

CONTENTS

TOPIC/TITLE **Page**

~ EVEN IF IT WERE NOT GREAT LENT, NOW IS THE TIME TO STRAIGHTEN OUT YOURSELF AND EVERYTHING ELSE ~ *From Metropolitan Archbishop Paul, S.S.B. To the flock entrusted into my care:* The grasp which any one individual or group has on holiness is so tenuous as to be frightening. Yet very few people consistently do anything to strengthen that grasp. And even fewer people do anything geared towards assisting others to grasp holiness, or strengthen their grasp. 1

WHY DO LIBERTINES HAVE A STRONG AVERSION AND DISLIKE FOR WAR? First, it must be understood that all reasonable individuals and groups have a strong aversion and dislike for war. 1

CHRIST IS THE PASSOVER LAMB WHICH THE JEWS WERE COMMANDED TO EAT Christ is both the

High Priest who offers the Sacrifice of Redemption and Salvation, and the actual Sacrifice. The lamb whose blood the Jews spread over their doorway and on their door 1

WAR PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE MATERIAL - SPIRITUAL There is real meaning to gird your loins with truth, and having on the breast plate of justice, of having on the breast plate of faith and charity and, for a helmet, the hope of salvation, and to being on guard against the roaring attack of the enemy, the break in (burglary) of the home (the soul), and the wily sneak attack of subterfuge. The closing prayer for blessing and imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday is, "Grant us, O Lord, to enter upon the duties of our Christian warfare with 1

PUBLICATION NOTICE 2

LETTERS (none) 2

WORLD WIDE WEB: 2

THE SOCIETY OF CLERKS SECULAR OF SAINT BASIL:

ST. MARY MAGDALENE property for sale 4

St. Sebastian Orthodox Catholic Church 4

In Guatemala the cold weather has caused much suffering and many deaths. 5

Great Lent: 5

The Confessions of Saint Augustine, (BOOK ONE, CHAPTER XVII, 27). 5

IMITATION OF CHRIST By Thomas a Kempis 6

CHILDREN'S PAGE *The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism Q. 554. - Q. 580.* 10

PRODUCTS REQUEST FORM 13

St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and foster-father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, 21

IN ALL TRUTH, ANYONE WHO IS NOT WITH CHRIST IS AGAINST HIM When Our Saviour cast out from the man, the devil that caused the man *(Continued CONTENTS on page 31)*

REUNION

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U.S.A.

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REUNION

*The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil
(The Basilians - The Basilian Fathers)*



Volume 15 No. 3 OF THE CHURCH OF MAN WITH GOD March, 2007 A.D.

~ EVEN IF IT WERE NOT GREAT LENT, NOW IS THE TIME TO STRAIGHTEN OUT YOURSELF AND EVERYTHING ELSE ~

From Metropolitan Archbishop Paul, S.S.B. To the flock entrusted into my care:

The grasp which any one individual or group has on holiness is so tenuous as to be frightening. Yet very few people consistently do anything to strengthen that grasp. And even fewer people do anything geared towards assisting others to grasp holiness, or strengthen their grasp.



(Continued WORK OUT on page 20)

WHY DO LIBERTINES HAVE A STRONG AVERSION AND DISLIKE FOR WAR?

First, it must be understood that all reasonable individuals and groups have a strong aversion and dislike for war. It must be further understood that only irrational people and groups desire or like war.

Libertines actually do not have an aversion or dislike for war. When libertines express an aversion for war, it usually is a war which they prefer to lose because it resembles a war they have already lost.

Libertines have surrendered in the war for salvation, the war for their immortal souls, and have joined the enemy, Satan. Therefore, when anyone engages in any form of conflict which in any manner opposes any form of evil, libertines will usually oppose the side which opposes evil. It is not that they oppose conflict or war, but that they oppose the side which opposes the strongest evil, for they are aligned with the strongest evil. They are very faithful to the principles of their leader, the Devil.

(Continued LIBERTINE on page 7)

CHRIST IS THE PASSOVER LAMB WHICH THE JEWS WERE COMMANDED TO EAT

Christ is both the High Priest who offers the Sacrifice of Redemption and Salvation, and the actual Sacrifice. The lamb whose blood the Jews spread over their doorway and on their door posts, and whose flesh the Jews ate on the night of the Passover in Egypt. The sacrificial meal which the Jews thereafter were commanded to eat every year in commemoration of the Passover and of their release from slavery, is the same Jesus Christ who is the High Priest and the Sacrifice.

His blood is the passage and the portal through which salvation is entered. It is not just a sign by which the Angel of Death was to know that those in the house were to be spared from death. The Blood of the Lamb of God is that which spares from eternal death, all those who enter through that very blood. But those who do not pass through that Blood, those who do not wash in that Blood, die eternally.

There is no symbolism in this. This is actuality.

(Continued LAMB on page 28)

WAR PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE MATERIAL - SPIRITUAL There is real meaning to gird your loins with truth, and having on the breast plate of justice, of having on the breast plate of faith and charity and, for a helmet, the hope of salvation, and to being on guard against the roaring attack of the enemy, the break in (burglary) of the home (the soul), and the wily sneak attack of subterfuge.

The closing prayer for blessing and imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday is, "Grant us, O Lord, to enter upon the duties of our Christian warfare with holy fasts, that, being about to fight against the spirits of wickedness, we may be fortified by the help of self-denial. Through Christ our Lord. Amen."

Contemplate this for just a little time.

Notice, this prayer clearly names the process by which holiness is attained. It is called warfare: Christian Warfare.

There are lines of thought, and there are concepts, which must be carefully defined and developed, or explained, if there is to be a cohesion and understanding of the ongoing plight of humankind. Since there can be justified differences in defining certain terms and situations, the general meanings of certain terms as used herein are, generally, as follows.

There are skirmishes which occur but

(Continued WAR on page 15)

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+ Paul, S.S.B.,
Publisher

+ The Basilians - The Basilian Fathers +

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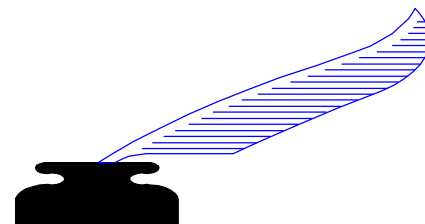
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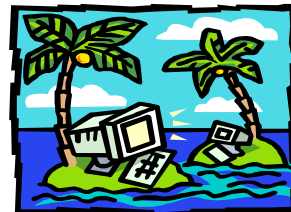
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Issues of REUNION, in color, in Adobe PDF and HTML, are available at:
<http://www.reu.org/public/news.htm>



On Line Chat Room: at the main web site log-in <http://www.reu.org> You have to register with the system before you can use it, and it is best to send e-mail to set a "chat schedule".

**Current Active Mailing Lists
Originating From BasilNet ReuNet
HIOC BBS
The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil - The Basilian Fathers**

Each ML has its own rules, which are posted in the ML on a regular basis. Abbreviated commands are also in the signature of each ML message sent via e-mail. You must have permission from the appropriate ML administrator to gate a ML.

PRAYERS

Prayer requests operates under a simple premise. When we pray for each other we fulfill a portion of our Christian duty. Prayers for the living and for the dead are allowed and welcome. Those who make prayer requests agree to include the prayer requests of all who make them here. Prayer requests MUST be moral and for moral

(Continued WEB on page 3)

(Continued FORREST from page 29)

"Hold it," interrupted St. Peter. "I see where you're going with this, and I guess I see your point, though that wasn't quite what I had in mind, but I'll give you credit for that one, too. Let's go on to the final question: Can you tell me God's first name?"

Forrest replied, "Andy."

"OK, OK," said a frustrated St. Peter, "I can understand how you came up with your answers to my first two questions, but just how in the world did you come up with the name of Andy as the first name of God?"

"Shucks, that was the easiest one of all," Forrest replied. "I learned it from the song... 'ANDY WALKS WITH ME, ANDY TALKS WITH ME, ANDY TELLS ME I AM HIS OWN...'"

St. Peter opened the gate and yelled: "RUN, FORREST, RUN!"

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(Continued AUGUSTINE from page 5)

28. But it was no wonder that I was thus carried toward vanity and was estranged from thee, O my God, when men were held up as models to me who, when relating a deed of theirs -- not in itself evil -- were covered with confusion if found guilty of a barbarism or a solecism; but who could tell of their own licentiousness and be applauded for it, so long as they did it in a full and ornate oration of well-chosen words. Thou seest all this, O Lord, and dost keep silence -- "long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth"[34] as thou art. Wilt thou keep silence forever? Even now thou drawest from that vast deep the soul that seeks thee and thirsts after thy delight, whose "heart said unto thee, +I have sought thy face; thy face, Lord, will I seek."[35] For I was far from thy face in the dark shadows of passion. For it is not by our feet, nor by change of place, that we either turn from thee or return to thee. That younger son did not charter horses or chariots, or ships, or fly away on visible wings, or journey by walking so that in the far country he might prodigally waste all that thou didst give him when he set out.[36] A kind Father when thou gavest; and kinder still when he returned destitute! To be wanton, that is to say, to be darkened in heart -- this is to be far from thy face.

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(Continued CONTENTS from page 32)

to be unable to speak, He gave proof of His Divine authority. But that proof was challenged by those persons who followed Satan, 26

THE AWESOME RESPONSIBILITY OF ANY AUTHORITY And Total Inability to Avoid Responsibility Imagine a home or work-place without Charity and Wisdom And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever 27

THE PASSION, BLOOD, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION OF I AM IS SALVATION When Christ identified Himself as I AM, He told the Jews a billion billion words worth of Who He Is. Christ is that which Is; In and Of Itself It Is. Nothing other than God simply Is: 28

YOUR CROSS (Thank you Roy) A young man was at the end of his rope, seeing no way out, dropped to his knees in prayer. "Lord, I can't go on," he said. "I have too heavy of a cross to bear." 29

FORREST GUMP AT THE PEARLY GATES (Thanks Greather) Forrest Gump died, and was met at the Pearly Gates by St. Peter. 29

HANDY LITTLE CHART (Thank you Patricia) God has a positive answer: YOU SAY GOD SAYS BIBLE VERSES 30

WHEN GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO FOLLOW CHRIST, IF YOU DO AND PERSEVERE, YOU WILL RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE Imagine you were part of the crowd of five thousand that was present when Jesus multiplied the barley loaves and the fishes. That was five thousand men, so if you add 30

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HANDY LITTLE CHART

(Thank you Patricia)

God has a positive answer:

YOU SAY GOD SAYS BIBLE VERSES

- You say: "It's impossible" God says: All things are possible (Luke 18:27)
- You say: "I'm too tired" God says: I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28-30)
- You say: "Nobody really loves me" God says: I love you (John 3:1 6 & John 3:34)
- You say: "I can't go on" God says: My grace is sufficient (II Corinthians 12:9 & Psalm 91:15)
- You say: "I can't figure things out" God says: I will direct your steps (Proverbs 3:5- 6)
- You say: "I can't do it" God says: You can do all things (Philippians 4:13)
- You say: "I'm not able" God says: I am able (II Corinthians 9:8)
- You say: "It's not worth it" God says: It will be worth it (Roman 8:28)
- You say: "I can't forgive myself" God says: I Forgive you (I John 1:9 & Romans 8:1)
- You say: "I can't manage" God says: I will supply all your needs (Philippians 4:19)
- You say: "I'm afraid" God says: I have not given you a spirit of fear (II Timothy 1:7)
- You say: "I'm always worried and frustrated" God says: Cast all your cares on ME (I Peter 5:7)
- You say: "I'm not smart enough" God says: I give you wisdom (I Corinthians 1:30)
- You say: "I feel all alone" God says: I will never leave you or forsake you (Hebrews 13:5)

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five barley loaves and two fishes to you and all the others, and you eat to you fill as does everyone else.

You must be wondering, what is going on? What is happening? Where could these few people obtain enough food to feed fifteen thousand people? There were no pack mules, no wagons, no supply train - where did the food come from? These people are not destitute, but they also are not rich. Feeding fifteen thousand people so that everyone is full, out here in the boondocks, would cost between half and year's income and a year's income. So even if these people manages to get the food here without my being able to know how they got it here, how did they pay for it?

In a very real sense, that is what we actually do today. We follow Christ, listen to Him, study what He has said and done, attempt to understand what He has done and why He has done it. If we are lucid, we accept Christ as God, and what He has done as miraculous. We then believe what He said and taught. And if we are wise, to sustain ourselves spiritually, we receive the Consecrated Bread of Heaven, distributed to us by His disciples, His Priests.

There also were those who had started out following Our Saviour, but left to go home and eat. They did not see and did not partake of the miracle. So too will it be for those who, when given the opportunity to follow Christ, do not follow Christ, for they will not receive the miracle of eternal life.

Ref: Gal. 4:22-31; John 6:1-15

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WHEN GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO FOLLOW CHRIST, IF YOU DO AND PERSEVERE, YOU WILL RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE

Imagine you were part of the crowd of five thousand that was present when Jesus multiplied the barley loaves and the fishes. That was five thousand men, so if you add a wife to each man, that is ten thousand people, and at least one child per couple, that is fifteen thousand people. Giving allowances for single men and childless couples, and for more than one child per couple, more than fifteen thousand people is not an unreasonable figure. Since Our Saviour had crossed the lake, there is a probability you are not a Jew but are a Gentile.

Let us not focus so much on what Jesus did, but on what you would have done if you had been there.

You followed Jesus as He walked from place to place, as He healed people of natural and demonic maladies, and as He taught both by His actions, His conversations, and as He taught as a lecturer in a classroom. You observed Him, listened to Him, tried to understand what He was doing and saying and why He was doing and saying what He did and said. You ate, slept, and talked with other people in the crowd about Jesus and what He was doing and saying.

You have followed Jesus up a mountain, when He has His disciples get you and the other fifteen thousand people, to sit down, and then He has His disciples distribute

(Continued WEB from page 2)
 purposes . . . hopefully morality will not have to be defined at length (i.e.: use common sense).

Participants and subscribers agree to honor the moral prayer requests posted, and to pray for those intentions and persons for at least one week.

BIBLE-DAY

Every day we try to post a Chapter of one of the Books of the Bible on the ML for discussion. This began with Genesis, Chapter 1, and continued to the end of Genesis, and so on to the next Book. Discussion is not limited to the Chapter posted each day. We use the Douay-Rheims translation which, while it sometimes has editorial comments biased against the Orthodox Church, is a basically a good, non political translation.

SERMONS

A place to exchange sermons by Christians. POSTERS must be, and certify they are: male; duly ordained Priests, Deacons, Ministers, or seminarians of, a Christian Church, Jurisdiction, or Religion; that the Creed of the Council of Nicea is the Creed, or expresses the basic dogma, of the Church of which each participant is a member. Rabbi may participate and post. (Us Christians may learn something). ANYONE may RECEIVE the ML.

When you post in this ML you must provide your church/religious affiliation in the post.

STUDIES

The STUDIES ML is a list which studies Orthodoxy and the Theology/Dogma of the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church. We attempt to have the text of what ever book/publication we are using posted in pertinent parts during the discussions. This is a slow moving ML, primarily because most people do not wish to or have the time to or are not inclined to read and study as is required for participation in a ML

such as this. However, for those who do, it is well worth the effort.

ONE-BODY

This is a mailing list designed to promote and further reunification of the Holy Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church with the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church and all other Jurisdictions of the Body of Christ; and to bring each and every human being into union with Christ Jesus our Lord.
Activity - very light.

REU_PUB

This ML sends REUNION (publication) to its subscribers, without the pictures and graphics which are in the paper publication. The ML does support discussion, and discussions encouraged. Mainly used for those who desire to receive the Newsletter but do not have access to the WWW (each issue is available on-line), those for whom telephone access to the BBS part of the system is not readily available, and those to whom we can not send a free print copy.

If you are already registered to use the message and file center for the Basilian Fathers, you may link to the listserver directly by logging in, selecting SUBSCRIBE MAILING LISTS in the menu and entering your e-mail address for the ML to which you wish to subscribe. If you are not already registered as a "user" you may go to the log-in menu, register, and then use the automatic system.

Or,

You can e-mail commands to the listserver using the addresses and commands below:

BasilNet ReuNet HIOC BBS Listserver E-mail Commands

If you experience problems with the ML or listserver you may contact the system administrator (sysop) via e-mail to Sysop@reu.org

User Commands

subscribe
 Subscribe to an email list.

E.G.:
 To subscribe to a mailing list, send a message to:
 listserver@reu.org
 In the message area put:
 subscribe studies
 subscribe sermons
 subscribe prayers
 subscribe bible-day
 subscribe one-body

unsubscribe
 Unsubscribe from an email list.

inactive
 Make yourself inactive on the list. This is good for when you leave on vacation, or just don't want any email for a while.

active
 Make yourself active on the list again.

get
 Request an information file from the server. The list administrator may set up files for you to retrieve that may contain various information. Do not use a file extension.

help
 Retrieves this information.

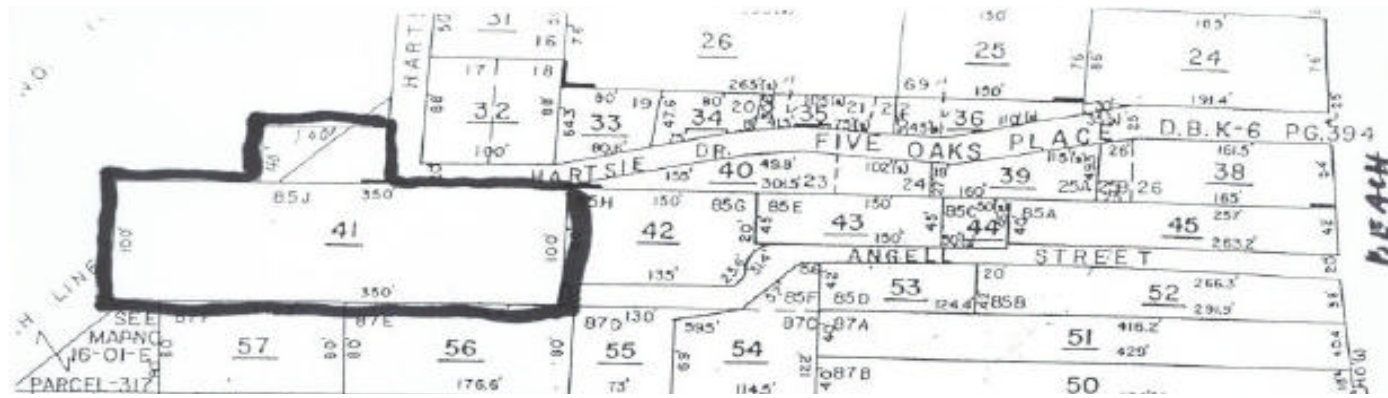
info
 Retrieves information on email lists hosted by this server

Please note: our e-mail system uses spam filters which are set very strictly, to the extent they even block out entire networks if those networks have a history of sending, relaying, or otherwise being involved in sending spam to our system. Many of the words in our spam filter are sometimes used in non-spam e-mail. If your e-mail is bounced, you may log on to the BBS and contact whomever it is you desire directly in Conference mail area 0 (zero), so we can add your e-mail address to our filter by-pass.

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THE SOCIETY OF CLERKS SECULAR OF SAINT BASIL

(The Basilian Fathers)



ST. MARY MAGDALENE NEWS
St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church
125 Hartsie Drive - 150 Angell Lane
Waveland, Mississippi 39576

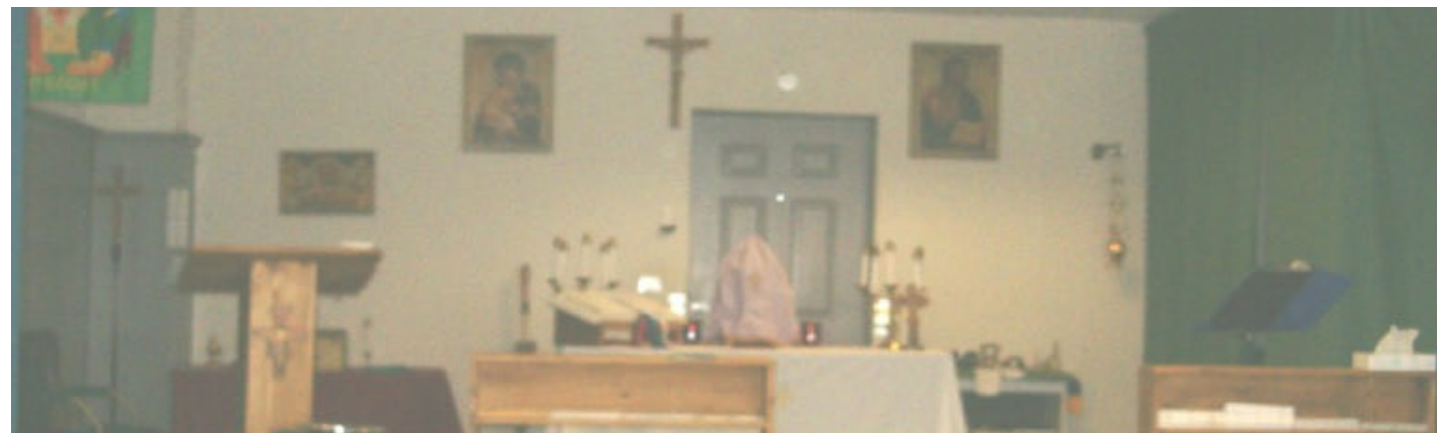
St. Mary Magdalene was destroyed by hurricane Katrina. There are no buildings or trees remaining on the property. A good natural setting is very important for maximum benefit to be derived from a spiritual retreat facility - the prime use of Saint Mary Magdalene was as a retreat house and our Mother House. That retreat house setting will require many years to re-establish at Saint Mary Magdalene.

We have therefore decided to sell the land, which is approximately one acre, composed of two adjacent lots, one being approximately 100 feet by 350 feet, the other being approximately 40 feet by 100 feet, situated approximately 550 feet from the beach of the Gulf of Mexico. (See the area outlined in bold in the above survey map. The survey map is not in true proportion due to the printing process.)

We have listed the property with Coldwell Banker Alfonso Realty, (228) 467-0244, agent Bobby Compretta, (228) 216-7197, for \$99,000.00. Inquiries should be directed to the real estate company or agent.

We would have rebuilt if the forest on the property had not been destroyed. We hope to establish another retreat house upon sale of the property.

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St. Sebastian Orthodox Catholic Church (1309 Broadway, Rockford, IL) Fatherr Montanye, S.S.B, informed us it

(Continued SSB NEWS on page 5)

If you are at your wits end, if you proceed, do you proceed into stupidity?

(Continued IAM from page 28)

The enormity of Christ God being the sacrifice which enables us to attain salvation is beyond our ability to appreciate.

If every person who has existed since the first human to this very day, were all alive right now, and were then all to die at the same time, and the deaths of these billions of people were solely for the purpose of saving the life of one frog, this would not begin to compare with the reality of the passion and death of Christ God, and the purpose of His passion and death.

The disparity between the importance of God and the importance of all of humankind that has ever and will ever exist, is greater than the difference between the weight of one grain of sand and the weight of all of the rest of the universe.

Yet God deems us to be of such great value, and loves us to such a great extent, that He suffered His passion and death, **and experiences it eternally in the eternal now**, even though in the running of time He will die no more for He has overcome death by His resurrection.

We must keep this in mind at all times. Even though we can not begin to comprehend it, we must keep it in mind at all times.

We must keep it in mind at all times because it is the most important combination of facts.

These facts, combined with how we respond to them, are, for each of us, outcome determinative.

These facts, combined with how we respond to them, determine our eternity.

Ref: Heb 9:11-15; John 8:46-59

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YOUR CROSS

(Thank you Roy)

A young man was at the end of his rope, seeing no way out, dropped to his knees in prayer. "Lord, I can't go on," he said. "I have too heavy of a cross to bear."

The Lord replied, "My son, if you can't bear its weight, just place your cross inside this room. Then, open that other door and pick out any cross you wish."

The man was filled with relief said, "Thank you, Lord," and he did as he was told.

Upon entering the other door, he saw many crosses, some so large the tops were not visible. Then, he spotted a tiny cross leaning against a far wall.

"I'd like that one, Lord," he whispered.

And the Lord replied, " My son, that is the cross you just brought in."

When life's problems seem overwhelming, it helps to look around and see what other people are coping with. You may consider yourself far more fortunate than you imagined.

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St. Peter waved him up and said, "Now that you have had a chance to think the questions over, tell me your answers."

Forrest said, "Well, the first one - how many days in the week begin with the letter 'T'? Shucks, that one's easy. That'd be Today and Tomorrow."

The Saint's eyes open wide and he exclaimed, "Forrest! That's not what I was thinking, but ... you do have a point, and I guess I didn't specify, so I give you credit for that answer.

How about the next one?" asked St.Peter, "How many seconds in a year?"

"Now that ones harder," said Forrest, "but I think and think about that and I guess the only answer can be twelve."

Astounded, St. Peter said, "Twelve? Twelve! Forrest, how in Heaven's name could you come up with twelve seconds in a year?"

Forest said, "Shucks, there's gotta be twelve: January second, February second, March second..."

(Continued FORREST on page 31)

Love is when you tell a guy you like his shirt, then he wears it everyday.

(Continued LAMB from page 1)

Every year the Jewish high priest sacrificed a bullock for his own sin offering. Then two rams, male goats, were chosen. The Jewish high priest sacrificed one for the sins of the Jews. The other was led away for Azazel, the Satanic leader of the fallen Sons of God who took wives among the daughters of men. This was to bring the sin inclination out of the presence of the Jews and back to its origin.

But the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, accomplished all of this and much more with His sacrifice and offering of Himself. And when that Sacrifice and Offering was completed, the curtain of the Holy of Holies was torn asunder and the Inner Sanctum wrecked for these were no longer of any use and no longer held any significance. What they symbolized and foretold had been accomplished.

The Jews wandered in the desert for forty years, until the generation of the Passover had been replaced by the next generation. That next generation accepted the Mosaic law more readily and fully than the generation of the Passover. Likewise, some forty years passed from the time Our Saviour offered Himself for us, to the time when the Jewish temple was destroyed - for sufficient time had passed for the generation of Calvary to accept or reject Christ, and for the next generation to more readily and fully accept Christ.

The temple made by man was no longer needed for it had been replaced by the Temple which is God.

These are not platitudes. None of this is symbolic. It is reality.

Those Jews who rejected Christ also rejected the true Passover Lamb. They became heretics for they rejected the Messiah and thereby rejected what God taught, provided, and desires, and

replaced that which they had rejected with what they desired. They left the true faith, the true religion, for one of their own creation. That is what heretics do, that is what makes an heretic an heretic.

They refused to pass through His blood into the eternal salvation made possible by His Sacrifice. With the temple made by man destroyed, and the Arc of the Covenant lost, they have no place and no means whereby to make sacrifice.

The Jewish sacrifices made under Mosaic law were valid only because they foretold, predicted, and were the precursors of the Sacrifice of Christ. Therefore, with the actuality of Calvary, the Mosaic law sacrifices were fulfilled, superseded, and superfluous. But today they can not even comply with Mosaic law.

Whether Gentile or Jew, those who

Those Jews who rejected Christ also rejected the true Passover Lamb. They became heretics for they rejected the Messiah and thereby rejected what God taught, provided, and desires, and replaced that which they had rejected with what they desired. They left the true faith, the true religion, for one of their own creation. That is what heretics do, that is what makes an heretic an heretic.

have the Sacrifice of Christ available to them, and who fail to partake of that Sacrifice, who fail to eat the Flesh of the Son of Man who is the Lamb of God and the true Passover Lamb - these do not receive the benefit of the Sacrifice. They are not passed over by the Angel of Death, but fall victim to eternal slavery in sin with no prospect of joy and happiness.

But those who worthily eat Our Saviour's Flesh and drink His Blood, enter into the Gate of Heaven which bears the Blood of the Paschal Lamb on its side and upper door posts.

Ref: Heb 9:11-15; John 8:46-59

THE PASSION, BLOOD, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION OF I AM IS SALVATION

When Christ identified Himself as I AM, He told the Jews a billion billion words worth of Who He Is.

Christ is that which Is; In and Of Itself It Is. Nothing other than God simply Is: no beginning, no end, subject to nothing, source of everything, totally indefinable, totally unknowable, known only because some knowledge of Him has been given by Him to all else that exists.

This which is totally beyond the ability of all else to even begin to comprehend, is That which underwent the most severe passion possible; physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and soul, all being tortured as totally and as completely as possible, and killed as a result of that torture. Yet, ever living. The Sign which was contradicted; dead yet ever living, and resurrected after death while yet living; This Sacrifice is God.

You do not understand. Well, surprise, surprise, surprise. Is your concept of yourself so great that you really expect to comprehend God? You not only do not fully comprehend everything about a grain of sand, you can not comprehend everything about a grain of sand. The same is true for that which you know best, yourself. Yet for some reason you believe, or think, or expect, to comprehend God?

The only things we know about God are those things which He has revealed to us. He has revealed to us that the human being Jesus Christ is also God the Son, with full human nature and full Divine nature. He has revealed to us that the same Jesus Christ is the Sacrifice, Messiah, Redeemer, promised to us by the very same, one and only, God.

(Continued I AM on page 29)

(Continued SSB NEWS from page 4)

was so cold, and the snow so bad, during part of February, that they had a "snow day" one Sunday.

In Guatemala the cold weather has caused much suffering and many deaths. One February in the late 1990's, several groups of people came to the home of Archbishop Andres to wish him a happy birthday. It was around three or four O'Clock in the morning, and the people were dressed for warmth, the little babies wearing colorful "wooly hats" to keep warm, for the temperature was very cold, somewhere in the low 70's (F), and would not rise to the more reasonable 90's until later in the day. This year the temperatures have been much, much lower. Most homes are heated by the cook stove, which is a concrete or cinder block structure roughly about three feet high, two feet wide, and four feet long. It has round holes in the top into which cooking pots are placed or upon which metal plates are placed and food cooked on the metal plates. Heat comes from wood, leaves, and anything which will burn. The fuel is placed inside the stove - smoke going out of a pipe chimney at one end. The reason the grounds around most houses appears to be swept clean daily is, everything which can burn is swept up daily so it can be used as fuel for cooking. Adobe brick houses and cinder block walled houses usually have fairly solid walls. The walls may crumble during earth quakes or storms - especially the adobe brick ones - but they are much more snug and secure than those houses where the walls are wood. The wood usually is too "green" and not well cured at the time of building, and therefore has a tendency to shrink, causing open spaces. Also, many wood wall houses are intentionally built with openings along the "boards" to allow for ventilation and light. The roofs on most houses do not form a seal with the walls, thereby allowing ventilation. But ventilation during an unusually cold winter can be deadly, as has been the case this year. The cold has also had a devastating effect on crops, not only reducing the amount of food avail-

able to the people, but also reducing the need for labor to harvest on the large plantations. Thus people not only suffer a reduction on what they can grow and provide for themselves, but also in what they can earn.

Great Lent: If as we teach we can assist people to understand the connection between our non-spiritual inclinations, needs, and desires, and our spiritual inclinations, needs, and desires, we may assist them in leveraging the non-spiritual into some form of control or subjugation. If course, we must also explain or make it clear that our spiritual inclinations, needs, and desires can be evil as well as holy, and stress the need to bring the holy into control. We have included information about Saint Joseph in this issue of REUNION, so that people can use what we know about him to assist themselves in their own struggles to follow God's instructions. You may find this a fruitful resource for your own sermons and efforts to teach, as well as subject matter in ordinary social discourse.

Do not forget the PRAYER OVER THE PEOPLE (prayed with the Celebrant facing the Altar) at the end of every **weekday** Divine Liturgy during Great Lent. There may occur certain Great Feasts during Great Lent where this prayer is not part of the Liturgy and therefore is not said. But where a Saint's feast is celebrated for some reason instead of the Liturgy for that day of Great Lent, or in addition to the liturgy for that day of Great Lent, remember to pray the Prayer Over The People. Even in Divine Liturgy commemorating the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary on Saturday, pray the Prayer Over The People. It is different from day to day, and is very meaningful each day. For instance, on the first Friday in Great Lent, the prayer is: Watch over Thy people, O Lord, and of Thy clemency, purge it of all its sins; for no adversity shall harm it, if no iniquity dominate it. You could actually use the prayer for any day of Great Lent as the foundation for a sermon.

The Confessions of Saint Augustine

As with Imitation of Christ, we had been presenting the Confessions of Saint Augustine, but were interrupted in that presentation. We now resume that presentation, and hope to continue in future issues of REUNION.

BOOK ONE

CHAPTER XVII

27. Bear with me, O my God, while I speak a little of those talents, thy gifts, and of the follies on which I wasted them. For a lesson was given me that sufficiently disturbed my soul, for in it there was both hope of praise and fear of shame or stripes. The assignment was that I should declaim the words of Juno, as she raged and sorrowed that she could not "Bar off Italy From all the approaches of the Teucric king." [33]

I had learned that Juno had never uttered these words. Yet we were compelled to stray in the footsteps of these poetic fictions, and to turn into prose what the poet had said in verse. In the declamation, the boy won most applause who most strikingly reproduced the passions of anger and sorrow according to the "character" of the persons presented and who clothed it all in the most suitable language. What is it now to me, O my true Life, my God, that my declaiming was applauded above that of many of my classmates and fellow students? Actually, was not all that smoke and wind? Besides, was there nothing else on which I could have exercised my wit and tongue? Thy praise, O Lord, thy praises might have propped up the tendrils of my heart by thy Scriptures; and it would not have been dragged away by these empty trifles, a shameful prey to the spirits of the air. For there is more than one way in which men sacrifice to the fallen angels.

CHAPTER XVIII

(Continued AUGUSTINE on page 31)

IMITATION OF CHRISTBy **Thomas a Kempis**

BOOK TWO

The Tenth Chapter

Appreciating God's Grace

Why do you look for rest when you were born to work? Resign yourself to patience rather than to comfort, to carrying your cross rather than to enjoyment.

What man in the world, if he could always have them, would not readily accept consolation and spiritual joy, benefits which excel all earthly delights and pleasures of the body? The latter, indeed, are either vain or base, while spiritual joys, born of virtue and infused by God into pure minds, are alone truly pleasant and noble.

Now, since the moment of temptation is always nigh, since false freedom of mind and overconfidence in self are serious obstacles to these visitations from heaven, a man can never enjoy them just as he wishes.

God does well in giving the grace of consolation, but man does evil in not returning everything gratefully to God. Thus, the gifts of grace cannot flow in us when we are ungrateful to the Giver, when we do not return them to the Fountainhead. Grace is always given to him who is duly grateful, and what is wont to be given the humble will be taken away from the proud.

I do not desire consolation that robs me of contrition, nor do I care for contemplation that leads to pride, for not all that is high is holy, nor is all that is sweet good, nor every desire pure, nor all that is dear to us pleasing to God. I accept willingly the grace whereby I become more humble and contrite, more willing to renounce self.

The man who has been taught by the gift of grace, and who learns by the lash of its withdrawal, will never dare to attribute any good to himself, but will

rather admit his poverty and emptiness. Give to God what is God's and ascribe to yourself what is yours. Give Him thanks, then, for His grace, but place upon yourself alone the blame and the punishment your fault deserves.

Always take the lowest place and the highest will be given you, for the highest cannot exist apart from the lowest. The saints who are greatest before God are those who consider themselves the least, and the more humble they are within themselves, so much the more glorious they are. Since they do not desire vain-glory, they are full of truth and heavenly glory. Being established and strengthened in God, they can by no means be proud. They attribute to God whatever good they have received; they seek no glory from one another but only that which comes from God alone. They desire above all things that He be praised in themselves and in all His saints -- this is their constant purpose.

Be grateful, therefore, for the least gift and you will be worthy to receive a greater. Consider the least gift as the greatest, the most contemptible as something special. And, if you but look to the dignity of the Giver, no gift will appear too small or worthless. Even though He give punishments and scourges, accept them, because He acts for our welfare in whatever He allows to befall us.

He who desires to keep the grace of God ought to be grateful when it is given and patient when it is withdrawn. Let him pray that it return; let him be cautious and humble lest he lose it.

BOOK TWO

The Eleventh Chapter

Few Love the Cross of Jesus

Jesus has always many who love His heavenly kingdom, but few who bear His cross. He has many who desire consolation, but few who care for trial. He finds many to share His table, but few to take part in His fasting. All desire to be happy

with Him; few wish to suffer anything for Him. Many follow Him to the breaking of bread, but few to the drinking of the chalice of His passion. Many revere His miracles; few approach the shame of the Cross. Many love Him as long as they encounter no hardship; many praise and bless Him as long as they receive some comfort from Him. But if Jesus hides Himself and leaves them for a while, they fall either into complaints or into deep dejection. Those, on the contrary, who love Him for His own sake and not for any comfort of their own, bless Him in all trial and anguish of heart as well as in the bliss of consolation. Even if He should never give them consolation, yet they would continue to praise Him and wish always to give Him thanks. What power there is in pure love for Jesus -- love that is free from all self-interest and self-love!

Do not those who always seek consolation deserve to be called mercenaries? Do not those who always think of their own profit and gain prove that they love themselves rather than Christ? Where can a man be found who desires to serve God for nothing? Rarely indeed is a man so spiritual as to strip himself of all things. And who shall find a man so truly poor in spirit as to be free from every creature? His value is like that of things brought from the most distant lands.

If a man give all his wealth, it is nothing; if he do great penance, it is little; if he gain all knowledge, he is still far afield; if he have great virtue and much ardent devotion, he still lacks a great deal, and especially, the one thing that is most necessary to him. What is this one thing? That leaving all, he forsake himself, completely renounce himself, and give up all private affections. Then, when he has done all that he knows ought to be done, let him consider it as nothing, let him make little of what may be considered great; let him in all honesty call himself an unprofitable servant. For truth itself has said: "When you shall have done all these things that are commanded you, say: 'we are un-

(Continued IMITATION on page 8)

**THE AWESOME
RESPONSIBILITY OF ANY
AUTHORITY****And Total Inability to Avoid
Responsibility****Imagine a home or work-place
without Charity and Wisdom**

And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven. (Mat 16:19.)

This is an awesome and fear invoking responsibility which the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of Wisdom, lead Saint Peter to exercise only in consultation with the Elders of the Church, with the Apostles and early Disciples of Our Saviour. And thus was established the power of the Church to determine and thereafter proclaim dogma only in a true and full Ecumenical or Great Council of the Church.

Each one of also us exercises authority every day, even if it extends only to ourselves. Even if we are imprisoned in jail or in a body which does not function, we exercise some form of authority over ourselves; and most of us exercise authority to some degree over others as well even though it be only by means of influence rather than the ability to demand others follow our orders and instructions.

Our individual free will makes each of us unable to avoid responsibility for the authority we exercise, for we are responsible for proper exercise of our own free will. Though we may attempt to instill another with the right, power, and authority to exercise our free will for us, by Divine design we retain our own free will, the responsibility for proper exercise of our free will, and the authority over our own free will.

Occasionally one may have the thought that it would be nice if God were to remove free will in-so-far as sinning is concerned, for then it would be easy to

be good. But there is no reward which accompanies lack of free will, for we are rewarded in eternity in accordance with the application of the exercise of our free will. To remove free will would be to place us at the level of animals, and animals do what instinct dictates - no more, and no less.

A thoughtful person will soon realize we need assistance in exercising authority whether it be over ourselves or over others. As in all matters, God has provided us with the ability to obtain assistance, and this assistance begins with Charity, with Divine Love, in conjunction with Wisdom.

Charity and Wisdom flow from God like water from a spring which we can not deplete. It is a spring to which we can continually return to quench our spiritually life sustaining need for Charity and Wisdom. Not a need for **spiritually** sustaining Charity and Wisdom, but **life** sustaining need for Charity and Wisdom.

It is only with Charity and Wisdom that we have even the remotest possibility of properly exercising authority. Without Charity and Wisdom, the leaders amongst us are no better than the alpha male or the matriarch of a herd or pack - whose main concern is to satisfy their natural drives and to protect and preserve their status and all that is associated with that status. Only as a by-product of this does any good result for the herd or pack.

But Charity and Wisdom instill one with a concern for others, and with a more farsighted concern for one's self. This concern is not the natural concern that an insect such as an ant or honey bee has for the hive, for that concern is part of the nature of those particular insects. The concern which Charity and Wisdom instill in us is voluntary - we can either accept it or reject it, act on it or ignore it, all because of free will which is so integral to authority and the proper or improper exercise of authority.

Now, imagine a home, work place, government, school, Church, teacher, police officer, physician, clergyman, mother, or father, who has no or little Divine Love, no or little Wisdom. This is not difficult, for an uncountable multitude of people live in such unholy environments at least for a part of each day.

A person or place that is without Charity and Wisdom is a person or place without goodness - it may not be overtly evil, but it is without goodness and thus is inclined to evil, nastiness, belittling, and using of people.

God is the only provider of Charity and of Wisdom, and without these there can be no happiness.

Remember that where God is not welcome, where God is not, there is no happiness. But where God is welcome, where God is, even though the physical situation may be unbearable, there is happiness.

Ref: 1 Peter 1:1-7; Mat. 16:13-19

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IN ALL TRUTH, ANYONE WHO IS NOT WITH CHRIST IS AGAINST HIM

When Our Saviour cast out from the man, the devil that caused the man to be unable to speak, He gave proof of His Divine authority. But that proof was challenged by those persons who followed Satan, and in their challenge they claimed Our Saviour cast out demons by Satan's power. Our Saviour pointed out the stupidity of that evil claim, by showing that a house divided against itself will fall; that if those on one side in a battle begin to fight against each other, their common enemy will prevail. Thus it made sense that if He were casting out devils by Satan's power, then Satan was fighting against himself, and this Satan would not do. It was also obvious that since He, Jesus, was able to cast out devils, and His challengers had not been able to cast this devil out of that man, that His challengers were on Satan's side, since Satan would not allow one part of his own forces to be defeated by another part of his own forces. Jesus reinforced His teaching in this, by pointing out that it therefore must be by the power of God, that He, Jesus, cast out devils, and His challengers must admit that He, Jesus Christ, was teaching and acting in the Name of God and that what He said and taught was true.

In this event we must also comprehend this matter of demonic possession was not a matter of superstition. In other circumstance Our Saviour healed a man born dumb, and also healed uncountable numbers of persons with medical and congenital maladies. And in still other events He permanently cast demons out of people. A clear distinction was made between those with natural maladies and those with demonic maladies. This clearly was an event where the man cured had a demonic malady.

Then Our Saviour made two of the most clear statements possible to make. First He said: **He that is not with me is against me.** (Luke 11:23) If you are not on Christ's side, totally, completely, in

every way possible, then you are against Him - you are the enemy and you have already lost. It is rare for any one person to always be one hundred per cent on Christ's side, and it is for that purpose He established the Sacrament of Absolution, so that we can more easily re-establish our credentials as members of His Body. But if we valiantly keep trying to be His faithful follower, then He will assist us so that we will in the end, be members of His Body.

Then Our Saviour said: **he that gathereth not with me scattereth.** (Luke 11:23). Continuing the military analogy, those who are not on Christ's side, those who do not follow Him, are members of the forces opposed to Jesus and they will be scattered without having any cohesion; and will lose.

When a woman in the crowd praised Our Saviour's upbringing Our Saviour responded: **Yea rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.** (Luke 11:28).

Again, this is an extremely straight forward statement. Hear God's word, Jesus Christ, listen to what He has said, comprehend it, and follow what He has said to do and avoid what He has said to avoid.

From this it follows that if you call yourself a Christian, you can not attempt to establish morality either yourself or through committee or by majority rule. To so do is to brand yourself a liar when you term yourself a Christian, for a Christian must accept morality as established by God. A Christian therefore can not be pro-choice, pro-abortion, favor or allow marital like relations between persons of the same gender, or in any manner support **OR IN ANY MANNER FAIL TO OPPOSE** any of these and any of the other perversions which evil and immoral Satanists are attempting to establish as permissible.

When you see the crucifix of Our Lord, remember that Our Saviour did not suffer His Passion and Death for them to be

ignored. He suffered His Passion and Death because of our sins, to prove the depth of His love for us, and to teach us.

In the Divine plan, it was necessary for Jesus Christ to really, fully, and completely experience His Passion and Death, in the totality of His being, in the totality of His person. It was necessary because of our sins. To obtain the benefit of His Passion and Death, one must fully and completely accept God's teachings without any attempt to change, modify, slight, or "improve". And live those teachings. For the **ONLY blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.**

Ref: Ephes. 5:1-9; Luke 11:14-28

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(Continued LIBERTINE from page 1)

One need but consider the French Revolution, fomented and lead by libertines, the enlightened, and the Bolshevik - Communist Russian Revolution, lead by enlightened libertine intellectuals, to realize just how blood thirsty libertines really are.

One need but consider the fact that libertines support abortion on demand. That most of them support abortion at any time of the development of the baby, to realize just how blood thirsty libertines really are.

One need but consider the fact that generally, libertines support euthanasia, physician assisted suicide, and generally, anything which will kill human beings, especially human beings other than themselves, and one will realize just how blood thirsty libertines really are.

Consider the war activities of one of the best known American libertines of current times, former President William Clinton. Against which side did he focus United States armed forces in his war? He placed American armed forces against the Orthodox and Roman Catholic populations, and in support of the non-Christian side. Before launching cruise missiles at a location where Osama bin Laden was known to be, Clinton's made sure the missiles were launched from a place where they would pass over several countries, and then had his State Department contact those countries to inform them of the launch and the target. This allowed officials of those countries to contact Osama bin Laden so he could escape. They did, and he did. On several occasions other countries had Osama bin Laden in custody and offered him to Clinton, who declined. Any action he took against Islamic terrorist was ineffectual, when it could have been very effective.

Libertines oppose anything which even hints of being good. When there is conflict or war, libertines always, yes always, oppose the side which fights for

good, even if it is to their own detriment.

Libertines also fail to mention their own use of certain political tactics, when those political tactics are used against them. During the five or six years prior to the 2006, American congressional elections, when the Republican party had control of the House and Senate, libertines blocked Senate consideration of all but a very few appointments to the federal courts. They blocked consideration by threatening to filibuster is an attempt were made to bring a vote on the appointments to the floor. To overcome a filibuster in the Senate, sixty Senators must vote to quash the filibuster. Having just over fifty votes, the Republicans could not overcome the filibuster threat, so the appointments went without being considered, and the country suffered by having a less effective federal court system. Newspapers and media journalists ignored this activity by the libertines. However, when the libertines took control of both house of congress in 2007, and Senate Republicans used the same filibuster threat tactic as the libertines, newspapers, media journalist, and PBS issued continual condemnations of the Republicans for even considering much less using the filibuster tactic.

Libertines use every evil, maligning, slanderous tactic possible. Ridicule is one of their most used and most potent weapons.

When a public figure is the focus of their attack, libertines attack the target's intelligence, stating the target is stupid. They are unrelenting in their attacks, even when the facts and evidence show they are wrong, show they are lying, prove they are stating that which they know is not true.

They do this because they are evil, wish to be evil, promote evil, and have found attacking their target's intelligence by ridicule is a most effective attack. It is effective because libertines control the news, entertainment, and

communications systems throughout the world, but especially in America and the Western European countries. They therefore can and do press their attacks, flooding the senses of the public with their propaganda until they have swayed public opinion to the point the general public believes their lies about the target of their attack.

One must be very careful not to equate being a libertine with being a member of the Democrat party. There must be a few hundred thousand Democrats who do not hold political office and who are not libertines.

Can anyone think of a Democrat who does hold a political office and who is not a libertine? Remember, such a person would have to be pro life and anti abortion with no reservation, totally against physician assisted suicide and totally against euthanasia, totally against same sex unions, totally against lesbians and homosexuals adopting children, totally in favor of supporting and actually work to support the traditional family in every manner possible, totally in favor of teaching universally accepted morality and moral values in school (which in our society means teaching Christian values without teaching Christianity - it can easily be done), favor teenagers abstaining from sex instead of teaching teenagers how to have sex without the girl becoming pregnant.

Who, pray tell, is this Democrat, and where is he or she?

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(Continued IMITATION from page 6)
profitable servants." [17]

Then he will be truly poor and stripped in spirit, and with the prophet may say: "I am alone and poor." [18] No one, however, is more wealthy than such a man; no one is more powerful, no one freer than he who knows how to leave all things and think of himself as the least of all.

[17] Luke 17:10.

[18] Ps. 24:16.

BOOK TWO

The Twelfth Chapter

The Royal Road of the Holy Cross

To many the saying, "Deny thyself, take up thy cross and follow Me," [19] seems hard, but it will be much harder to hear that final word: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." [20] Those who hear the word of the cross and follow it willingly now, need not fear that they will hear of eternal damnation on the day of judgment. This sign of the cross will be in the heavens when the Lord comes to judge. Then all the servants of the cross, who during life made themselves one with the Crucified, will draw near with great trust to Christ, the judge.

Why, then, do you fear to take up the cross when through it you can win a kingdom? In the cross is salvation, in the cross is life, in the cross is protection from enemies, in the cross is infusion of heavenly sweetness, in the cross is strength of mind, in the cross is joy of spirit, in the cross is highest virtue, in the cross is perfect holiness. There is no salvation of soul nor hope of everlasting life but in the cross.

Take up your cross, therefore, and follow Jesus, and you shall enter eternal life. He Himself opened the way before you in carrying His cross, and upon it He died for you, that you, too, might take up your cross and long to die upon

it. If you die with Him, you shall also live with Him, and if you share His suffering, you shall also share His glory.

Behold, in the cross is everything, and upon your dying on the cross everything depends. There is no other way to life and to true inward peace than the way of the holy cross and daily mortification. Go where you will, seek what you will, you will not find a higher way, nor a less exalted but safer way, than the way of the holy cross. Arrange and order everything to suit your will and judgment, and still you will find that some suffering must always be borne, willingly or unwillingly, and thus you will always find the cross.

Either you will experience bodily pain or you will undergo tribulation of spirit in your soul. At times you will be forsaken by God, at times troubled by those about you and, what is worse, you will often grow weary of yourself. You cannot escape, you cannot be relieved by any remedy or comfort but must bear with it as long as God wills. For He wishes you to learn to bear trial without consolation, to submit yourself wholly to Him that you may become more humble through suffering. No one understands the passion of Christ so thoroughly or heartily as the man whose lot it is to suffer the like himself.

The cross, therefore, is always ready; it awaits you everywhere. No matter where you may go, you cannot escape it, for wherever you go you take yourself with you and shall always find yourself. Turn where you will -- above, below, without, or within -- you will find a cross in everything, and everywhere you must have patience if you would have peace within and merit an eternal crown.

If you carry the cross willingly, it will carry and lead you to the desired goal where indeed there shall be no more suffering, but here there shall be. If you carry it unwillingly, you create a burden for yourself and increase the load, though still you have to bear it. If you cast away one cross, you will find an-

other and perhaps a heavier one. Do you expect to escape what no mortal man can ever avoid? Which of the saints was without a cross or trial on this earth? Not even Jesus Christ, our Lord, Whose every hour on earth knew the pain of His passion. "It behooveth Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead, . . . and so enter into his glory." [21] How is it that you look for another way than this, the royal way of the holy cross?

The whole life of Christ was a cross and a martyrdom, and do you seek rest and enjoyment for yourself? You deceive yourself, you are mistaken if you seek anything but to suffer, for this mortal life is full of miseries and marked with crosses on all sides. Indeed, the more spiritual progress a person makes, so much heavier will he frequently find the cross, because as his love increases, the pain of his exile also increases.

Yet such a man, though afflicted in many ways, is not without hope of consolation, because he knows that great reward is coming to him for bearing his cross. And when he carries it willingly, every pang of tribulation is changed into hope of solace from God. Besides, the more the flesh is distressed by affliction, so much the more is the spirit strengthened by inward grace. Not infrequently a man is so strengthened by his love of trials and hardship in his desire to conform to the cross of Christ, that he does not wish to be without sorrow or pain, since he believes he will be the more acceptable to God if he is able to endure more and more grievous things for His sake.

It is the grace of Christ, and not the virtue of man, which can and does bring it about that through fervor of spirit frail flesh learns to love and to gain what it naturally hates and shuns.

To carry the cross, to love the cross, to chastise the body and bring it to subjection, to flee honors, to endure contempt gladly, to despise self and wish to be despised, to suffer any adversity and loss, to desire no prosperous days on earth --

(Continued IMITATION on page 9)

(Continued ST. JOSEPH from page 24)

Christ Child, saying, "Who hath given me the Son of the Most High to be a Son to me? I was jealous of Thy Mother, and I thought to put her away, and I knew not that in her womb was hidden a mighty treasure, that should suddenly enrich my poor estate. David the king sprang from my race, and wore the crown; and I have come to a very low estate, who instead of a king am a carpenter. Yet a crown hath come to me, for in my bosom is the Lord of crowns."

Blessed Jerome says, "In His boundless wisdom, God employs the simplest of means. What was the best way to effect the incarnation of the Son of God? To reveal openly the all-holy Virgin's virginal state would have meant to bring attention to the Lord Jesus prematurely, without proper preparation. A threefold purpose was accomplished by Joseph's betrothal to the Virgin: quiet obscurity was assured for Christ until the appointed moment, an impenetrable defense was provided for both her and the divine infant. All this was accomplished by the sacred betrothal of St. Joseph to the Virgin-Mother."

What do we assert by the multi-faceted role Joseph would play? Biblical Israel had a patriarchal or father-centered form of family life. From biblical times, as a father and husband, a man would defend his family's right before the judges when necessary (Deut. 22:13-19). We also know that "the fatherless and the widow," who had no man to defend their rights, were often denied justice (cf. Deut. 10:19).

The stigma of an illegitimate child would have thwarted the divine plan. Furthermore, Mary now had a responsible and respectable man who would provide food, clothing and shelter for her and her infant Son. God ordained the family unit as a vital part of human society. And what a great reward and honor awaited Joseph and all his house.

One of his sons would be of the inner Twelve Apostles (Jude); one would become the first Bishop of Jerusalem

(James); and his daughter Salome, the myrrh-bearer, would give birth to the two Apostles.

Then there was Cleopas' son, Symeon, the second martyred Bishop of Jerusalem. Whether Symeon was Joseph's son or his nephew, it is clear that salvation, honor and glory came to their house.

When the magi were present, St. Romanos the Melodist, puts forth Mary's explanation to the magi concerning the presence of Joseph in the house.

Theotokos: "I shall remind you, O magi, for what reason I have Joseph in my dwelling. It is for the refutation of all who doubt. He himself will tell what he heard about my child. For in his sleep he saw a holy angel who told him whence I conceived (Mt. 1:20). A divine being, shining like fire, reassured him in the night and settled his thorny doubts. Therefore Joseph is with me to reveal that here is a young child, the pre-eternal God. Clearly he will report the things that he himself saw among the heavenly beings and mortals on earth -- how the shepherds sang songs, and the shining ones sang with men of clay; how the star ran ahead of you to light your way and guide you."

Saint Basil the Great (c.330-379) confirms this explanation and description of Joseph as a witness to her purity and whose presence would preserve her from calumny. St. Basil also remarks that the "The virginity of Mary would be hidden from the prince of the world."

The venerable Bede (c.673-735) summarized patristic teaching on their marriage, writing: "Blessed Mary had then a husband who would be the most reliable witness of her integrity and most faithful custodian of our Lord and Saviour. For the Child Jesus, Joseph would bring to the temple the victims of sacrifice prescribed by the law; in the hour of persecution he would take Him

and His Mother into Egypt and bring them back; and finally he would provide many other services called for by the fragility of the nature assumed."

Bede also gives, "The guarantee afforded by Joseph's genealogy, the protection of Mary against stoning as an adulteress, and the concealment of the virginal birth from the evil one," as another reason for the marriage.

Saint Ignatius (circa 110 A.D.) made the valuable observation that "Now the virginity of Mary was hidden from the prince of this world, as was also her Offspring, and the death of the Lord. Thus, three mysteries of renown, which were wrought in silence, but have been revealed to us."

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(Continued ST. JOSEPH from page 23)

These brothers and sisters must have been Joseph's children from his previous marriage. As such they would still have been considered Jesus' brothers and sisters.

It is not strange, as things usually go with us imperfect (but perfectible) humans, that they would have looked with disapproval upon Jesus and His Mother - who was likely younger than they were. This would especially be the case since Jesus' origins would be the subject of suspicion all His life (and indeed for as long as His story would be told) - for only by faith would people accept that His conception was of the Holy Spirit and not as a result of Mary's infidelity to her betrothed, Joseph.

Joseph himself had problems with doubts, as is portrayed in his posture in the Icon of the Nativity (and also in the liturgical texts for that glorious Feast).

It is interesting that Mary is looking towards him as he is sitting deep in thought, addressed by a man dressed in an animal skin (some say Adam, some say the Tempter).

She is praying for him to find victory over his doubt of what she alone KNOWS by personal experience to be true - that this wonderful Son comes from the Most High Himself without the mediation of a human father. Joseph did indeed win that victory and his faith, love and dedication remained consistent all his life - and for all eternity.

Apparently Joseph's children also came to believe as he did - especially after Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection. Of them all James seemed to be most like his wonderful, kind, merciful, loving father, Joseph, for (again based on the Apocrypha) he declared that Jesus was his Brother when his siblings were disputing with Joseph about whether or not Jesus should be included among his inheritors.

James told his father not to be troubled about this for whatever he received he would share with Jesus, His brother. Hence the title "Brother of Jesus" - at first a mocking epithet which later became the honorific "Brother of the Lord", when James' siblings also came to believe that the young fellow they had thought they knew - and resented - was indeed the Messiah, the Lord from Heaven. James is still called this by the Church and is celebrated in the East together with Joseph His father on the Sunday after the Nativity (also Jesus', Mary's and their ancestor, David the King.)

St. Joseph's Repose

The apocryphal account, The History of Joseph, a 4th century document, describes Joseph's last years: At length, the elder arrived at a very advanced age. He did not, however, labor under any bodily weakness, nor had his sight failed, nor were any of his teeth miss-

“Indeed the agony and fear of death has encompassed me. But as soon as I heard Thy voice, my soul was at rest. O Jesus of Nazareth! Jesus, my Saviour! Jesus, O sweetest name in my mouth, and in the mouth of all that love it! O Eye that seest and Ear that hearest, hear me! I am Thy servant; this day I most humbly reverence Thee and before Thy face I pour out my tears. Thou art altogether my God.”

ing. His mind was still clear and never wandered and, like a youth, he displayed youthful vigor in his business. His limbs remained unimpaired and free of pain. But his old age was greatly prolonged.

When Joseph knew that he would soon repose, he arose and went to Jerusalem, into the temple of the Lord, and poured out his prayer before the sanctuary. He besought the Lord to send the great Michael, the prince of the holy angels, to remain with him when his soul would depart. He begged forgiveness for his sins and besought the Lord's compassion.

He then returned to Nazareth and was suddenly seized by disease, making him keep to his bed. The sickness weighed heavily upon him. According to the most ancient tradition, dating from the time of the Apostles, Christ Himself heard the righteous man's confession, an account of his entire life. Then, going beside his bed, Jesus said, "Hail, my father Joseph, thou righteous man." And Joseph answered him, "Hail, my well-beloved Son. Indeed the agony and fear of death has encompassed me. But as soon as I heard Thy voice, my soul was at rest. O Jesus of Nazareth! Jesus, my Saviour! Jesus, O sweetest name in my mouth, and in the mouth of all that love it! O Eye that seest and Ear that hearest, hear me! I am Thy servant; this day I most humbly reverence Thee and before Thy face I pour out my tears. Thou art altogether my God."

The soul of Joseph then departed peacefully to his ancestors, where he gave witness to the joyful news of the long-awaited Messiah.

According to St. Epiphanius of Cyprus (c315-403), the Elder Joseph lived to a profound old age, having entered into rest at the age of one hundred and ten years old. He reposed just before Christ entered His public ministry to preach the Gospel.

Saint Joseph's virtue is summed up in the words of the Evangelist Matthew that he was "a just man" (deekaos). This was the eulogy of Holy Writ itself.

COMMENTS

Saint Ephraim writes that Joseph caressed the Son as a babe; he ministered to Him as God. He rejoiced in Him as the Good One, yet he was greatly bewildered and awestruck at Him as the Just One (Eastern Orthodox Hymns on the Nativity).

St. Ephraim depicts Joseph holding the

(Continued ST. JOSEPH on page 25)

(Continued IMITATION from page 8)

this is not man's way. If you rely upon yourself, you can do none of these things, but if you trust in the Lord, strength will be given you from heaven and the world and the flesh will be made subject to your word. You will not even fear your enemy, the devil, if you are armed with faith and signed with the cross of Christ.

Set yourself, then, like a good and faithful servant of Christ, to bear bravely the cross of your Lord, Who out of love was crucified for you. Be ready to suffer many adversities and many kinds of trouble in this miserable life, for troublesome and miserable life will always be, no matter where you are; and so you will find it wherever you may hide. Thus it must be; and there is no way to evade the trials and sorrows of life but to bear them.

Drink the chalice of the Lord with affection it you wish to be His friend and to have part with Him. Leave consolation to God; let Him do as most pleases Him. On your part, be ready to bear sufferings and consider them the greatest consolation, for even though you alone were to undergo them all, the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come.

When you shall have come to the point where suffering is sweet and acceptable for the sake of Christ, then consider yourself fortunate, for you have found paradise on earth. But as long as suffering irks you and you seek to escape, so long will you be unfortunate, and the tribulation you seek to evade will follow you everywhere. If you put your mind to the things you ought to consider, that is, to suffering and death, you would soon be in a better state and would find peace.

Although you were taken to the third heaven with Paul, you were not thereby insured against suffering. Jesus said: "I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." [22] To suffer, then, remains your lot, if you mean to love Jesus and serve Him forever.

If you were but worthy to suffer something for the name of Jesus, what great glory would be in store for you, what great joy to all the saints of God, what great edification to those about you! For all men praise patience though there are few who wish to practice it.

With good reason, then, ought you to be willing to suffer a little for Christ since many suffer much more for the world.

Realize that you must lead a dying life; the more a man dies to himself, the more he begins to live unto God.

No man is fit to enjoy heaven unless he has resigned himself to suffer hardship for Christ. Nothing is more acceptable to God, nothing more helpful for you on this earth than to suffer willingly for Christ. If you had to make a choice, you ought to wish rather to suffer for Christ than to enjoy many consolations, for thus you would be more like Christ and more like all the saints. Our merit and progress consist not in many pleasures and comforts but rather in enduring great afflictions and sufferings.

If, indeed, there were anything better or more useful for man's salvation than suffering, Christ would have shown it by word and example. But He clearly exhorts the disciples who follow Him and all who wish to follow Him to carry the cross, saying: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." [23]

When, therefore, we have read and searched all that has been written, let this be the final conclusion -- that through much suffering we must enter into the kingdom of God.

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- [19] Matt. 16:24.
- [20] Matt. 25:41.
- [21] Luke 24:46, 26.
- [22] Acts 9:16.
- [23] Luke 9:23.

BOOK THREE

INTERNAL CONSOLATION

The First Chapter

The Inward Conversation of Christ with the Faithful Soul

I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me." [24]

Blessed is the soul who hears the Lord speaking within her, who receives the word of consolation from His lips. Blessed are the ears that catch the accents of divine whispering, and pay no heed to the murmurings of this world. Blessed indeed are the ears that listen, not to the voice which sounds without, but to the truth which teaches within. Blessed are the eyes which are closed to exterior things and are fixed upon those which are interior. Blessed are they who penetrate inwardly, who try daily to prepare themselves more and more to understand mysteries. Blessed are they who long to give their time to God, and who cut themselves off from the hindrances of the world.

Consider these things, my soul, and close the door of your senses, so that you can hear what the Lord your God speaks within you. "I am your salvation," says your Beloved. "I am your peace and your life. Remain with Me and you will find peace. Dismiss all passing things and seek the eternal. What are all temporal things but snares? And what help will all creatures be able to give you if you are deserted by the Creator?" Leave all these things, therefore, and make yourself pleasing and faithful to your Creator so that you may attain to true happiness.

[24] Ps. 84:9.

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CHILDREN'S PAGE

The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism

Q. 554. Could a person who denies only one article of our faith be a member of the Church?

A. A person who denies even one article of our faith could not be a member of the Church; for truth is one and we must accept it whole and entire or not at all.

Q. 555. Are there any pious beliefs and practices in the Church that are not articles of faith?

A. There are many pious beliefs and practices in the Church that are not articles of faith; that is, we are not bound under pain of sin to believe in them; yet we will often find them useful aids to holiness, and hence they are recommended by our pastors.

Q. 556. Of what sin are persons guilty who put firm belief in religious or other practices that are either forbidden or useless?

A. Persons who put a firm belief in religious or other practices that are forbidden or useless are guilty of the sin of superstition.

Q. 557. Where does the Church find the revealed truths it is bound to teach?

A. The Church finds the revealed truths it is bound to teach in the Holy Scripture and revealed traditions.

Q. 558. What is the Holy Scripture or Bible?

A. The Holy Scripture or Bible is the collection of sacred, inspired writings through which God has made known to us many revealed truths. Some call them letters from Heaven to earth, that is, from God to man.

Q. 559. What is meant by the Canon of the Sacred Scriptures?

A. The Canon of Sacred Scriptures means the list the Church has prepared to teach us what sacred writings are Holy Scripture and contain the inspired

word of God.

Q. 560. Where does the Church find the revealed traditions?

A. The Church finds the revealed traditions in the decrees of its councils; in its books of worship; in its icons, paintings and inscriptions on tombs and monuments; in the lives of its Saints; the writings of its Fathers, and in its own history.

Q. 561. Must we ourselves seek in the Scriptures and traditions for what we are to believe?

A. We ourselves need not seek in the Scriptures and traditions for what we are to believe, but we should seek them in the Scriptures. God has appointed the Church to be our guide to salvation and we must accept its teaching as our infallible rule of faith. Therefore, we can learn from what the Church teaches, and if we study the Scriptures as well, we should do so under the guidance of the Church so-as-to avoid error. If we do not study the Scriptures under the guidance of the Church, then each individual may make an error in understanding, and each individual will therefore believe differently, but everyone can not have different beliefs and have each different belief be true.

Q. 562. How do we show that the Holy Scriptures alone could not be our guide to salvation and infallible rule of faith?

A. We show that the Holy Scripture alone could not be our guide to salvation and infallible rule of faith:

1. Because all men cannot examine or understand the Holy Scripture; but all can listen to the teaching of the Church;

2. Because the New Testament or Christian part of the Scripture was not written at the beginning of the Church's existence, and, therefore, could not have been used as the rule of faith by the first Christians;

3. Because there are many things in the Holy Scripture that cannot be understood without the explanation given by

tradition, and hence those who take the Scripture alone for their rule of faith are constantly disputing about its meaning and what they are to believe.

Q. 563. How is the Church Holy?

A. The Church is Holy because its founder, Jesus Christ, is holy; because it teaches a holy doctrine; invites all to a holy life; and because of the eminent holiness of so many thousands of its children.

Q. 564. How is the Church Catholic or universal?

A. The Church is Catholic or universal because it subsists in all ages, teaches all nations, and maintains all truth.

Q. 565. How do you show that the Church is universal in time, in place, and in doctrine?

A. 1. The Church is universal in time, for from the time of the Apostles to the present it has existed, taught and labored in every age;

2. It is universal in place, for it has taught throughout the whole world;

3. It is universal in doctrine, for it teaches the same everywhere, and its doctrines are suited to all classes of persons. It has converted all the pagan nations that have ever been converted.

Q. 566. Why does the Church use the national language of its children instead of one language such as the Latin language?

A. The Church uses the national language of its children because the Holy Spirit, at Pentecost, had each person hear the Apostles in their own language even though the Apostles spoke in Hebrew. This is do each individual would understand what was being said and taught.

Q. 567. How is the Church Apostolic?

A. The Church is Apostolic because it was founded by Christ on His Apostles, and is governed by their lawful successors, and because it has never ceased,

(Continued CATECHISM on page 11)

(Continued ST. JOSEPH from page 22)

laudable practice of giving the fullest cultus to St. Joseph". His feast, introduced towards the end shortly afterwards, into the Dominican Calendar, gradually gained a foothold in various dioceses of Western Europe. Among the most zealous promoters of the devotion at epoch, St. Vincent Ferrer (d. 1419), Peter d'Ailly (d. 1420), St. Bernadine of Siena (d. 1444), and Jehan Charlier Gerson (d. 1429) deserve an especial mention. Gerson, who had, in 1400, composed an Office of the Espousals of Joseph particularly at the Council of Constance (1414), in promoting the public recognition of devotion to St. Joseph. Only under the pontificate of Sixtus IV (1471-84), were the efforts of these holy men rewarded by Roman Calendar (19 March). From that time the devotion acquired greater and greater popularity, the dignity of the feast keeping pace with this steady growth.

At first only a *festum simplex*, it was soon elevated to a double rite by Innocent VIII (1484-92), declared by Gregory XV, in 1621, a festival of obligation, at the instance of the Emperors Ferdinand III and Leopold I and of King Charles II of Spain, and raised to the rank of a double of the second class by Clement XI (1700-21). Further, Benedict XIII, in 1726, inserted the name into the Litany of the Saints.

One festival in the year, however, was not deemed enough to satisfy the piety of the people. The feast of the Espousals of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, so strenuously advocated by Gerson, and permitted first by Paul III to the Franciscans, then to other religious orders and individual dioceses, was, in 1725, granted to all countries that solicited it, a proper Office, compiled by the Dominican Pierto Aurato, being assigned, and the day appointed being 23 January.

Nor was this all, for the reformed Order of Carmelites, into which St. Teresa had infused her great devotion to the foster-father of Jesus, chose him, in 1621, for their patron, and in 1689, were allowed

to celebrate the feast of his Patronage on the third Sunday after Easter. This feast, soon, adopted throughout the Spanish Kingdom, was later on extended to all states and dioceses which asked for the privilege. No devotion, perhaps, has grown so universal, none seems to have appealed so forcibly to the heart of the Christian people, and particularly of the labouring classes, during the nineteenth century, as that of St. Joseph.

This wonderful and unprecedented increase of popularity called for a new lustre to be added to devotion to the saint. Accordingly, one of the first acts of the pontificate of Pius IX, himself singularly devoted to St. Joseph, was to extend to the whole Church the feast of the Patronage (1847), and in December, 1870, according to the wishes of the bishops and of all the faithful, he solemnly declared the Holy Patriarch Joseph, patron of the Catholic Church, and enjoined that his feast (19 March) should henceforth be celebrated as a double of the first class (but without octave, on account of Lent). Following the footsteps of their predecessor, Leo XIII and Pius X have shown an equal desire to add their own jewel to the crown of St. Joseph: the former, by permitting on certain days the reading of the votive Office of the saint; and the latter by approving, on 18 March, 1909, a litany in honour of him whose name he had received in baptism.

ACCORDING TO TRADITION: (apocryphal literature)

According to some traditions, Joseph the Carpenter, spouse of the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary, the Holy Theotokos, was married to Salome before he married the married the Ever Virgin Mary. Before she died he had four sons by his wife Salome: James, Hosea, Simon and Jude (see Luke 6:16, Acts 1:13;)

The Holy Apostle Jude, the Brother of the Lord, was one of the Twelve and a kinsman of the Lord according to the flesh. As an Apostle, St Jude preached in Mesopotamia, Arabia and Syria, and

met a Martyr's end in Beirut. He is the author of the New Testament Epistle that bears his name. His name ("Judas" in Greek, from "Judah" in Hebrew) means "praise".

The Holy Myrrh-bearer Salome, was also by tradition, a daughter of Saint Joseph and his wife Salome. The Holy Myrrh-bearer Salome was the mother of the Apostles James and John, the wife of Zebedee, and the daughter of Joseph the Betrothed, who was a widower when he became betrothed to the Mother of God. She was a disciple of the Lord and one of the Myrrh-bearing women who first brought tidings of the Resurrection to the world.

That St. Joseph was elderly:

The New Testament Apocrypha speak of Joseph as an elderly man, a widower with adult children, who was quite reluctant to be included among those from among whom a protector for Mary would be chosen. Although the Apocrypha were not included in the canon of Scripture their importance is great and much in evidence in the liturgical texts of some of the great Feasts.

However, the Gospels too give evidence for an elderly Joseph. For example he is no longer mentioned after Jesus' trip to the temple as an adolescent. Note also that as Jesus was dying upon the Cross He asked John to look after His mother. That would have been unnecessary - and even insulting to Joseph had he been alive. But as an elderly man he would have reposed well before Jesus' crucifixion at the age of 33. Mary, however, would only have been in her middle age.

The New Testament clearly speaks of Jesus' brothers and sisters. Had they been Mary's as well as Joseph's they would have been able to take care of their mother and again, He would not have had to entrust her to John's care. (Life for a woman without a male protector would have been enormously difficult in those days).

(Continued ST. JOSEPH on page 24)

(Continued ST. JOSEPH from page 21)

David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost. . . And Joseph, rising from his sleep, did as the angel of he Lord had commanded him, and took unto him his wife" (Matthew 1:19, 20, 24).

The Nativity and the Flight to Egypt.

A few months later, the time came for Joseph and Mary to go to Bethlehem, to be enrolled, according to the decree issued by Caesar Augustus: a new source of anxiety for Joseph, for "her days were accomplished, that she should be delivered", and "there was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2:1-7). What must have been the thoughts of the holy man at the birth of the Saviour, the coming of the shepherds and of the wise men, and at the events which occurred at the time of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, we can merely guess. St. Luke tells only that he was "wondering at those things which were spoken concerning him" (2:33). New trials were soon to follow.

The news that a king of the Jews was born could not but kindle in the wicked heart of the old and bloody tyrant, Herod, the fire of jealousy. Again "an angel of the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph, saying: Arise, and take the child and his mother, and fly into Egypt: and be there until I shall tell thee" (Matthew 2:13).

Return to Nazareth. The summons to go back to Palestine came only after a few years, and the Holy Family settled again at Nazareth. St. Joseph's was henceforth the simple and uneventful life of an humble Jew, supporting himself and his family by his work, and faithful to the religious practices commanded by the Law or observed by pious Israelites. The only noteworthy incident recorded by the Gospel is the loss of, and anxious quest for, Jesus, then twelve years of old, when He had strayed during the yearly pilgrimage to the Holy City (Luke 2:42-51).

Death. This is the last we hear of St.

Joseph in the sacred writings, and we may well suppose that Jesus's foster-father died before the beginning of Saviour's public life. In several circumstances, indeed, the Gospels speak of the latter's mother and brothers (Matthew 12:46; Mark 3:31; Luke 8:19; John 7:3), but never do they speak of His father in connection with the rest of the family; they tell us only that Our Lord, during His public life was referred to as the son of Joseph (John 1:45; 6:42; Luke 4:22) the carpenter (Matthew 13:55).

Would Jesus, moreover, when about die on the Cross, have entrusted His mother to John's care, had St. Joseph been still alive?

According to the apocryphal "Story of Joseph the Carpenter", the holy man reached his hundred and eleventh year when he died, on 20 July (A. D. 18 or 19). St. Epiphanius gives him ninety years of age at the time of his demise; and if we are to believe the Venerable Bede, he was buried in the Valley of Josaphat. In truth we do not know when St. Joseph died; it is most unlikely that he attained the ripe old age spoken of by the "Story of Joseph" and St. Epiphanius. The probability is that he died and was buried at Nazareth.

DEVOTION TO SAINT JOSEPH

Joseph was "a just man". This praise bestowed by the Holy Ghost, and the privilege of having been chosen by God to be the fosterfather of Jesus and the Spouse of the Virgin Mother, are the foundations of the honour paid to St. Joseph by the Church. So well-grounded are these foundations that it is not a little surprising that devotion to St. Joseph was so slow in winning recognition. Foremost among the causes of this is the fact that "during the first centuries of the Church's existence, it was only the martyrs who enjoyed veneration" (Kellner).

Far from being ignored or passed over in silence during the early Christian ages, St. Joseph's prerogatives were occasionally descanted upon by the Fa-

thers; even such eulogies as cannot be attributed to the writers among whose works they found admittance bear witness that the ideas and devotion therein expressed were familiar, not only to the theologians and preachers, and must have been readily welcomed by the people.

The earliest traces of public recognition of the sanctity of St. Joseph are to be found in the East. His feast, if we may trust the assertions of Papebroch, was kept by the Copts as early as the beginning of the fourth century. Nicephorus Callistus tells likewise -- on what authority we do not know -- that in the great basilica erected at Bethlehem by St. Helena, there was a gorgeous oratory dedicated to the honour of Saint Joseph.

Certain it is, at all events, that the feast of "Joseph the Carpenter" is entered, on 20 July, in one of the old Coptic Calendars, as also in a Synazarium of the eighth and ninth century published by Cardinal Mai (Script. Vet. Nova Coll., IV, 15 sqq.).

Greek menologies of a later date at least mention St. Joseph on 25 or 26 December, and a twofold commemoration of him along with other saints was made on the two Sundays next before and after Christmas.

In the West the name of the foster-father of Our Lord (*Nutritor Domini*) appears in local martyrologies of the ninth and tenth centuries, and we find in 1129, for the first time, a church dedicated to his honour at Bologna.

The devotion, then merely private, as it seems, gained a great impetus owing to the influence and zeal of such saintly persons as St. Bernard, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Gertrude (d. 1310), and St. Bridget of Sweden (d. 1373).

According to Benedict XIV (De Serv. Dei beatif., I, iv, n. 11; xx, n. 17), "the general opinion of the learned is that the Fathers of Carmel were the first to import from the East into the West the

(Continued ST. JOSEPH on page 23)

CHILDREN'S PAGE

(Continued CATECHISM from page 10)

and never will cease, to teach their doctrine.

Q. 568. Does the Church, by defining certain truths, thereby make new doctrines?

A. The Church, by defining, that is, by proclaiming certain truths, articles of faith, does not make new doctrines, but simply teaches more clearly and with greater effort truths that have always been believed and held by the Church.

Q. 569. What, then, is the use of defining or declaring a truth an article of faith if it has always been believed?

A. The use of defining or declaring a truth an article of faith, even when it has always been believed, is:

1.(1) To clearly contradict those who deny it and show their teaching false;

2.(2) To remove all doubt about the exact teaching of the Church, and to put an end to all discussion about the truth defined.

Q. 570. In which Church are these attributes and marks found?

A. These attributes and marks are found in the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church alone. As stated above, the Church has been severed into Orthodox and Roman but this would must be healed by the Bishops otherwise Jesus Christ will heal it Himself and He will then "rake it over the heads of those who stand in His way."

Q. 571. How do you show that Protestant Churches have not the marks of the true Church?

A. Protestant Churches have not the marks of the true Church, because:

1. They are not one either in government or faith; for they have no chief head or governing council which propounds unchanging doctrine, and they profess different beliefs. They often change their dogma so-as-to approve the sinful desires of the people, such as approving abortions or approving peo-

ple of the same sex living together as though they were husband and wife;

2. They are not holy, because their doctrines are founded on error and lead to evil consequences;

3. They are not catholic or universal in time, place or doctrine. They have not existed in all ages nor in all places, and their doctrines do not suit all classes;

4. They are not apostolic, for they were not established until hundreds of years or even more than a thousand years after the Apostles, and they do not teach the doctrines of the Apostles.

Q. 572. From whom does the Church derive its undying life and infallible authority?

A. The Church derives its undying life and infallible authority from the Holy Ghost, the spirit of truth, who abides with it forever.

Q. 573. By whom is the Church made and kept One, Holy, and Catholic?

A. The Church is made and kept One, Holy, and Catholic by the Holy Ghost, the spirit of love and holiness, who unites and sanctifies its members throughout the world.

LESSON THIRTEENTH: On the Sacraments in General

Q. 574. What is a Sacrament?

A. A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.

Q. 575. Are these three things, namely: An outward or visible sign, the institution of that sign by Christ, and the giving of grace through the use of that sign, always necessary for the existence of a Sacrament?

A. These three things, namely:

1. An outward or visible sign, the institution of that sign by Christ, and the giving of grace through the use of that sign, are always necessary for the existence of a Sacrament, and if any of the three be wanting there can be no Sacrament.

Q. 576. Why does the Church use numerous ceremonies or actions in applying the outward signs of the Sacraments?

A. The Church uses numerous ceremonies or actions in applying the outward signs of the Sacraments to increase our reverence and devotion for the Sacraments, and to explain their meaning and effects.

Q. 577. How many Sacraments are there?

A. There are seven Sacraments: Baptism, Chrismation (Confirmation), Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction (Holy Anointing), Holy Orders, and Matrimony.

Q. 578. Were all the Sacraments instituted by Our Lord?

A. All the Sacraments were instituted by Our Lord, for God alone has power to attach the gift of grace to the use of an outward or visible sign. The Church, however, can institute the ceremonies to be used in administering or giving the Sacraments.

Q. 579. How do we know there are seven Sacraments and no more or less?

A. We know there are seven Sacraments and no more or less because the Church always taught that truth. The number of the Sacraments is a matter of faith, and the Church cannot be mistaken in matters of faith.

Q. 580. Why have the Sacraments been instituted?

A. The Sacraments have been instituted as a special means through which we are to receive the grace merited for us by Christ. As Christ is the giver of the grace, He has the right to determine the manner in which it shall be given, and one who refuses to make use of the Sacraments will not receive God's grace.

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ICON # 4



ICON # 7



ICON # 11



ICON # 19

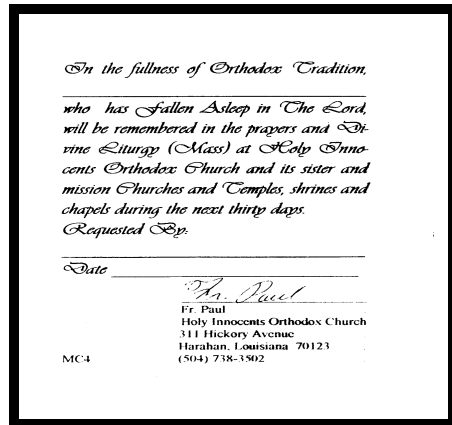


ICON # 26

DIVINE LITURGY CARDS

These 4 1/4" by 5 1/2" (folded) Icon cards feature the above Icons, and open to reveal prayer intentions for the living and for those who have Fallen Asleep in The Lord.

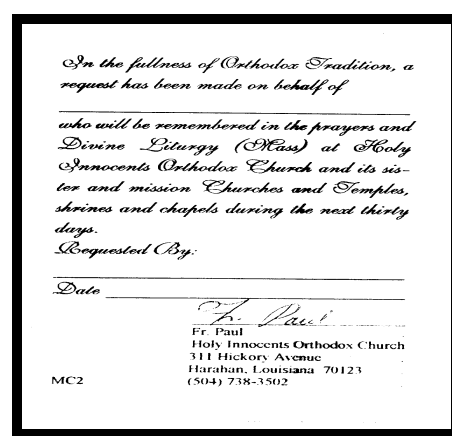
For those who have Fallen Asleep in The Lord, Icon # 19 graces the cover, with the following text (reduced here to fit in this



column) inside:

General Intentions For the Living, for weddings, illnesses, general need, and for the sake of prayer itself, etc., cards, have Icons nos. 4, 7, 11, and 26 are available on the covers. All the Icons are full color printed cards.

The text on the inside of the cards for the living is given above, again reduced here to fit inside the column.



These cards are very beautiful, bamboo or light gray in color, but they are only a product - some-

thing to induce you to make a donation which we use to support the various works we provide, including publication of **REUNION**.

To have a person included in our prayers and at Divine Liturgy, send us a note, or fill out the form in the right column of this page and send it to us. There is no fee for the prayers and Liturgies, that would be Simony.

Like Monasteries which obtain donations for their Icons, or sell Icons

and other items, the donations we receive from these cards are of great use to us. Your help is always appreciated.

+

Dear Basilian Fathers, Please include and remember O

in the Divine Liturgy and Prayers for the (living - dead) at Holy Innocents Orthodox Church and its sister and mission places of worship, on the occasion of _____

If special date enter MM/DD: _____ / _____

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[Please note that prayer requests are also normally posted in HOLY INNOCENTS ORTHODOX CHURCH BBS http://www.reu.org with world wide access] / /



St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and foster-father of Our Lord Jesus Christ,
Feast March 19, July 20, December 25, 26, and the two Sundays before and after Christmas and Theophany

LIFE

Sources. The chief sources of information on the life of St. Joseph are the first chapters of our first and third Gospels; they are practically also the only reliable sources, for, while the apocryphal literature is full of details, the non-admittance of these works into the Canon of the Sacred Books casts a strong suspicion upon their contents; and, even granted that some of the facts recorded by them may be founded on trustworthy traditions, it is in most instances next to impossible to discern and sift these particles of true history from the fancies with which they are associated. Among these apocryphal productions dealing more or less extensively with some episodes of St. Joseph's life may be noted the so-called "Gospel of James", the "Pseudo-

Matthew", the "Gospel of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary", the "Story of Joseph the Carpenter", and the "Life of the Virgin and Death of Joseph".

Genealogy. St. Matthew (1:16) calls St. Joseph the son of Jacob; according to St. Luke (3:23), Heli was his father. This is not the place to recite the many and most various endeavours to solve the vexing questions arising from the divergences between both genealogies; nor is it necessary to point out the explanation which meets best all the requirements of the problem. Contrary to what was once advocated, most modern scholars readily admit that in both documents we possess the genealogy of Joseph, and that it is quite possible to reconcile their data.

Residence. Bethlehem, the city of David and his descendants, appears to have been the birth-place of Joseph. When, however, the Gospel history opens, namely, a few months before the Annunciation, Joseph was settled at Nazareth. Why and when he forsook his home-place to betake himself to Galilee is not ascertained; some suppose -- and the supposition is by no means improbable -- that the then moderate circumstances of the family and the necessity of earning a living may have brought about the change. St. Joseph, indeed, was a *tekton*, as we learn from Matthew 13:55, and Mark 6:3. The word means both mechanic in general and carpenter in particular; St. Justin vouches for the latter sense (Dial. cum Tryph., lxxxviii, in P.G., VI, 688), and tradition has accepted this interpretation, which is followed in the English Bible.

Marriage. It is probably at Nazareth that Joseph betrothed and married her who was to become the Mother of God. When the marriage took place, whether before or after the Incarnation, is no easy matter to settle, and on this point the masters of exegesis have at all times been at variance. Most modern commentators, following the footsteps of St. Thomas, understand that, at the epoch of the Annunciation, the Blessed Virgin was only affianced to Joseph; as St.

Thomas notices, this interpretation suits better all the evangelical data.

The stories concerning St. Joseph's marriage contained in the apocryphal writings state that when forty years of age, Joseph married a woman called Melcha or Escha by some, Salome by others; they lived forty-nine years together and had six children, two daughters and four sons, the youngest of whom was James (the Less, "the Lord's brother"). A year after his wife's death, as the priests announced through Judea that they wished to find in the tribe of Juda a respectable man to espouse Mary, then twelve to fourteen years of age. Joseph, who was at the time ninety years old, went up to Jerusalem among the candidates; a miracle manifested the choice God had made of Joseph, and two years later the Annunciation took place. These dreams, as St. Jerome styles them, from which many a Christian artist has drawn his inspiration (e.g.: Raphael's "Espousals of the Virgin"), are void of authority; they nevertheless acquired in the course of ages some popularity; in them some ecclesiastical writers sought the answer to the wellknown difficulty arising from the mention in the Gospel of "the Lord's brothers"; from them also popular (though not scholastic) credulity has retained the belief that St. Joseph was an old man at the time of marriage with the Mother of God.

The Incarnation. This marriage, true and complete, was, in the intention of the spouses, to be virgin marriage (cf. St. Aug., "De cons. Evang.", II, i in P.L. XXXIV, 1071-72; "Cont. Julian.", V, xii, 45 in P.L. XLIV, 810; St. Thomas, III:28; III:29:2). But soon the faith of Joseph in his spouse was sorely tried: she was with child. However painful the discovery must have been for him, unaware as he was of the mystery of the Incarnation, his delicate feelings forbade him to defame his affianced, and he resolved "to put her away privately; but while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying: Joseph, son of

(Continued ST. JOSEPH on page 22)

(Continued WAR from page 19)

Church, the Church has to be doing something against the gates. He did not say the gates of the Church would prevail against the attacks by Hell, but that the gates of Hell would not prevail against what ever the Church did against the gates of Hell. It is time we attacked, and continue attacking.

It is very disquieting, very upsetting, to contemplate being constantly at war. But that is a reality of this world, in this life. A part of us tells us that when something has been taken care of, it should remain taken care of. We can understand the need for maintenance. Growing food is part of maintenance. So is changing the oil in an internal combustion engine. But matters such as building a house, or winning a war, such matters seem as though they should have a level of permanence about them. When you build a house, you do not expect the walls to begin to fall down, at least not during your life time. You may have to re-glaze a window or two, or replace one which is broken by something or someone, but you do not expect, in the normal course of life, to have to rebuild a house, or build another. And when a battle has been won, it should remain won. When you have defeated the enemy in a war, the enemy should remain defeated.

But, for spiritual war, such is not reality, for the spiritual war for the salvation of your soul is an underlying war which will continue to the instant of the death of your body. If you have won at that time, neither the Devil, nor his allies, nor your more base inclinations, can change that outcome. And you will never have to battle again.

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(Continued WORK OUT from page 1)

With this issue of REUNION, and the immediately prior issue, we have made an open confrontation for the purpose of stimulating your thought process, and hopefully your realization of how desperate is the moral situation the world faces.

Even if it were not now Great Lent, now is the time for each of us to engage in the spiritual exercises which spiritually strengthen us.

Fast if you are able. But if you are elderly or have a medical condition which could be aggravated even a very little or slightly by fasting, do not fast. Practice abstinence, again, if possible, but not if it could or will even slightly aggravate a medical condition. An incapacitated person can be an inspiration to us all, but usually would be more valuable in prayer. And the dead who are in Heaven probably assist us more than we have the capacity to know, but a live person here physically present gives us great assistance by their example.

So, do not endanger your life. But do remember:

Fasting and abstinence are tools for subjection of the material or animalistic; tools by which the spirit and soul of a human may gain mastery over the animal part of that human. The opposite approach is to reward the animal part with something it likes but which is spiritually "OK" - giving the reward when the animal in us has behaved or obeyed the spiritual part. The reward is given because the animal either has not done something bad which it desired to do, or has done something good which it did not wish to or was not inclined to do.

You therefore should consider and practice the various means by which you can weaken your animalistic inclinations, and strengthen your holy spiritual inclinations.

Prayer is a much abused word and concept, and an activity in which few actually engage. The number of times you say "Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me a sinner," or the number of "Hail Mary's" you recite is not as important as your intellectual and emotional focus while saying the words. Your meditation, thoughts, desires, and mental communication with God re-make the recitation into prayer.

Prayer is a multitude of things, but consistent amongst those things is communication with God. That process of communication with God assists in the clarification of your relationship with God, your comprehension of His Awefulness, your respect for Him as well as reinforcing your gratitude to Him. It also assists in clarifying your comprehension of your deficiencies and your strengths, and the means by which you arrest and control your deficiencies while exercising your strengths making them more substantial and useful.

Traditionally, this is the time of the liturgical year in which we engage in these strengthening exercises. They also serve as purification exercises, preparing us for the celebration of Pascha.

The combination of intentions and effects flowing from the same series of exercises is an example of Divine economy. We should be thankful for this, for, when practiced in the proper spirit, we take on the glow of spiritual health without realizing it until we are tested in an unexpected manner. Then we are like the person who has been gradually working out in the gym, and after a while, finds themselves unexpectedly in a situation where strength and agility are urgently required. They react instinctively using the strength and agility their muscles and body have acquired, but which their conscious mind had no realization was actually there.

So, take a spiritual work out.



+ Paul, S.S.B.

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(Continued WAR from page 18)

new morality, but were attempting to protect existing human life and the rights held by that existing life. The "Uncle Walter's" misdirected the public, misrepresented the truth, and won the day for evil.

The result makes the results of withdrawal of financial support for South Vietnam appear to be nothing, and that South Vietnamese situation resulted in the deaths of ten million people.

This shows us that we must accurately assess what the "pundits of sin" proclaim. When someone advocates immorality they must be opposed, they must be fought, they must be attacked and their immoral position attacked - not with guns and bullets, but with the moral forces readily available.

If a news anchor advocates immorality, stop watching that news anchor, and inform those companies which advertise on the news show that you have ceased to watch the show and why. You can then escalate if the anchor does not cease, or is not replaced, by informing the advertisers that since the broadcast of immorality persists, you will no longer purchase their products. Another escalation is to organize a boycott of the station, the network, the advertisers. These people value money and what it can obtain. If you can effectively threaten their source of money they will comply with your requests - and not a single bullet need be fired.

But **YOU** have to **DO** something for there to be an effective, positive result.

If you have not yet realized it, for every material world war example we have presented, there is a spiritual world war parallel or correlation.

Like the terrorist in the current underlying war, the enemy, even though he has declared war upon us, would rather you think the threat is not serious. He would rather you think we are not at war.

But whether or not you like it, we are at war. We have two enemies who never sleep, never cease to attack us, and who work in harmony for our destruction. These enemies are our more base or vulgar selves, and the Devil.

The enemy has infiltrated spies and special forces into our midst. These hidden enemy forces have taken control of or greatly influences our leaders, communications and information systems, lulling much of the population into a feeling of non-concern. The poison has been so gradually introduced into our system that the body has adapted to it, not so-as-to resist it or acclimate to it and function despite it, but so-as-to be dying and to consider that status as normal.

It is normal to experience or perceive one soldier doing his best to protect his fellow combatant; to know that above all else he fears letting his buddy down in the heat of battle. The fifth columnists have been welcomed into the fortress of the True Church, and placed on the General Staff. The foot soldier Priest wonders if the man in the fox hole next to him, or his company of bat-

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talion commander, will turn on him, neglect to cover his flank, or simply turn tail and run. He does not know if supplies are coming, or if his weapons were properly manufactured and will work under battle conditions. He is not secure in his protective armor.

The civilians at home do not know if there is a battle raging. They sense a war, but do not always have true and proper information.

Those who would provide supplies to the spiritual warriors do not always know which warriors are real and

which are merely grabbing anything which floats by.

But if everyone were to consider themselves to be spiritual warriors, and engage in the battle, there would be no need for concern over whether or not the supplies were going to the real front line. Those making the supplies, and transporting them, would also be on the front line fighting, and therefore would know who is a spiritual warrior and who is a war profiteer.

Everyone must know how to fight, at least to some extent, and must engage in the fight, even if the only extent to which they can make engagement is by prayer. Each individual of The Church Militant relies on each other member of the spiritual armed forces. As in the Battle of the Bulge, or at Iwo Jima, the front line spiritual warriors fear most that they will not meet the needs of their companions on the front line, while true members of The Church Militant in every arena will do everything possible to not let anyone down.

This is how it must be in the war against evil.

Some may believe killing or restriction of what are known as civil rights must be employed in this battle. Those who believe such can even be considered, much less be done, have succumbed to the enemy. In all

of our battles, in all of the prosecution of the war against evil, we must never even come close to crossing the bounds of God given, dictated, and required morality. Sin can never be used to oppose sin, immoral means can never be used to oppose immorality.

When Jesus Christ said, "upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," (Mat 16:18) He made it clear that we as members of His Church, of His Body, are to attack the gates of Hell. For if the gates of Hell will not prevail against the

(Continued WAR on page 20)

(Continued WAR from page 17)
 turies. During World War II, the United States agreed to support Ho Chi Minh's desire for Vietnamese independence from France, but reneged on the agreement not out of desire to maintain the Colonial System, but because Ho Chi Minh proved to be a Communist bent on totalitarian rule. When the French were driven out, the South again attempted to obtain independence from the North and from China. The United States viewed the strife between the Northern and Southern portions of Vietnam as an opportunity to slow or stop the spread of Communism, and of anti-American governments and cultures. But the officials of the United States apparently were totally unaware of the historic animosity between North and South. The South also had a very large Roman Catholic, and a small Orthodox Catholic, population. In the Tet Offensive (January 31, 1968) the North Vietnamese expended their military strength against the South Vietnamese and United States military. It was a bold military move, but South Vietnamese forces, with the assistance of U.S. forces, soon destroyed the North Vietnamese forces. The North Vietnamese made contact with the French to initiate peace negotiations, and then, on February 27, 1968, well respected new anchor Walter Cronkite made his famous "no way we can win" speech during his news broadcast. Cronkite was, next to Edward R. Murrow, the most respected television journalist. The popular attitude was, "If 'Uncle Walter' says we can not win, we can not win." Cronkite had announced the murder of President Kennedy to the nation and the world, and had hosted several series about World War II, which he had covered as a reporter. Therefore, despite the fact that North Vietnamese forces had been virtually destroyed, and the North Vietnamese had begun the process of suing for peace, popular public opinion in the United States swung into strong opposition to the war as unwinnable, simply because "Uncle Walter" said so. The North Vietnamese, seeing this, with-

drew their peace proposals. However, South Vietnam proved to be a very difficult military objective as long as it received military funding from the United States. Without the assistance of the large U. S. military presence which once supported it, the South successfully withstood everything the North could throw at it, until the Congress of the United States withdrew military funding to South Vietnam in late 1974, for the 1975, budget. Literally without the ability to buy bullets for their soldier's guns, South Vietnam fell to the North on April 30, 1975. By 1979, the Communist Vietnamese government had directly and through its policies killed ten million people in Vietnam and the surrounding countries. For a country like Cambodia, with a population of only seven million, this was devastating. The policy which lead to American involvement was the

The right of privacy was created as a legal right, and then formed into the right to do what ever a person desired to do, unless it effected another person who had the ability to fight back. And then, the effected person had to fight back and fight back very strongly.

"Domino Theory Principle", which held, simply stated, since Communist China has great influence in its part of the world, the fall of any part of Indochina, Burma, Thailand, the Peninsula, and Indonesia, could easily lead to a domino effect. Were one to fall it could lead to the fall of the next, and so on. This would restrict the trading partners of Japan, Formosa, the Philippines and southward, possibly threatening even Australia and New Zealand. This, in part, is exactly what did happen, with Japan and Formosa eventually regrouping to engage in trade with the Communist countries thereby staving off what could have been very horrible for those places. However, in Indonesia, the Philippines and southward, Islam took advantage of the chaos, and now controls those areas - and those areas are hostile not only to the U.S.A., but to any and all Christian people and areas, as well as to any and all non-Muslims.

This too has a very important spiritual parallel.

Non only has The Domino Theory been proven accurate in the political - government arena, it has proven to be true in the moral arena. Not just in matters of Christianity and the True Church, but in plain, simple, morality.

Again, by way of example, the right of privacy was created as a legal right, and then formed into the right to do what ever a person desired to do, unless it effected another person who had the ability to fight back. And then, the effected person had to fight back and fight back very strongly. But those who could not fight back, and those who did not fight back, were doomed.

Created but yet to be born babies are unable to fight back. They are unable to protect themselves. Indeed, they have the God given right to expect they will be protected, especially by their mothers. They were the first to lose.

Those not directly effected by the immoral activities of others often failed to oppose those immoral activities, until the immoral activities became so firmly entrenched as to become custom, so as to become as entrenched as though a right - just as segregation and racial discrimination, and before it, overt and out right slavery, were entrenched as rights.

When opposition to the entrenchment of immorality and Godlessness began to form, the proponents of immorality began a public relations war. Just as "Uncle Walter" had made his declaration which many took as fact, so too did his students make similar proclamations: that one need not follow direction especially that given by some entity called God, and that one person is not allowed to impose their own sense of morality upon another. But in the mater of yet to be born children, those who advocated protecting the children were not attempting to impose a new law or a

(Continued WAR on page 19)

(Continued WAR from page 1)
 never develop into something more serious. In skirmishes which do not develop further, there usually there are no great differences amongst the potential combatants. The entire nations usually are not mobilized against each other, for there is mutual horror at the prospect of war. Eventually the problems are resolved, especially if the parties are honorable and honest, dealing with themselves and each other with even hand.

There are many spiritual parallels, the most obvious being those occasions where there have been differences of opinion within the Church. Those differences were settled in true Ecumenical Councils, where dogmatic proclamations were made settling the differences of opinion.

But there also have been many, many, local councils, which served to settle internal differences, some of which were procedural, others of which were theological, but none of which were binding on all parts of the Church because they were not True Ecumenical Councils - meaning, not every part of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church was invited to and did participate.

Basically, these are "friendly" skirmishes, even though some involve very heated discussions.

There also are skirmishes which linger for many years, seeming to dissipate, then flaring up, sometimes over one problem, sometimes over another. They may last for centuries, or even millenia. Such are war, whether declared or not, they are war. They are underlying (not ongoing but underlying) war. One side or the other may from time to time seem to be on the point of destruction, and from time to time there may be an appearance of peace, but with time the battles are renewed. Usually one (or more) of the combatants stokes the fires of distrust, dislike, hatred, desire to overpower, to destroy, invoking the

righteousness of their cause and the evil of the their opposition; and the need to expand their own righteousness through combat which will defeat all who stand in their way. But the face of decency and just cause is presented to all so that the enemy and potential neutral parties will be deceived. Though there generally is not complete mobilization of all the participants, at least one party usually is generally mobilized, or able to mobilize the entire population on short notice.

This is the main type of war which has existed since the creation of man. It was initiated by Satan and is focused against God, using humankind as fodder for Sa-

. . . and those charged with dissemination of information are more concerned with destruction of those with whom they disagree on moral matters, than with preservation of freedom.

tan's cannons. It is the war which will continue until the Second Coming, until, as it is popularly called, Judgment Day.

In this war Satan often engages the services of men and women who attempt to prove that humankind does not require assistance from any source to solve its problems. They hold that all human needs and problems can be solved and resolved by humans alone. Very often these people engage in great charitable works. They often solve or resolve the problems of many individuals through their charitable works, such as the provision of free medical care to children suffering certain, difficult to cure, medical conditions. But their main premise is erroneous, for their main premise is Godless.

Satan also engages the services of those who encourage sins of the senses, and sins of the intellect.

But most often he encourages each individual's more base and materialistic inclinations, tendencies, and instincts.

More on this later.

Then there are obvious or overt wars. Wars where if any participant is not fully mobilized, it will be defeated. Full mobilization involves not only the armed forces being on the alert to defend and to attack, but includes the industry of the participants being turned to matters of war. The respective populations are well aware of the war status, and each civilian either is involved in the war effort, has a family member involved in the war effort, or knows someone involved in the war effort.

The forces of evil are fully activated in the spiritual war; but the forces of good are not. The Devil and his allies have always marshalled every force, device, technology, troop - everything possible to constantly attack those who would be good. They have infiltrated evil troops into the armed forces of the good, and

have lead whole armies, navies, and air forces into rebellion, mutiny, and desertion. They have corrupted the command structure of the good armed forces by appealing to the unholy aspirations of many of the joint commanders and many of their subordinates. The evil forces have maintained focus on their battle plan, but the good forces do not always follow the battle plan issued by the Supreme Commander, God. Instead, the good forces, through inflated sense of self importance, deign themselves able to improve on the perfect battle plan issued by God, thus, hopefully unintentionally, making themselves allies of the evil forces.

Obviously, World War II, was overt war, as was The Great War, World War I. The Cold War was a combination of war and skirmishes, with the military fighting being primarily in Korea and Vietnam, with additional skirmishes in Africa and Central and South America; while the other form of fighting was a combination of cultural and financial efforts. The Cold War was an underlying war.

(Continued WAR on page 16)

(Continued WAR from page 15)

The current efforts by what are called terrorists and against terrorism is merely the latest series of battles which have been ongoing since the beginning of time. While the current struggles are seen as being between those who would impose their form of Islam upon all others, and those who resist that imposition, it actually is the age old battle between those who would enslave all except themselves, and those they wish to enslave. But it is not yet an overt war because there is no mobilization by those who are resisting enslavement.

Nor is there any real mobilization by those who are the targets of the Devil's current attacks.

In World War II, which was an overt war, there was no overt war between Germany and France - there were battles but there was no overt war because, unlike in WWI, France did not totally mobilize, and surrendered so quickly. The civilian population did not organize and support the "war effort" (though part of it did organize in "The Resistance" after France surrendered), industry was not fully turned to matters of war, and the military was not fully engaged. There were battles, but no overt war. Similarly, the current terrorist war is not yet an overt war. It is an underlying war. It is a war which those seeking to enslave may well win because there is no general civilian effort against it, no strong unity of political effort against it, and those charged with dissemination of information are more concerned with destruction of those with whom they disagree on moral matters, than with preservation of freedom.

The current situation in the underlying spiritual war is very similar. It too has been ongoing since the creation of man. People of moral outlook are just beginning to realize the numerous skirmishes which have been lost to evil really were not skirmishes, but full fledged battles; and these battles have been lost with their accompanying territory and production facilities.

By way of example, the battles of artificial birth control and abortion have been lost, and the generations born after the loss of these battles generally accept artificial birth control, abortion, and sexual promiscuity as a part and way of life. With the loss of these battles a new life style has gained acceptance, that of people living together as though they were married, but without the benefit of marriage - without the benefit of Sacramental Matrimony. They produce children if they are of different genders, and even if they are of the same gender, they obtain children. In both situations they raise another generation which ignores Sacramental Matrimony or matrimony of any nature, and which ignores the family unit, its permanence, structure, inter-related duties, responsibilities, obligations, privileges and rights, thereby ignoring the social foundation which forms and sustains functionality amongst humans. It denies the supremacy of God and His instructions, that which is Divinely ordered, and in all probability condemns its followers to eternity without God.

The task of fighting the battle to regain that which has been lost because the battle against artificial birth control and abortion was lost, will be a long, tedious, difficult battle. But it is but one of many battles which must be fought.

Education is another battle front where the forces of good are being overwhelmed. They are being overwhelmed because there are insufficient soldiers on the front lines. Parents do not monitor what is being taught in school, with the result that Asian and Oriental pagan religions such as Hindu and Buddhism are being taught not just in public grammar and high schools, but even in Roman Catholic schools. Relationships between two men and relationships between two women, as though they were married, are taught as being correct, proper, and good, without parents being aware this is being taught. Books showing how to engage not just in heterosexual activities, but lesbian sexual activities, and homosexual sexual activities,

and plain old open sodomy, are on the library shelves in all levels of school - not just in colleges. The Bible often is in the reserved section of many grade and high school libraries, but the illustrated books on sexual perversion are in the open stacks, available to every child in many schools.

If the battles to rectify these situations are not fought, then, just as happened in France, there will be only a small army, "The Spiritual Resistance," opposing the enemy. If the United States, Great Britain, and the other Allies, had not supported the French underground, and eventually invaded German held territory, France probably would not be free even today. If the spiritual war is not fought and won by men and women who believe in morality, who will come and supply "The Spiritual Resistance"? Who will attack and invade the territory held by Satan? Who will battle for the souls held by the forces of evil? God will, but no one in their right mind wants to go through the suffering, the pure Hell, which the forces of evil will inflict upon mankind if mankind does not itself reform under the guidance of God. For God handles matters in His own time and in His own way, but He assist mankind to quickly do good if mankind applies itself in a unified holy front.

We can not wait for the Church to lead this battle, for the human administration of the Church has been infiltrated by the Devil's fifth columnists. It can be cleansed, but first those decent administrators who desire the Church regain her moral position must gird their loins, accept the moral fortitude God has supplied to all of His Saints, and be willing to risk all their material positions, wealth, and the respect of their associates. They must acknowledge past mistakes so the mistakes can be rectified, rectify those mistakes even if this involves cleansing the ranks of those with Sacerdotal and Pontifical orders, and hold fast to what Christ Jesus has instructed. But within the Church, even though there is moral, theological, and

(Continued WAR on page 17)

not reunify His Church He will come and reunify it Himself. Are we children, that we must always fight and be in discord,

(Continued WAR from page 16)

dogmatic corruption, there remains *The Church Militant*. It is The Church Militant which, under the Generalship of Jesus Christ, will force the cleansing of the Church and in that cleansing there will be reunification of the Church as it was in the days of the Early Church Fathers.

In war the individual combatants, the soldiers, sailors, airmen, mutually support one another. The greatest fear of each is that he or she will fail in taking care of his or her brethren. The soldier in the fox hole does not turn and run despite his great fear, because his buddy in the fox hole next to him will be harmed. The pilot of a stricken airplane does not bail out because he has crew who must be given the opportunity to escape. The sailor in the engine room does not abandon his post despite his great fear, for his shipmates rely on him to man his post so their ship can both perform its task and survive. Each performs not just his or her duty, but fights, literally fights, for the welfare and survival of his and her mates, *because that is what they do*.

The Soldiers of Christ must likewise give each other full mutual support.

But each individual soldier must also being his different components into control of his spirit, of his soul. He and she must be able to rely on his and her body not to betray his or her soul in time of battle.

The individual members of the armed forces do not just step into their roles and positions. They train. Each goes through basic training, and, after assignment to a position, train in and for that position. Even after they have become expert, they continue to train for that position, and to cross train.

So too must the Soldiers of Christ. Each must receive basic training, a good, firm, basic education in The Way taught by Christ, in basic dogma, and the basic reasons behind The Way and the basic dogma. And they must cross train.

Women can not become priests, but they can become mothers, and even become a Matuska if their husband becomes a Priest. And every man who has the calling can answer the calling and become a Priest - and in the Orthodox Church as well as the Byzantine Rites associated with Rome, men often can continue to exercise their lay professions and secular roles while serving as Priests.

Discipline is second nature to the military, as it must be in God's military. Weapons are always maintained, whether on the parade ground or in the most adverse environment, for without proper maintenance the weapons are useless. So too must each of God's warriors maintain his weapons. His prime weapon is prayer, and his basic maintenance kit is also prayer.

When the country's very existence is threatened, the home civilian population, those unable to serve in the armed forces because of age or infirmity, form a home guard, as did the British in World War II. In that same war there was no real "home guard" in the United States of America because there was no real threat to the very existence of the U.S.A.

For a very long time Western civilization has experienced stability wherein Christianity has not "felt" threatened, while the area of the former Byzantine Empire has maintained Christianity under an uneasy truce with other religions. Under its Christian foundation, Western civilization has flourished, to the extent it no longer deems the rigors of Christianity to be necessary. But Christians of the former Byzantine Empire are very aware of the fragile nature of basic decency, and the ability to worship.

The West, in its comfort, has allowed the rigors of Christianity to be loosened, with the result society has not just begun to abandon Christianity, but in many countries no longer even presents the appearance of being Christian. Once Most Christian France, as an example,

has declared itself to officially be a nation without consideration of religion. The United States has a pre occupation with being politically correct or incorrect, smothering the objections of its moral home guard. And even Most Catholic Ireland now allows children to be killed at the whim of their mother. But they East is fully aware of what happens when morality is betrayed - as was Constantinople when it fell. And it is fully aware of the great evil which is inflicted upon the persons of true Christians, as shown by the very recent demolition of the Armenian Orthodox Church and mass murder of the Armenian people by Islamic Turkey - the Ottoman Empire - about one hundred years ago.

This is not dredging up old history. This is learning from recent history. What should be learned is, the forces of evil will not just morally corrupt, but will also physically kill and destroy so that the empire of evil can rule without the likelihood the forces of good will be able to regroup and reinforce.

In the underlying war of terrorism today, there is no perception of real threat by most of the population of the U.S.A., for the U.S.A. has not had to face the threat of annihilation since the War of 1812.

That lack of perception of real threat extends to the real war, the underlying war which has existed since the creation of man.

The lack of perception of real threat is a very dangerous attitude for it may lead those in opposition to those fighting the war, to use the war as leverage to oppose those who are fighting the war. This often leads to severe harm to others, and weakening of the opposition to the true enemy. By way of example, Vietnam: Few, even few historians, realize the people in the Southern part of what today is Vietnam, have fought for freedom from China, Cambodia, and North Vietnam, since the five and six hundreds, the sixth and seventh cen-

(Continued WAR on page 18)

requiring constant parental supervision if we are to Live?