and listen to one of the best musicians in the world playing the best music ever written, how many other things are we missing? †

## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY



*The original article entitled "Pearls Before Breakfast" was published in the Washington Post on April 8, 2007.*



**FRANK & ERNEST**



## SCRIPTURAL CORNER



THE MARTYDOM OF  
ST STEPHEN

Pieter Pauwel Ruebens  
(1616)

## Luke 6:27-28

*<sup>27</sup>But I say to you that hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup>bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.*

### Comment from the Navarre Bible:\*

<sup>27</sup>“In loving our enemies there shines forth in us some likeness to God our Father, who, by the death of his Son, ransomed from everlasting perdition and reconciled to himself the human race, which previously was most unfriendly and hostile to him” (St Pius V Catechism, IV, 14, 19). Following the example of God our Father, we must desire for everyone (even those who say they are our enemies) eternal life, in the first place; additionally, a Christian has a duty to respect and understand everyone without exception, because of his or her intrinsic dignity as a human person, made in the image and likeness of the Creator.

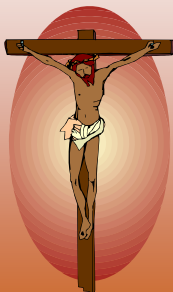
<sup>28</sup>Jesus Christ teaches us by example that this is a real precept and not just a pious recommendation; even when nailed to the cross he prayed to his Father for those who had brought him to such a pass: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Lk 23:34). In imitation of the Master, St Stephen, the first martyr of the Church, when he was being stoned, prayed to our Lord not to hold the sin against his persecutors (cf. Acts 7:60). In the liturgy of Good Friday the Church offers prayers and suffrages to God on behalf of those outside the Church, asking him to give them the grace of faith; to release from their ignorance those who do not know him; to give Jews the light of the truth; to bring non-Catholic Christians, linked by true charity, into full communion with our Mother the Church. ☩

\*The Navarre Bible, a renown edition of Sacred Scripture prepared by members of the Faculty of Theology of Navarre University, consisting of the New Vulgate, the Revised Standard Version and commentaries.

## PRAYER PETITIONS

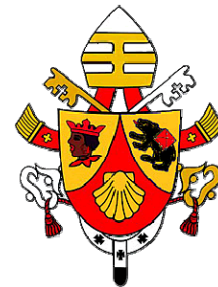
*Heavenly Father, I offer you this day  
all that I shall think, do or say,  
uniting it with what was done  
by Jesus Christ, your only Son. Amen*

*If you have a special need for  
prayer, please let us know so  
by emailing your request to  
[alanphar@firstam.com](mailto:alanphar@firstam.com)*



- ◆ Dr. Douglas McKee (deceased)
- ◆ Bill Allard (special intention)
  - ◆ Carol Flynn (illness)
  - ◆ Carli Whittemore
  - ◆ Mike Quigley (illness)
    - ◆ Jean Howard
  - ◆ Ryan McEachon (special intention)
- ◆ Heather Flynn USAFA (special intention)
- ◆ John Flynn IV USNA (special intention)
- ◆ Kathy Todd (cancer)
- ◆ Ellie Shonafelt & Her Children
  - ◆ David Macdonald (illness)
  - ◆ Eric & Marie Bessem
  - ◆ Julia Nelson (serious illness)
    - ◆ Sean Nelson (illness)
    - ◆ Scott Smith (illness)
- ◆ Anne Lanphar (special intention)
  - ◆ Children in Juvenile Hall ☩

**LITURGY OF VESPERS**  
**ON THE FEAST OF THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL**  
**FOR THE CONCLUSION OF THE**  
**WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY**  
**HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI**  
*Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls*  
*Sunday, 25 January 2009*



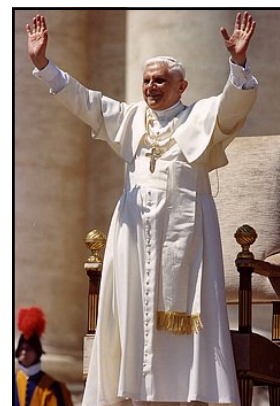
**FROM**  
**PETER'S**  
**SUCCESSOR,**  
**POPE**  
**BENEDICT XVI**

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

It is a great joy every time we meet again at the sepulchre of the Apostle Paul, on the liturgical memorial of his conversion at the conclusion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. I greet all of you with affection. In a particular way I greet Cardinal Cordero Lanza di Montezemolo, the Abbot and the Community of monks who are hosting us. I also greet Cardinal Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. With him I greet the Cardinals present, the Bishops and the Pastors of the various Churches and Ecclesial Communities, who have come here this evening. A special word of recognition goes to those who have collaborated in the preparation of the prayer materials, personally living the practice of reflection and encounter in order to listen to one another and, together, to listen to the Word of God.

St Paul's conversion offers us the model and indicates to us the way towards full unity. Unity, in fact, requires conversion: from division to communion, from wounded unity to one that is healed and full. This conversion is a gift of the Risen Christ as it happened for St Paul. We have heard it in the Apostle's own words in the Reading just proclaimed: "By the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor 15: 10). The same Lord who called Saul on the road to Damascus addresses the members of his Church which is one and holy and calling each one by name asks: why have you divided me? Why have you wounded the unity of my body? Conversion implies two dimensions. In the first step one knows and recognizes one's faults in the light of Christ, and this recognition becomes sorrow and contrition, the desire for a new beginning.

In the second step one recognizes that this new journey cannot come from oneself. It consists in letting oneself be conquered by Christ. As St Paul says: "I am racing to grasp the prize if possible, since I have been grasped by Christ [Jesus]" (Phil 3: 12). Conversion demands our "yes", my "racing"; ultimately it is not my action, but a gift in letting myself be formed by Christ. It is death and resurrection. Therefore St Paul does not say: "I am converted", but he says "I died" (Gal 2: 19), I am a new creature. Actually, St Paul's conversion was not a passage from immorality to morality his was a high morality from a mistaken faith to a correct faith his faith was true, even if incomplete but rather it was a state of being conquered by Christ's love. It was the renunciation of his own perfection, the humility of the one who places himself without reserve at the service of Christ for the brethren. And only in this renunciation of ourselves, in this conformity with Christ can we be united also among ourselves, do we become "one" in Christ. It is



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communion with the Risen Christ that gives us unity.

We can observe an interesting analogy with the dynamic of St Paul's conversion also by meditating on the biblical text of the Prophet Ezekiel (37: 15-28) chosen as the basis of our prayer this year. In it, in fact, is presented the symbolic gesture of the two pieces of wood reunited into one in the prophet's hand; the future action of God is represented with this gesture. The second part of chapter 37 the first part of which contains the famous vision of the dry bones and the resurrection of Israel is a work of God's Spirit. How can one fail to note that the prophetic sign of the reunification of the people of Israel is placed after the great symbol of the dry bones vivified by the Spirit? From it derives a theological scheme analogous to that of the conversion of St Paul. It is above all the power of God who, with his Spirit, works the resurrection as a new creation. This God, who is the Creator and is able to raise the dead, is also able to lead the divided people to unity again. Paul both as and more than Ezekiel becomes the elect instrument for preaching the unity Jesus won through his Cross and Resurrection: unity among Jews and pagans, to form a single new people.

Christ's Resurrection thus extends the parameters of unity: not only a unity of the tribes of Israel, but a unity of Jews and pagans (cf. Eph 2; Jn 10: 16); the unification of humanity dispersed by sin, and still more, a unity of all believers in Christ.

We owe the choice of this passage of the Prophet Ezekiel to our brothers from Korea, who felt strongly challenged by this biblical text both as Koreans and as Christians. With the division of the Hebrew people into two kingdoms, they have mirrored themselves as sons of a single land, whose political events have separated them into the north and the south. And this human experience of theirs has helped them to understand better the plight of the division of Christians. Now, in the light of this Word of God that our Korean brothers have chosen and proposed to all, emerges a truth full of hope: God promises his people a new unity that must be a sign and instrument of reconciliation and peace also on a historical level, for all the nations. The unity that God gives to his Church, and for which we pray, is naturally communion in the spiritual sense, in faith and in charity. But we know that this unity in Christ is the leaven of fraternity also on the social level, in relationships among nations and for the entire human family. It is the yeast of the Kingdom of God that makes the mass of dough rise (cf. Mt 13: 33). In this sense, the prayer we are raising in these days, with reference to the prophecy of Ezekiel, has also become an intercession for the diverse situations of conflict currently afflicting humanity. There, where human words become powerless, because the tragic noise of violence and arms prevails, the prophetic power of the Word of God does not waver and it repeats to us that peace is possible, and that we must be instruments of reconciliation and peace. Therefore our prayer for unity and for peace asks always to be proven by courageous gestures of reconciliation among us Christians. I am thinking still of the Holy Land: how important it is that the faithful who live there, as well as the pilgrims who go there, offer to all the witness that diversity of rites and of tradi-

*Papal Message* (Continued on page 21)



CONVERSION  
OF SAUL  
(DETAIL)

*Michelangelo*  
(1542)

(Continued from page 20) *Papal Message*

tions should not constitute an obstacle to mutual respect and fraternal charity. In the legitimate diversity of the various traditions we must seek unity in the faith, through our fundamental "yes" to Christ and to his one Church. In this way diversity will no longer be an obstacle that separates us, but an enrichment through the multiple expressions of the common faith.

I would like to conclude this reflection of mine by referring to an event that the more elderly among us certainly cannot forget. On 25 January 1959, exactly 50 years ago, Bl. Pope John XXIII manifested for the first time in this place his will to convoke "an ecumenical Council for the universal Church" (AAS LI [1959], p. 68). He made this announcement to the Cardinal Fathers in the Chapter Hall of the Monastery of St Paul after having celebrated solemn Mass in the Basilica. From that provident decision, suggested to my venerable Predecessor, according to his firm conviction, by the Holy Spirit, has also derived a fundamental contribution to ecumenism, summarized in the Decree *Unitatis redintegratio*. Among other things, in it one reads: "There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without interior conversion. For it is from newness of attitudes of mind (cf. Eph 4: 23), from self-denial and unstinted love, that desires of unity take their rise and develop in a mature way" (n. 7). The attitude of interior conversion in Christ, of spiritual renewal, of growth in charity toward other Christians has given way to a new situation in ecumenical relations. The fruits of theological dialogue, with their convergence and with the most precise identification of the divergences that still remain, urge the courageous pursuance of two directions: in the acceptance of what has been positively achieved and in a renewed commitment toward the future. Opportunely, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, whom I thank for the service they render to the cause of unity of all the Lord's disciples, has recently reflected on the reception of ecumenical dialogue and on the future. This reflection, if on one hand rightly wishes to value what has been gained, on the other, then, it intends to find new ways to continue the relations among the Churches and Ecclesial Communities in the current context. The horizon of full unity remains open before us. It is an arduous duty, but stirring for Christians who want to live in harmony with the Lord's prayer: "that they may be one, that the world may believe" (Jn 17: 21). The Second Vatican Council has given us the prospect of "this holy objective the reconciliation of all Christians in the unity of the one and only Church of Christ transcends human powers and gifts" (UR, 24). Trusting in the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ, and encouraged by the significant steps accomplished by the ecumenical movement, let us invoke the Holy Spirit with faith so that he continues to illuminate and guide our way. May the Apostle Paul, who fatigued and suffered so much for the unity of the Mystical Body of Christ, urge us and assist us from heaven. May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the unity of the Church, accompany and sustain us. †

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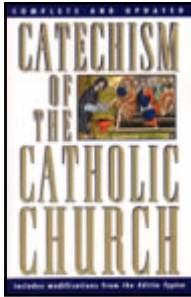
## THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

### PART THREE: LIFE IN CHRIST

#### SECTION ONE: MAN'S VOCATION: LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

#### CHAPTER ONE: THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

#### ARTICLE 7: THE VIRTUES



## CATECHISM CORNER



### THE SEVEN ACTS OF MERCY

*Caravaggio*

(1607)

#### CHARITY

**1822** Charity is the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.

**1823** Jesus makes charity the new commandment.[96] By loving his own "to the end,"[97] he makes manifest the Father's love which he receives. By loving one another, the disciples imitate the love of Jesus which they themselves receive. Whence Jesus says: "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love." And again: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

**1824** Fruit of the Spirit and fullness of the Law, charity keeps the *commandments* of God and his Christ: "Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love."

**1825** Christ died out of love for us, while we were still "enemies." The Lord asks us to love as he does, even our enemies, to make ourselves the neighbor of those farthest away, and to love children and the poor as Christ himself.

*The Apostle Paul has given an incomparable depiction of charity: "charity is patient and kind, charity is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Charity does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Charity bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."*

**1826** "If I . . . have not charity," says the Apostle, "I am nothing." Whatever my privilege, service, or even virtue, "if I . . . have not charity, I gain nothing." Charity is superior to all the virtues. It is the first of the theological virtues: "So faith, hope, charity abide, these three. But *the greatest of these is charity.*"

**1827** The practice of all the virtues is animated and inspired by charity, which "binds everything together in perfect harmony"; it is the *form of the virtues*; it articulates and orders them among themselves; it is the source and the goal of their Christian practice. Charity upholds and purifies our human ability to love, and raises it to the supernatural perfection of divine love.

**1828** The practice of the moral life animated by charity gives to the Christian the spiritual freedom of the children of God. He no longer stands before God as a slave, in servile fear, or as a mercenary looking for wages, but as a son responding to the love of him who "first loved us":

*If we turn away from evil out of fear of punishment, we are in the position of slaves. If we pursue the enticement of wages, . . . we resemble mercenaries. Finally if we obey for the sake of the good itself and out of love for him who commands . . . we are in the position of children.*

**1829** The *fruits* of charity are joy, peace, and mercy; charity demands beneficence and fraternal correction; it is benevolence; it fosters reciprocity and remains disinterested and generous; it is friendship and communion:

*Love is itself the fulfillment of all our works. There is the goal; that is why we run: we run toward it, and once we reach it, in it we shall find rest. †*

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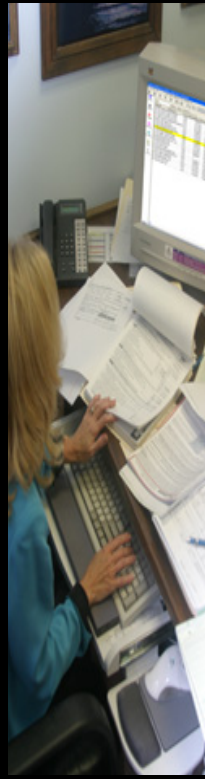


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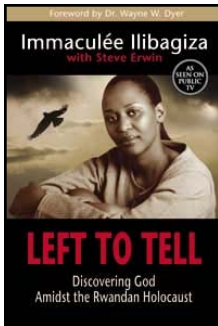
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*There were many voices, many killers I could see them in my mind: my former friends and neighbors, who had always greeted me with love and kindness, moving through the house carrying spears and machetes and calling my name. "I have killed 399 cockroaches," they chanted. "Immaculée will make 400. It's a good number to kill."*

It's hard to believe even now that this haunting event actually took place in our lifetime. The Rwandan holocaust claimed the lives of nearly a million people. Miraculously, a brave and remarkable woman-Immaculée Ilibagiza-survived the slaughter by finding shelter in the confines of a small bathroom. By the grace of God, Immaculée was left to tell her triumphant story about faith, forgiveness, and endurance during one of modern time's most horrific events.

**Publisher: Hay House ISBN: 1401908969 Pages 215 Price: \$ 16.47 (Amazon) †**

**NOTE: Immaculee will speak at NCEA on April 14-16 in Anaheim. [www.ncea.org](http://www.ncea.org)**

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