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REUNION

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



Volume 20 No. 1 OF THE CHURCH OF MAN WITH GOD March, 2010 A.D.

~ GOAL AND PURPOSE OF SPIRITUAL LIFE Is it to “get to heaven”?
Not so subtle subtleties of Heaven and of Love ~

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

Those who realistically contemplate spiritual life often express their ultimate goal as being that of getting to Heaven, or of being united with God for all eternity.

A more accurate or better expression of the concept behind desiring to go to Heaven is that one’s goal is to love God.

It is important to realize this because Heaven is not simply a place and state of existence. It is total immersion in God, complete harmony with God, absolute concert with God - with the real God, not some figment of a person’s imagination or wishful thinking or imagining.

If one is not so concerned with themselves as to interfere with loving someone else, then love of God actually is very easy and simple to attain. It is consistently maintaining that love and maintaining it at a level or strength sufficient to be meaningful which may be difficult.

But first, one must not confuse love with attraction or infatuation. When our senses perceive someone whose physical attributes are pleasing that is attraction but it is not love.

Love requires knowledge of the individual - not necessarily knowledge by each individual of the other, but knowledge by at least one of the individuals of the other or others. Also, the desire to be loved is able to induce love in another. And, love by one
(Continued HEAVEN - LOVE on page 7)



BRIEF EXAMINATION OF THE HISTORY OF ERRORS REGARDING THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST and some effects of those errors

Through the centuries Christians have often wondered exactly what is Jesus Christ; what does it mean to be The Word of God made Incarnate, or more succinctly and accurately, the Word Incarnate; what or how is the Person Who is God the Son of God and the Son of Man? Succinctly: what is the relationship of, or, what are the workings of, the combination of the Divine Nature and the human nature in Jesus Christ?

(Continued TWO NATURES on page 7)

TWENTY YEARS

As we begin our twentieth year of publication we are amazed that it actually is twenty years since we first began publication. It does not seem that twenty years have passed. It also amazes us that we continue in publication even though it has been twenty years. Our “longevity” is surprising to us. But, then, our subject is inexhaustible. — *Ed.*

A Brief Examination Of: THE TRUE MEANING OF DEIFICATION IN THIS LIFE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE RESURRECTION AND THE SACRAMENTS. And an inducement to acquisition of holiness.

There are several very important matters of which we should be aware especially as we prepare for Great Lent, Holy Week, and Pascha.

Simply by becoming human, fully and completely human, while remaining totally and completely Divine, our Lord Jesus Christ at the very least, initiated a change or at the very least a potential for change in human nature.

The Resurrection of Christ, perhaps in and of itself or perhaps as a result of the Resurrection itself or perhaps by the very nature of the Resurrection, had a decisive - and this particular word decisive -
(Continued DEIFICATION on page 12)

APPLIED DOGMA EFFECTS Attempting to shirk responsibility

The parable of the seeds which fell on rocky ground, good ground, sprouted and withered, was choked, and which bore fruit, is applicable to a myriad of situations, especially as a measure of what results when facts and reality are corrupted and when facts and reality are presented truthfully.

The presentation of error and straightforward lies as dogma, and the presentation of an interpreted, slanted, or otherwise inaccurate version of Sacred Scripture, will lead those who

(Continued EFFECTS on page 8)

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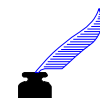
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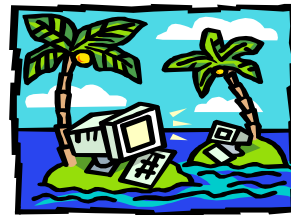
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(The Editors reserve the right to reject any submissions, and to edit as necessary. Letters must be typed, single space, signed, and include the sender's name address, and day and evening telephone numbers - If your typed letter is accompanied by an ASCII DOS Text copy on a floppy, we will thank you with extra prayers - Ed.)

WORLD WIDE WEB:

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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
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Each ML (Mailing List) 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 or SysOp 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

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living a moral life, but that one may learn and therefore know more about God and live in a manner more attuned to God. That is the purpose of most of the articles on page 1 of this issue of REUNION.
* INTERNET WEB SITE AND FACILITIES MAY GO DOWN TEMPORARILY pages 4 - 5

MIRACLES LEAD TO WHAT IS OF REAL IMPORTANCE If the things which happened around Jesus, which were caused by Jesus, which we term miracles because there is no scientific basis for their having occurred and numerous scientific factors which state the events are impossible to have happened, yet they did - if these things happened relative to one individual today, thoughtful people and the not so thoughtful alike would believe all of it to be fake even if it happened to them. page 6

CHILDREN'S PAGE pages 10-11
The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism, Color the Resurrection

PRODUCTS REQUEST FORM pages 13-14

CHRIST DID NOT HAVE AN ADVANTAGE OVER US For Christ's fasting, prayer, and resistance to temptation to have true meaning for us we must understand that The Word made flesh truly is an unique entity. We must at least understand and, as best is possible, comprehend the true separation of the two natures, Divine and human, in the Person of the Word Incarnate. page 15

METHODS OR MEANS OF ACQUISITION OR ACQUIRING, OF VALUATION OR ESTABLISHING VALUE - And of ENTITLEMENTS and that which it is impossible to earn yet which can only be earned if it is to be acquired - ~ Merit ~ Some "things" have intrinsic value, some are valued or have value given to them, and some are both of innate value and deemed to be valuable; while often that which has in-

trinsic value is not valued, and that which is valued actually is without value. . . There is one "thing" which often is viewed as a combination of at least two "things", which one is both unable to earn, yet which one must earn; something which only one human has ever earned. That "thing" is eternal life. page 16

FROM THE BOOK OF DAN Dan. 3:47-51 page 17

WHY ARE THE WEEDS TAKING OVER THE FIELDS? The wheat which is planted, harvested, and processed today, and which has been used for the past several thousand years, is the same as the grain which originally grew in the wilds before cultivation - but then again, it is not the same as that which grew and still grows in the wilds. page 18

Psalm 90:1-7, 11-16 page 18

HOW CAN WE EXPRESS OUR FAITH AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE? Very few of us are or will be remarkable. So, how can an ordinary person be extraordinary? When the seed of Faith falls upon what ever good ground there is in one of us, it takes root and grows, sending its roots into all of our being and changing those portions of us that are not spiritually fertile into that which is spiritually fertile. This happens unless we pull the word of God out by the roots, or fail to water it with the heavenly dew of Grace. page 19

THE PRECIOUSNESS OF FAITH The crux of Christianity, its foundation, its sole validity, is in the Divinity of Jesus Christ, God. If one does not comprehend as humans are capable of comprehending the awesomeness of God and in comparison the insignificance of humanity, the honor which God hath bestowed upon humanity page 20

DIVINELY PROVIDED WORLDLY DELIGHTS There are those who would take God out of life by abusing all of the delights God has provided for us in this life, through inappropriate or excessive participation in those delights. And there are those who would

take God out of life by denying access to or forbidding participation in those delights. page 21

Ezech 18:1-9 page 21

EXORCISM OF THE POSSESSED (Continued) page 22

IT IS ALWAYS GOOD TO REMEMBER EZECHIEL Ez. 18:20-28 page 25

ENCHIRIDION ON FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE by Saint Augustine page 26

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(Continued ENCHIRIDION from page 29)
verse of Maro's gives us pleasure,

"Happy is he who can understand the causes of things,"[28]

it still does not follow that our felicity depends upon our knowing the causes of the great physical processes in the world, which are hidden in the secret maze of nature,

"Whence earthquakes, whose force swells the sea to flood, so that they burst their bounds and then subside again,"[29] and other such things as this.

But we ought to know the causes of good and evil in things, at least as far as men may do so in this life, filled as it is with errors and distress, in order to avoid these errors and distresses. We must always aim at that true felicity wherein misery does not distract, nor error mislead. If it is a good thing to understand the causes of physical motion, there is nothing of greater concern in these matters which we ought to understand than our own health. But when we are in ignorance of such things, we seek out a physician, who has seen how the secrets of heaven and earth still remain hidden from us, and what patience there must be in unknowing.

17. Although we should beware of error wherever possible, not only in great matters but in small ones as well, it is impossible not to be ignorant of many things. Yet it does not follow that one falls into error out of ignorance alone. If someone thinks he knows what he does not know, if he approves as true what is actually false, this then is error, in the proper sense of the term. Obviously, much depends on the question involved in the error, for in one and the same question one naturally prefers the instructed to the ignorant, the expert to the blunderer, and this with good reason. In a complex issue, however, as when one man knows one thing and another man knows something else, if the former knowledge is more useful and

the latter is less useful or even harmful, who in this latter case would not prefer ignorance? There are some things, after all, that it is better not to know than to know. Likewise, there is sometimes profit in error -- but on a journey, not in morals.[30] This sort of thing happened to us once, when we mistook the way at a crossroads and did not go by the place where an armed gang of Donatists lay in wait to ambush us. We finally arrived at the place where we were going, but only by a roundabout way, and upon learning of the ambush, we were glad to have erred and gave thanks to God for our error. Who would doubt, in such a situation, that the erring traveler is better off than the unerring brigand? This perhaps explains the meaning of our finest poet, when he speaks for an unhappy lover:

"When I saw [her] I was undone, and fatal error swept me away,"[31]

for there is such a thing as a fortunate mistake which not only does no harm but actually does some good.

But now for a more careful consideration of the truth in this business. To err means nothing more than to judge as true what is in fact false, and as false what is true. It means to be certain about the uncertain, uncertain about the certain, whether it be certainly true or certainly false. This sort of error in the mind is deforming and improper, since the fitting and proper thing would be to be able to say, in speech or judgment: "Yes, yes. No, no."[32] Actually, the wretched lives we lead come partly from this: that sometimes if they are not to be entirely lost, error is unavoidable. It is different in that higher life where Truth itself is the life of our souls, where none deceives and none is deceived. In this life men deceive and are deceived, and are actually worse off when they deceive by lying than when they are deceived by believing lies. Yet our rational mind shrinks from falsehood, and naturally avoids error as much as it can, so that even a deceiver is unwilling to be deceived by somebody else.[33] For the liar thinks he does not deceive himself

and that he deceives only those who believe him. Indeed, he does not err in his lying, if he himself knows what the truth is. But he is deceived in this, that he supposes that his lie does no harm to himself, when actually every sin harms the one who commits it more that it does the one who suffers it.

[28] Virgil, Georgios, II, 490.

[29] Ibid., 479.

[30] Sed in via pedum, non in via morum.

[31] Virgil, Eclogue, VIII, 42. The context of the passage is Damon's complaint over his faithless Nyssa; he is here remembering the first time he ever saw her -- when he was twelve! Cf. Theocritus, II, 82.

[32] Cf. Matt. 5:37.

[33] Cf. Confessions, Bk. X, Ch. XXIII.

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(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, in Adobe (PDF) format. In some instances this is better than the paper print issue because the pictures often are in color. The ML does support discussion, and discussion is encouraged. It is mainly used by those who desire to receive the Newsletter but do not have access to the WWW (each issue is available on-line), and those to whom we can not send a free print copy.

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Most of the mailing lists then send out a welcome message.

Some of the mailing lists use the mailing list name as the sender's address. Some use the sender's name, and others use Fr. Paul, or father.paul@reu.org on behalf of whoever the one who originated the message. We will bring some consistency to this sometime in the future, probably.

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THE BASILIAN FATHERS

(The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil)

THE PRIME "ACTIVITY" IN WHICH CLERGY AND RELIGIOUS MUST ENGAGE IF THEY ARE TO FULFILL THEIR DUTY AS CLERGY AND RELIGIOUS

The prime activity in which clergy of all ranks and religious of any gender and any type of organization must engage is the attainment of eternal life, the salvation of their own souls and those of others. *This should be their prime focus.*

Social justice - which has become corrupt in meaning so that it now includes official approval of every sin imaginable, fair wages, saving the environment, living green and green energy, supporting the poor and impoverished, assisting the victims of natural and man made disasters, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, burying the dead, riding herd on elected officials, catching and imprisoning criminals, setting the innocent free, and anything else of which one can think, whether "wacko" or in accordance with God's instructions, can not be the prime focus of a member of the clergy or of a religious. If any of these are the prime focus, then that individual is not fulfilling their prime duty to God.

Incidentally, this also holds true for the laity as well.

This does not mean clergy and religious either should or must ignore these other matters. Indeed, attending to these other matters often is an integral aspect or part of following God's instructions as one advances to attainment of eternal life.

While it does a person absolutely no good if they die with a full stomach, a decent roof over their head, reasonably clothed, and without want, if at the same time they have not attained eternal

life. If through your efforts someone attains eternal life, and does so with a viable, moral source of income which provides a reasonable standard of living, then your efforts have been well applied.

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LITURGICAL CALENDAR and CELEBRATES for year 2010 A. D.

We have been grossly delayed in sending out the Liturgical Calendars for the year 2010 A.D., as well as the Celebrates for this year.

The delays were caused by our moving. Various pieces of equipment and material were boxed, some in the old location and some in the new location. Sorting "stuff" out and setting up equipment was time consuming, more so because the unusually cold weather made it difficult to load and transport material from one location to the other.

Everyone should have received the Liturgical Calendars by now. If you have not, please contact Archbishop Paul.

The Celebrates also have been issued and should be in your hands by the time you receive this issue of REUNION.

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INTENTIONS AND PRAYERS IN THE GREGORIAN DIVINE LITURGY

Many of the persons, things, and situations for whom or which the Priest prays in Gregorian Divine Liturgy are the subject of generic prayers focused

on general or specific needs or situations. The individual(s) or that which is the subject of the prayers are named or otherwise mentioned in the Collects and Secret Prayers which are added to those of the particular feast or day of the liturgical calendar. The Epistle and Gospel of the feast or day of the liturgical calendar are used, and the "unchanging" part of the Divine Liturgy, which composes the remainder of the Liturgy, is prayed.

Thus, if the Divine Liturgy is being prayed and offered primarily for someone to assist with their life in general, the additional Collects and Secret may be that for Friends and Those Dear to Us. To the regular Collects and Secret would be added:

FOR FRIENDS AND THOSE DEAR TO US

COLLECT (PRAYER)

O God, Who by the grace of the Holy Spirit hast poured the gifts of charity into the hearts of Thy faithful, grant unto Thy servants and handmaids, for whom we implore Thy clemency, health of soul and body, that they may love Thee with all their might and with their whole love may execute what things are pleasing to Thee. (V.) Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, throughout all ages of ages. (R.) Amen.

THE SECRET (PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS)

Have mercy, we beseech Thee, O Lord, upon Thy servants and handmaids, for whom we offer to Thy majesty this sacrifice of praise, that through these holy things they may obtain the grace of supernatural benediction and acquire the glory of everlasting beatitude. (V.) Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the

(Continued SSB on page 5)

(Continued ENCHIRIDION from page 28)

which it cannot be further deprived. If, however, the corruption comes to be total and entire, there is no good left either, because it is no longer an entity at all. Wherefore corruption cannot consume the good without also consuming the thing itself. Every actual entity [natura] is therefore good; a greater good if it cannot be corrupted, a lesser good if it can be. Yet only the foolish and unknowing can deny that it is still good even when corrupted. Whenever a thing is consumed by corruption, not even the corruption remains, for it is nothing in itself, having no subsistent being in which to exist.

13. From this it follows that there is nothing to be called evil if there is nothing good. A good that wholly lacks an evil aspect is entirely good. Where there is some evil in a thing, its good is defective or defectible. Thus there can be no evil where there is no good. This leads us to a surprising conclusion: that, since every being, in so far as it is a being, is good, if we then say that a defective thing is bad, it would seem to mean that we are saying that what is evil is good, that only what is good is ever evil and that there is no evil apart from something good. This is because every actual entity is good [omnis natura bonum est]. Nothing evil exists _in itself_, but only as an evil aspect of some actual entity. Therefore, there can be nothing evil except something good. Absurd as this sounds, nevertheless the logical connections of the argument compel us to it as inevitable. At the same time, we must take warning lest we incur the prophetic judgment which reads: "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil: who call darkness light and light darkness; who call the bitter sweet and the sweet bitter." [23] Moreover the Lord himself saith: "An evil man brings forth evil out of the evil treasure of his heart." [24] What, then, is an evil man but an evil entity [natura mala], since man is an entity? Now, if a man is something good because he is an entity, what, then, is a bad man except an evil good? When, however, we distinguish between these two concepts,

we find that the bad man is not bad because he is a man, nor is he good because he is wicked. Rather, he is a good entity in so far as he is a man, evil in so far as he is wicked. Therefore, if anyone says that simply to be a man is evil, or that to be a wicked man is good, he rightly falls under the prophetic judgment: "Woe to him who calls evil good and good evil." For this amounts to finding fault with God's work, because man is an entity of God's creation. It also means that we are praising the defects in this particular man _because_ he is a wicked person. Thus, every entity, even if it is a defective one, in so far as it is an entity, is good. In so far as it is defective, it is evil.

14. Actually, then, in these two contraries we call evil and good, the rule of the logicians fails to apply. [25] No weather is both dark and bright at the same time; no food or drink is both sweet and sour at the same time; no body is, at the same time and place, both white and black, nor deformed and well-formed at the same time. This principle is found to apply in almost all disjunctions: two contraries cannot coexist in a single thing. Nevertheless, while no one maintains that good and evil are not contraries, they can not only coexist, but the evil cannot exist at all without the good, or in a thing that is not a good. On the other hand, the good can exist without evil. For a man or an angel could exist and yet not be wicked, whereas there cannot be wickedness except in a man or an angel. It is good to be a man, good to be an angel; but evil to be wicked. These two contraries are thus coexistent, so that if there were no good in what is evil, then the evil simply could not be, since it can have no mode in which to exist, nor any source from which corruption springs, unless it be something corruptible. Unless this something is good, it cannot be corrupted, because corruption is nothing more than the deprivation of the good. Evils, therefore, have their source in the good, and unless they are parasitic on something good, they are not anything at all. There is no other source whence an evil thing can come to be. If this is

the case, then, in so far as a thing is an entity, it is unquestionably good. If it is an incorruptible entity, it is a great good. But even if it is a corruptible entity, it still has no mode of existence except as an aspect of something that is good. Only by corrupting something good can corruption inflict injury.

15. But when we say that evil has its source in the good, do not suppose that this denies our Lord's judgment: "A good tree cannot bear evil fruit." [26] This cannot be, even as the Truth himself declareth: "Men do not gather grapes from thorns," since thorns cannot bear grapes. Nevertheless, from good soil we can see both vines and thorns spring up. Likewise, just as a bad tree does not grow good fruit, so also an evil will does not produce good deeds. From a human nature, which is good in itself, there can spring forth either a good or an evil will. There was no other place from whence evil could have arisen in the first place except from the nature -- good in itself -- of an angel or a man. This is what our Lord himself most clearly shows in the passage about the trees and the fruits, for he said: "Make the tree good and the fruits will be good, or make the tree bad and its fruits will be bad." [27] This is warning enough that bad fruit cannot grow on a good tree nor good fruit on a bad one. Yet from that same earth to which he was referring, both sorts of trees can grow.

[23] Isa. 5:20.

[24] Matt. 12:35.

[25] This refers to Aristotle's well-known principle of "the excluded middle."

[26] Matt. 7:18.

[27] Cf. Matt. 12:33.

CHAPTER V

The Kinds and Degrees of Error

16. This being the case, when that
(Continued ENCHIRIDION on page 30)

(Continued ENCHIRIDION from page 27)
Augustine's for the Bible.
[18] Rom. 8:24, 25 (Old Latin).
[19] James 2:19.

CHAPTER III

God the Creator of All; and the Goodness of All Creation

9. Wherefore, when it is asked what we ought to believe in matters of religion, the answer is not to be sought in the exploration of the nature of things [rerum natura], after the manner of those whom the Greeks called "physicists." [20] Nor should we be dismayed if Christians are ignorant about the properties and the number of the basic elements of nature, or about the motion, order, and deviations of the stars, the map of the heavens, the kinds and nature of animals, plants, stones, springs, rivers, and mountains; about the divisions of space and time, about the signs of impending storms, and the myriad other things which these "physicists" have come to understand, or think they have. For even these men, gifted with such superior insight, with their ardor in study and their abundant leisure, exploring some of these matters by human conjecture and others through historical inquiry, have not yet learned everything there is to know. For that matter, many of the things they are so proud to have discovered are more often matters of opinion than of verified knowledge.

For the Christian, it is enough to believe that the cause of all created things, whether in heaven or on earth, whether visible or invisible, is nothing other than the goodness of the Creator, who is the one and the true God. [21] Further, the Christian believes that nothing exists save God himself and what comes from him; and he believes that God is triune, i.e., the Father, and the Son begotten of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the same Father, but one and the same Spirit of the Father and the Son.

10. By this Trinity, supremely and equally and immutably good, were all things created. But they were not created supremely, equally, nor immutably good. Still, each single created thing is good, and taken as a whole they are very good, because together they constitute a universe of admirable beauty.

11. In this universe, even what is called evil, when it is rightly ordered and kept in its place, commends the good more eminently, since good things yield greater pleasure and praise when compared to the bad things. For the Omnipotent God, whom even the heathen acknowledge as the Supreme Power over all, would not allow any evil in his works, unless in his omnipotence and goodness, as the Supreme Good, he is able to bring forth good out of evil. What, after all, is anything we call evil except the privation of good? In animal bodies, for instance, sickness and wounds are nothing but the privation of health. When a cure is effected, the evils which were present (i.e., the sickness and the wounds) do not retreat and go elsewhere. Rather, they simply do not exist any more. For such evil is not a substance; the wound or the disease is a defect of the bodily substance which, as a substance, is good. Evil, then, is an accident, i.e., a privation of that good which is called health. Thus, whatever defects there are in a soul are privations of a natural good. When a cure takes place, they are not transferred elsewhere but, since they are no longer present in the state of health, they no longer exist at all. [22]

[20] One of the standard titles of early Greek philosophical treatises would translate into Latin as De rerum natura. This is, in fact, the title of Lucretius' famous poem, the greatest philosophical work written in classical Latin.

[21] This basic motif appears everywhere in Augustine's thought as the very foundation of his whole system.

[22] This section (Chs. III and IV) is the most explicit statement of a major motif which pervades the whole of August-

inian metaphysics. We see it in his earliest writings, Soliloquies, 1, 2, and De ordine, II, 7. It is obviously a part of the Neoplatonic heritage which Augustine appropriated for his Christian philosophy. The good is positive, constructive, essential; evil is privative, destructive, parasitic on the good. It has its origin, not in nature, but in the will. Cf. Confessions, Bk. VII, Chs. III, V, XII-XVI; On Contenance, 14-16; On the Gospel of John, Tractate XCVIII, 7; City of God, XI, 17; XII, 7-9.

CHAPTER IV

The Problem of Evil

12. All of nature, therefore, is good, since the Creator of all nature is supremely good. But nature is not supremely and immutably good as is the Creator of it. Thus the good in created things can be diminished and augmented. For good to be diminished is evil; still, however much it is diminished, something must remain of its original nature as long as it exists at all. For no matter what kind or however insignificant a thing may be, the good which is its "nature" cannot be destroyed without the thing itself being destroyed. There is good reason, therefore, to praise an uncorrupted thing, and if it were indeed an incorruptible thing which could not be destroyed, it would doubtless be all the more worthy of praise. When, however, a thing is corrupted, its corruption is an evil because it is, by just so much, a privation of the good. Where there is no privation of the good, there is no evil. Where there is evil, there is a corresponding diminution of the good. As long, then, as a thing is being corrupted, there is good in it of which it is being deprived; and in this process, if something of its being remains that cannot be further corrupted, this will then be an incorruptible entity [natura incorruptibilis], and to this great good it will have come through the process of corruption. But even if the corruption is not arrested, it still does not cease having some good of

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unity of the Holy Spirit, God, throughout all ages of ages. (R.) Amen.

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT (PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION)

Partaking of the divine mysteries, O Lord, we beseech Thee that this saving sacrament may benefit, unto prosperity and peace, those for whose love we have offered it to Thy majesty. (V.) Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, throughout all ages of ages. (R.) Amen.

The word servants or handmaids would be changed to singular, the one of inappropriate gender omitted, and the name of the individual stated after servant or handmaid.

This would be in addition to mentioning the individual in The Commemoration of the Living in the unchanging part of the Gregorian Divine Liturgy.

This works very well in most situations.

But it falls short of maximum prayer and focus in the instance of illness, especially illness where death is likely, and for those who have died.

While such individuals are mentioned in The Commemoration of the Living, and The Commemoration of the Dead, as appropriate, for those who are ill the focus of the prayers and readings are such that while the Collects and Prayers may be added to the regular day's liturgy, it is better, if the feast or liturgical season allows, that the prayers and readings be entirely from the liturgy for those who are ill. For those who are near death these prayers and readings are even more focused and therefore even of more meaning and focused intent, making it even more desirable that they be prayed in their entirety.

For those who have died, again, the Collects and Secret may be added to the regu-

lar day's liturgy. But in such situations the Requiem is even more focused, with the entire Gregorian Requiem Divine Liturgy being designed to assist those who are most in need and most unable to assist themselves.

Therefore, whenever possible, even on the anniversary of death or when death has occurred quite some time in the past, because of the design of the prayers and readings in the Gregorian Requiem Divine Liturgy, it should be prayed for the dead in its entirety - instead of that of the feast or day of the liturgical season.

TEACHING DOGMA AND THEOLOGY

Not just as instructions on living a moral life, but that one may learn and therefore know more about God and live in a manner more attuned to God.

That is the purpose of most of the articles on page 1 of this issue of REUNION.

If these articles are well received we will continue to provide similar articles, on a variety of topics or aspects of what God has revealed about Himself to us.

These articles are designed to be readily understood by those with little or no formal theological training.

That this is necessary has become readily apparent from casual conversations with members of the general public, and from overhearing people discuss their beliefs regarding God.

Apparently, the viability of current religious education, even at schools operated by the multitude of valid jurisdictions of the true Church, is deplorable. At best, at the end of a course, it leaves the students just as ignorant regarding religious matters as at the beginning of the course. But

it is not unusual for the students to be filled with erroneous concepts at the end of a course of studies.

These articles, and those which we hope to publish in future issues, are designed to teach dogma and theology in a straight forward manner. Hopefully they will in some manner offset or even overcome some of the deficiencies common or prevalent in current religious education.

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INTERNET WEB SITE AND FACILITIES MAY GO DOWN TEMPORARILY

At present the computers which operate our InterNet WEB site and InterNet communications and files, remain at our old location. We intend to move them to our new location within the next few weeks.

When this is done, there may be anywhere from a few hours to a few days during which we will experience an interruption in service. If this occurs, it probably will be because we set up the system between ten and fifteen years ago (actually, one portion of the system was set up around 1993) and may forget to change some important setting. If this happens, it may require a few hours or even days of study and experimentation to put everything back in order.

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MIRACLES LEAD TO WHAT IS OF REAL IMPORTANCE

If the things which happened around Jesus, which were caused by Jesus, which we term miracles because there is no scientific basis for their having occurred and numerous scientific factors which state the events are impossible to have happened, yet they did - if these things happened relative to one individual today, thoughtful people and the not so thoughtful alike would believe all of it to be fake even if it happened to them.

Even if a person had a leg cut off ten years before and were cured so that a new leg, sound and whole, were there, most people would believe it to be a fraud. Even those who knew the person cured very well, and perhaps even the person who was cured, would believe some form of trickery was involved.

The Pagans of old and of today believe anything is possible if you get in good with a god, or if you know the magic words and gestures. They are very similar to some of today's popular "religions". Everyone knew someone who had a cousin who had a sister-in-law whose husband's relative obtained something through magic or the gods. But no one had first hand experience of that or had been there when it happened.

Israelite religious leaders were split on the possibility of miracles, and on the reality of life after death.

But the Apostles and Disciples of Christ witnessed and personally experienced numerous miracles made by Jesus during a three year period. And Jesus did not have any magic props - His followers would have been aware of any baggage He had with Him and He had none. They would have been aware of any accomplices He would have needed to have if what He did was fake. And if Jesus was a fake, they had nothing to gain by preaching His Gospel, for the only worldly thing they each obtained from preaching The Way was pain and suffering.

When you think about the Transfiguration, do not contemplate it as an interesting in-

terlude. Understand it to be reality. Understand that it really happened just as it was related, and that it is of great significance.

God Jesus Christ was really there manifesting a transfigured human nature - perhaps not glorified for His Passion, Death, and Resurrection had not yet happened in our time. But He definitely was not exhibiting a regular human nature. And suddenly Moses and Elias were talking with Him. That would have been sufficient to shock anyone, but apparently by this time Saints Peter, James, and John had become somewhat accustomed to, shall we say, ordinary miracles around Jesus. Then the miracle scared the Apostles almost to death for God the Father manifested Himself in voice and God the Holy Spirit manifested Himself as an overshadowing bright cloud.

All of this miracle and all of the miracles which Our Lord wrought were written for us to read by the people who participated in them.

An historian who writes contemporary history, the history of his own time, is believed. Journalists, if there are any remaining, are believed. The historian and the journalist make money, earn material benefit, from their work.

But the Apostles, Disciples, and Church Fathers earned no material benefit from telling the world what Jesus Christ God told them to tell the world. They derived no material benefit from following The Way taught by Jesus, by God. They actually suffered material harm because of their obeying God and living and attempting to think in accordance with God's will.

They only benefit they could anticipate was not even eternal happiness. Rather, the only benefit they could anticipate was pleasing God; and that benefit was sufficient.

They knew if they pleased God, God would take care of everything else which could be of any permanent importance to them.

The very same is true for us today.

And if you think very carefully about your own life, you will realize it has been filled with miracles - unless you ascribe the good things which you have experienced to luck or coincidence.

If you do believe in luck or in coincidence, then you are really a Pagan or a "Modernists" and believe in magic. For those people, here is a magic phrase: Abra Cadabra, Shimminy Bobity Pfftit. Say it with your left thumb inserted in your right nostril, your right little finger in your navel, standing on your left foot, and your ridiculous appearance will match your level of intelligence.

If, however, you are intelligent and therefore attempt to please God - really attempt to please God, simply because He is God and it is what is proper to do; or more enlightenedly, because you have discovered you love God - then God will help *YOU* complete the work of salvation which God has begun in you.

Ref: 1 Thes. 4:1-7; Mat. 17:1-9

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(Continued ENCHIRIDION from page 26)

ist from himself, so also no one can be wise in himself save only as he is enlightened by Him of whom it is written, 'All wisdom is from God' [Ecclus. 1:1]. [5] Job 28:28.

[6] A transliteration of the Greek, literally, a handbook or manual.

[7] Cf. Gal. 5:6.

[8] Cf. 1 Cor. 13:10, 11.

[9] 1 Cor. 3:11.

[10] Already, very early in his ministry (397), Augustine had written De agone Christiano, in which he had reviewed and refuted a full score of heresies threatening the orthodox faith.

CHAPTER II

The Creed and the Lord's Prayer as Guides to the Interpretation of the Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Love

7. Let us begin, for example, with the Symbol[11] and the Lord's Prayer. What is shorter to hear or to read? What is more easily memorized? Since through sin the human race stood grievously burdened by great misery and in deep need of mercy, a prophet, preaching of the time of God's grace, said, "And it shall be that all who invoke the Lord's name will be saved." [12] Thus, we have the Lord's Prayer. Later, the apostle, when he wished to commend this same grace, remembered this prophetic testimony and promptly added, "But how shall they invoke him in whom they have not believed?" [13] Thus, we have the Symbol. In these two we have the three theological virtues working together: faith believes; hope and love pray. Yet without faith nothing else is possible; thus faith prays too. This, then, is the meaning of the saying, "How shall they invoke him in whom they have not believed?"

8. Now, is it possible to hope for what we do not believe in? We can, of course, believe in something that we do not hope for. Who among the faithful does not believe in the punishment of

the impious? Yet he does not hope for it, and whoever believes that such a punishment is threatening him and draws back in horror from it is more rightly said to fear than to hope. A poet, distinguishing between these two feelings, said,

"Let those who dread be allowed to hope," [14]

but another poet, and a better one, did not put it rightly:

"Here, if I could have hoped for [i.e., foreseen] such a grievous blow..." [15]

Indeed, some grammarians use this as an example of inaccurate language and comment, "He said 'to hope' when he should have said 'to fear.'"

Therefore faith may refer to evil things as well as to good, since we believe in both the good and evil. Yet faith is good, not evil. Moreover, faith refers to things past and present and future. For we believe that Christ died; this is a past event. We believe that he sitteth at the Father's right hand; this is present. We believe that he will come as our judge; this is future. Again, faith has to do with our own affairs and with those of others. For everyone believes, both about himself and other persons -- and about things as well -- that at some time he began to exist and that he has not existed forever. Thus, not only about men, but even about angels, we believe many things that have a bearing on religion.

But hope deals only with good things, and only with those which lie in the future, and which pertain to the man who cherishes the hope. Since this is so, faith must be distinguished from hope: they are different terms and likewise different concepts. Yet faith and hope have this in common: they refer to what is not seen, whether this unseen is believed in or hoped for. Thus in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is used by the enlightened defenders of the catholic rule of faith, faith is said to be "the conviction of things not seen." [16]

However, when a man maintains that neither words nor witnesses nor even arguments, but only the evidence of present experience, determine his faith, he still ought not to be called absurd or told, "You have seen; therefore you have not believed." For it does not follow that unless a thing is not seen it cannot be believed. Still it is better for us to use the term "faith," as we are taught in "the sacred eloquence," [17] to refer to things not seen. And as for hope, the apostle says: "Hope that is seen is not hope. For if a man sees a thing, why does he hope for it? If, however, we hope for what we do not see, we then wait for it in patience." [18] When, therefore, our good is believed to be future, this is the same thing as hoping for it.

What, then, shall I say of love, without which faith can do nothing? There can be no true hope without love. Indeed, as the apostle James says, "Even the demons believe and tremble." [19]

Yet they neither hope nor love. Instead, believing as we do that what we hope for and love is coming to pass, they tremble. Therefore, the apostle Paul approves and commends the faith that works by love and that cannot exist without hope. Thus it is that love is not without hope, hope is not without love, and neither hope nor love are without faith.

[11] The Apostles' Creed. Cf. Augustine's early essay On Faith and the Creed.

[12] Joel 2:32.

[13] Rom. 10:14.

[14] Lucan, Pharsalia, II, 15.

[15] Virgil, Aeneid, IV, 419. The context of this quotation is Dido's lament over Aeneas' prospective abandonment of her. She is saying that if she could have foreseen such a disaster, she would have been able to bear it. Augustine's criticism here is a literalistic quibble.

[16] Heb. 11:1.

[17] Sacra eloquia -- a favorite phrase of

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ENCHIRIDION ON FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE

by
Saint Augustine

CHAPTER I

The Occasion and Purpose of this "Manual"

1. I cannot say, my dearest son Laurence, how much your learning pleases me, and how much I desire that you should be wise -- though not one of those of whom it is said: "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputant of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"[1] Rather, you should be one of those of whom it is written, "The multitude of the wise is the health of the world"[2]; and also you should be the kind of man the apostle wishes those men to be to whom he said,[3] "I would have you be wise in goodness and simple in evil."[4]

2. Human wisdom consists in piety. This you have in the book of the saintly Job, for there he writes that Wisdom herself said to man, "Behold, piety is wisdom."[5] If, then, you ask what kind of piety she was speaking of, you will find it more distinctly designated by the Greek term *qeosebeia*, literally, "the service of God." The Greek has still another word for "piety," *ensebeia*, which also signifies "proper service." This too refers chiefly to the service of God. But no term is better than *qeosebeia*, which clearly expresses the idea of the man's service of God as the source of human wisdom.

When you ask me to be brief, you do not expect me to speak of great issues in a few sentences, do you? Is not this rather what you desire: a brief summary or a short treatise on the proper mode of worshipping [serving] God?

3. If I should answer, "God should be worshipped in faith, hope, love," you

would doubtless reply that this was shorter than you wished, and might then beg for a brief explication of what each of these three means: What should be believed, what should be hoped for, and what should be loved? If I should answer these questions, you would then have everything you asked for in your letter. If you have kept a copy of it, you can easily refer to it. If not, recall your questions as I discuss them.

4. It is your desire, as you wrote, to have from me a book, a sort of enchiridion,[6] as it might be called -- something to have "at hand" -- that deals with your questions. What is to be sought after above all else? What, in view of the divers heresies, is to be avoided above all else? How far does reason support religion; or what happens to reason when the issues involved concern faith alone; what is the beginning and end of our endeavor? What is the most comprehensive of all explanations? What is the certain and distinctive foundation of the catholic faith? You would have the answers to all these questions if you really understood what a man should believe, what he should hope for, and what he ought to love. For these are the chief things -- indeed, the only things -- to seek for in religion. He who turns away from them is either a complete stranger to the name of Christ or else he is a heretic. Things that arise in sensory experience, or that are analyzed by the intellect, may be demonstrated by the reason. But in matters that pass beyond the scope of the physical senses, which we have not settled by our own understanding, and cannot -- here we must believe, without hesitation, the witness of those men by whom the Scriptures (rightly called divine) were composed, men who were divinely aided in their senses and their minds to see and even to foresee the things about which they testify.

[5]. But, as this faith, which works by love,[7] begins to penetrate the soul, it tends, through the vital power of goodness, to change into sight, so that the holy and perfect in heart catch glimpses of that ineffable beauty whose

full vision is our highest happiness. Here, then, surely, is the answer to your question about the beginning and the end of our endeavor. We begin in faith, we are perfected in sight.[8] This likewise is the most comprehensive of all explanations. As for the certain and distinctive foundation of the catholic faith, it is Christ. "For other foundation," said the apostle, "can no man lay save that which has been laid, which is Christ Jesus."[9] Nor should it be denied that this is the distinctive basis of the catholic faith, just because it appears that it is common to us and to certain heretics as well. For if we think carefully about the meaning of Christ, we shall see that among some of the heretics who wish to be called Christians, the *_name_* of Christ is held in honor, but the reality itself is not among them. To make all this plain would take too long -- because we would then have to review all the heresies that have been, the ones that now exist, and those which could exist under the label "Christian," and we would have to show that what we have said of all is true of each of them. Such a discussion would take so many volumes as to make it seem endless.[10]

6. You have asked for an enchiridion, something you could carry around, not just baggage for your bookshelf. Therefore we may return to these three ways in which, as we said, God should be served: faith, hope, love. It is easy to *_say_* what one ought to believe, what to hope for, and what to love. But to defend our doctrines against the calumnies of those who think differently is a more difficult and detailed task. If one is to have this wisdom, it is not enough just to put an enchiridion in the hand. It is also necessary that a great zeal be kindled in the heart.

[1] 1 Cor. 1:20.

[2] Wis. 6:26 (Vulgate).

[3] Rom. 16:19.

[4] A later interpolation, not found in the best MSS., adds, "As no one can ex-

(Continued ENCHIRIDION on page 27)

(Continued HEAVEN - LOVE from page 1)
person for another often induces love for the lover in the one loved.

Examining just these three essentials, it is obvious that God, as Creator of all, including each of us, knows each of us better than any one of us knows his or her self. Our intellect should make it clear to us that God loves us because God would not create that which He does not love. It should also be clear to us that God loves us more than those He could have created instead of creating us, because He did create us and did not create those others.

The love God has for us is as natural to the Divine Nature as is the love a parent has for its baby child. For a parent not to love its baby child would be unnatural, and for God not to love each of us would be unnatural to the Divine Nature. Just as the normal baby perceives the love of its parents, so too is the normal human able to perceive the love of God. And just as the normal baby responds to the love expressed by its parents, so too is the normal human able to respond to the love expressed by God. But that response is not limited to loving in return. If an individual is excessively self absorbed, in a response to parental love there can be attempted manipulation which often is successful - but which is never successful with God. And of course, love can always be rejected.

The main force or factor in opposition to love is self absorption. The more narcissistic a person is, the more a person loves themselves more than others or to the exclusion of others, the less likely such person is to love someone else.

Such a person may also be able to perceive the desire another person has to be loved, but their response may be to use the person desiring to be loved, instead of loving in response to the perceived desire to be loved.

When one responds to God's love with love for God, as that love for God

intensifies the person attempts to be in harmony with God as part of their love for God. As their human love develops it may attain, change into, or develop into something related but very different. It may lead to Charity, to the same Divine Love which God has. If this occurs it may be that it is a transitory or occasional or "sometimes" quality which the human "has". But if the human really tries, partially by diminishing their focus on their self, partially by learning about God and appreciating what God has done for us, then the human may stabilize in a state of Charity.

Because humans need but respond in a positive manner to the love God has for us, and to God's desire to be loved by each of us, love of God is something which is attainable by everyone.

As one loves God, and nourishes that love, one approaches Heaven and union with God. As Charity - Divine Love - develops and is nourished one partakes in a nominal manner in the Divine Nature. It is possible and often does happen that an individual acquires Charity to the extent they actually participate in aspects of the Divine Energies while in this life.

All of this is attainable by each of us while still in this world, in this life. Very few attain this state primarily because very few are willing to expunge the effort necessary to expunge temporal self interest, and very few are willing to expunge temporal self interest.

But to the extent we are willing, and seek to love God, and to attain Charity, to that extent we have prepared a Divine future in the world to come. And to that extent we participate in a subtle manner in that Divine future while in this life.



+ Paul, S.S.B.
God, please help me love You

(Continued TWO NATURES from page 1)

In the early days of the Church, for decades after the Resurrection and the Ascension, this question did not really exist because there were thousands of people who personally knew Jesus, and when they fell asleep in the Lord there were thousands with whom they had come in contact and spent innumerable hours relating what Jesus Christ did and taught, and what they knew of Him. This personal and virtually personal knowledge and familiarity made such a question something which really did not enter anyone's mind to ask in the manner in which it later became a question to explore.

But as time passed, and not much time, the devil found he could induce doubt and error by prompting those who wished to establish their own little religious fiefdoms to introduce error. Thus, after just a few generations there were great theological debates on this subject, which eventually were settled based on the established dogma of the Church - well they were settled in the East. In the West it was not until the time of Saint Thomas Aquinas that the West and the Roman Church found there way back to the truth based on the beginning established dogma of the Church. Based of the facts of Jesus Christ Himself.

One error was the thought that God animated or possessed the human body known as Jesus Christ. The major debate was whether this occurred at the conception of Jesus, or at some later time. A variant was that as the man Jesus proved himself to be worthy, God dwelt in Jesus in some manner - perhaps animating him or possessing him or dwelling in him and making him holy.

But each of these propositions means God was merely yanking a human body around like a puppet, or required human cooperation. The devil can do that, and often does.

Then there was the question as to
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whether or not all the aspects of being human were incorporated into or could be attributed to this God-man combination. Obviously the Divine Person, with what ever aspects are particular to the Divine Nature, including Divine Will, must have been present in the God-man combination. But did the man part of the combination have all the human nature components, particularly human body, human soul, human spirit (some combine the human soul and the human spirit - and that is OK), and human will?

If there were any aspect of human nature left out, then there was no true human involved in the sacrifice of atonement for man's sins, and if there were any aspect of Divine Nature left out, then there was no Nature of a status sufficient to be a sacrifice for the atonement of man's sins.

Or, were there two persons combined under the identity of Jesus Christ, one Person being of Divine Nature and the other person being of human nature?

If this were the situation, then the Blessed Trinity must have increased in number to the Blessed Four. Perhaps they played the card game bridge.

These matters are important because they determine what and who you worship. That the combinations of errors remain are readily evident in the common Protestant and Pentecostals teaching that Mary was indeed the mother of Jesus Christ but not the mother of God, and the teaching that communion bread and wine (or grape juice in some "churches") are not really God but only represent God. Of course, in the churches without Apostolic Succession and without a valid Priesthood, it is true that the bread and wine only represent God - but that is not true in the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, be it an Orthodox part or otherwise.

The resolution of this confusion was already in existence as early as 325 A.D.

in the formalization of the Nicene Creed, at The (First) Council of Nicea (Nicaea). If the West had not taken liberties with the Creed, and especially after having added the "filioque clause", it would have had a tradition of dogma with which to resolve the question which had already been resolved.

God has but a single nature - the Divine Nature. An aspect of that Divine Nature is that there are three Person in the Godhead. Briefly, the Father is thought of as the Magisterium, the Son as being eternally begotten of the Father, and the Holy Spirit as eternally proceeding from the Father. If you think you have an understanding of this, or of the generation of the Trinity, then you have committed the sin of presumption, or you are delusional, because the only reason we know these things is because God has revealed them to us. We are incapable of comprehending them or understanding them, other than as facts, because comprehension and understanding require a Divine Nature for these are aspects of the Divine Nature and the Divine Nature only comprehensible to the Divine and those to whom the Divine chose to make them comprehensible.

When the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary accepted the the request of God the Father, that she become the mother of His only begotten Son, through the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, the Word was made flesh. The Second Person of the Blessed Trinity took on a complete and total human nature within the womb of the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary, taking His flesh from her flesh just as any normal child would take the flesh from his or her mother. But it was not just taking of flesh, but also of the complete human nature, from the Virgin Mary. A complete human, body, soul, spirit, and will, were received and taken and made integral in the Person of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, complete, and complete with His total Divine Nature, remaining but one single Person but a unique Person in that He had and has two natures, a Divine Nature and a human nature. His mother named Him Jesus and we know Him as

Jesus Christ.

Jesus Himself, stating Himself to be the Son of God, totally Divine, the Word of God often referred to His human nature calling Himself the Son of Man. He plainly stated He has both Divine Nature and human nature, both complete in every aspect.

And both were necessary if man were to offer a sufficient sacrifice in atonement for sins: for since man sinned only man could make and offer the sacrifice, and since God was the one offended only God could make and offer the sacrifice.

What the Protestants worship does not exist, just as the gods the pagans worship do not exist. But what we worship does exist, and is both almighty and eternal.

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(Continued EFFECTS from page 1)

follow even the most insignificant of such falsehoods, into such gross error as to endanger their immortal souls.

A good example is the combination of the teachings of Martin Luther, Gunther, and Rosmini. Gunther defined personality as possession of one's self by consciousness of one's self and one's acts. He totally ignored the metaphysical nature of personality, of person, as a being, as an unique individual, and focused on psychology as defining person. He was wrong because a person's psychology is but an aspect of a person - not the person and not the definition of the or a person. Rosmini taught that Christ's human will and humanity were completely taken over by the Holy Ghost as to totally surrender Christ's humanity in the governance of the Person, Jesus Christ. And Luther taught that as Jesus Christ the man became God, that there was a separation of the Divine Nature and of the human nature in Christ, and that Christ striped away His Divine Nature to put on His full human nature

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tion of His Cross. Quake before His arm, for it is He Who silenced the groans of hell, and brought forth the souls unto light. Be afraid of the body of man + (on the breast), be in dread

of the image of God + (on the brow). Make no resistance, neither delay in leaving this person, for it has pleased Christ to take up his dwelling in man. Let it not occur to thee to despise my command, because thou dost recognize in me a poor sinner. It is God Himself Who commands + thee! The majesty of Christ commands + thee!

God the Father commands + thee, God the Son commands thee, God the Holy Spirit commands + thee! The mystery of the Cross commands + thee! The faith of the holy apostles Peter and Paul and the other saints commands + thee! The blood of the

martyrs commands + thee! The constancy of the confessors commands + thee! The devout intercession of all holy men and women commands + thee! The power of the mysteries of

Christian faith commands + thee! Go out, then, thou transgressor, go out, thou seducer full of deceit and perfidy, thou enemy of virtue and persecutor of the innocent. Make way, thou horrible creature, make way, thou monster, make way for Christ, in whom thou has found nothing of thy works. For He has stripped thee of thy might and laid waste thy kingdom; He has overcome thee and put thee in chains, and has blown up thy war materials. He has cast thee out into exterior darkness, where ruination is being made ready for thee and thine abettors. But to what purpose dost thou resist in thy insolence? To what purpose dost thou brazenly refuse? Thou art guilty before the almighty God, Whose laws thou hast transgressed. Thou art guilty before His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,

Whom thou didst presume to tempt, Whom thou wast emboldened to nail to the Cross. Thou art guilty before the human race, for through thy blandishments thou didst proffer it the poisoned cup of death.

I adjure thee, therefore, thou profligate dragon, in the name of the spotless + Lamb, Who walked upon the asp and the basilisk and tread underfoot the lion and the dragon, depart from this man + (on the brow), depart from the Church of God + (signing the bystanders). Quake and fly afar, as we call upon the name of the Lord, before Whom hell trembles, to Whom the heavenly Virtues and Powers and Dominations are subject, Whom the Cherubim and Seraphim praise with unending voice as they sing: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth! The Word made flesh commands + thee. He Who was born of a

Virgin commands + thee. Jesus + of Nazareth commands thee. For when thou didst mock His disciples, He did shatter and humble thy pride, and did order thee out of a certain man; and when He had cast thee forth, thou didst not even dare except by His leave to enter into a herd of swine.

And now as I adjure thee in His + name, vanish from this man whom He has created. It is hard for thee to want to resist. + It is hard for thee to kick against the goad. + For the longer thou dost delay thy departure, the heavier thy punishment shall be; since it is not men thou dost contemn, but rather Him, the Ruler over the living and the dead, Who shall come to judge the living and the dead and the world by fire.

R. Amen.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto thee.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

IT IS ALWAYS GOOD TO REMEMBER EZECHIEL

Ez. 18:20-28

18:20. The soul that sinneth, the same shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, and the father shall not bear the iniquity of the son: the justice of the just shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. 18:21. But if the wicked do penance for all his sins which he hath committed, and keep all my commandments, and do judgment, and justice, living he shall live, and shall not die. 18:22. I will not remember all his iniquities that he hath done: in his justice which he hath wrought, he shall live. 18:23. Is it my will that a sinner should die, saith the Lord God, and not that he should be converted from his ways, and live? 18:24. But if the just man turn himself away from his justice, and do iniquity according to all the abominations which the wicked man useth to work, shall he live? all his justices which he hath done, shall not be remembered: in the prevarication, by which he hath prevaricated, and in his sin, which he hath committed, in them he shall die. 18:25. And you have said: The way of the Lord is not right. Hear ye, therefore, O house of Israel: Is it my way that is not right, and are not rather your ways perverse? 18:26. For when the just turneth himself away from his justice, and comitteth iniquity, he shall die therein: in the injustice that he hath wrought he shall die. 18:27. And when the wicked turneth himself away from his wickedness, which he hath wrought, and doeth judgment, and justice: he shall save his soul alive. 18:28. Because he considereth and turneth away himself from all his iniquities which he hath wrought, he shall surely live, and not die.

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(Continued EXORCISM from page 23)

dered the sea and the wind and all the storm to obey. Hence, pay heed, Satan, and tremble, thou enemy of the faith, thou foe of the human race! For thou art the carrier of death and the robber of life; thou art the shirker of justice and the root of all evil, the formentor of vice, the seducer of men, the traitor of the nations, the instigator of envy, the font of avarice, the source of discord, the exciter of sorrows! Why tarriest thou resisting, when thou knowest that Christ the Lord doth bring thy plans to naught? Him shalt thou fear, Who in Israel was sacrificed, in Joseph was sold, in the lamb was slain, was crucified as man, and finally triumphed over hell. (The three signs of the Cross which follow are traced on the brow of the one possessed.) Wherefore, get thee gone in the name of the Father, + and of the Son, + and of the Holy + Spirit. Make way for God the Holy Spirit through the sign of the holy + Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the selfsame Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

R. Amen.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto thee.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Prayer

O GOD, Creator and Defender of the human race, Who hast formed man in thine image, look down with pity upon this thy servant, **N.** (Thy handmaid, **N.**), for he (she) has fallen a prey to the craftiness of an evil spirit. The ancient adversary, the arch-enemy of the earth enshrouds him (her) in shuddering fear. He renders his (her) mental faculties befuddled; he keeps him (her) bewildered by making him (her) sore afraid; he holds

him (her) in a state of perturbation, as he strikes terror within him (her). Drive out, O Lord, the power of the devil, and banish his artifices and frauds. Let him, the wicked tempter, be routed afar. By the sign + (on the brow) of thy name let thy servant (handmaid) be protected and safeguarded in both body and soul. (The three Crosses which follow are traced on the breast of the subject.) Keep watch over his (her) + reason, rule thou over his (her) + emotions, bring cheer into his (her) + heart. Let there vanish from his (her) soul the temptations of the mighty adversary. O Lord, as we call upon thy holy name, graciously grant that the evil spirit, who hitherto terrorized over us, may now himself be terror-stricken and may he depart vanquished. Thus let this servant (handmaid) of thine offer thee with steadfast heart and sincere mind the meed that is thy due. Through Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for all ages.

R. Amen.

Exorcism

I ADJURE thee, thou ancient serpent, by the Judge of the living and the dead, by thy own Creator, by the Creator of the world, by Him Who has the power to consign thee to hell, that thou speedily depart in trembling, along with thy raving followers, from this servant (handmaid) of God, **N.**, who seeks refuge in the bosom of the Church. I adjure thee once more + (on the brow), not by my own weakness but by the might of the Holy Spirit, begone from this servant (handmaid) of God, **N.**, whom the Almighty has made in His image. Yield, therefore, yield, not to myself but to the minister of Christ! For it is the power of Christ that compels thee, Who brought thee under the subjec-

tion of His Cross. Quake before His arm, for it is He Who silenced the groans of hell, and brought forth the souls unto light. Be afraid of the body of man + (on the breast), be in dread of the image of God + (on the brow). Make no resistance, neither delay in leaving this person, for it has pleased Christ to take up his dwelling in man. Let it not occur to thee to despise my command, because thou dost recognize in me a poor sinner. It is God Himself Who commands + thee! The majesty of Christ commands + thee! God the Father commands + thee, God the Son commands thee, God the Holy Spirit commands + thee! The mystery of the Cross commands + thee! The faith of the holy apostles Peter and Paul and the other saints commands + thee! The blood of the martyrs commands + thee! The constancy of the confessors commands + thee! The devout intercession of all holy men and women commands + thee! The power of the mysteries of Christian faith commands + thee! Go out, then, thou transgressor, go out, thou seducer full of deceit and perfidy, thou enemy of virtue and persecutor of the innocent. Make way, thou horrible creature, make way, thou monster, make way for Christ, in whom thou has found nothing of thy works. For He has stripped thee of thy might and laid waste thy kingdom; He has overcome thee and put thee in chains, and has blown up thy war materials. He has cast thee out into exterior darkness, where ruination is being made ready for thee and thine abettors. But to what purpose dost thou resist in thy insolence? To what purpose dost thou brazenly refuse? Thou art guilty before the almighty God, Whose laws thou hast transgressed. Thou art guilty before His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,

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to become a victim for mankind.

In this combination of errors it is possible for a person to believe any human can become deified not in the manner Saint Paul teaches, as adopted Sons of God, but as god or as gods - as a form of evolution. From this the Latter Day Saints - the Mormons - developed their concept that every believer will be given a planet to rule as god. (An interesting related thought occurs - will these Mormon governors have anyone else living on their planets, others whom they will be able to rule? And exactly what will they do there?)

This combination of errors was also instrumental in the development, especially from Luther, of the concept that a Christian becomes "justified" not by or as a gift from God, or by the development of holiness in himself, but by a simple declaration of God which by merit of Christ's passion and death would mean a sinner's sins are not imputed to the sinner because Jesus "puts on the sinner" and atones for the sinner's sins through His passion and death.

Protestants would have the Person of Christ be a compromise between His Divine Nature and His human nature, with the human nature taking on all that is related to sin and the consequences of sin, and the Divine Nature controlling the human nature. But such an entity would be unable to make atonement for sin because it would not be a freely operating human nature free will, operating in concert with a freely operating Divine Will, both of which are required to make atonement for sin. Actually, we must constantly reiterate and remember, that a complete and total human being must make atonement for sin because it is human for whose sins atonement is being made, and it must be complete and total God who is making atonement for sin because it is God who is offended by sin.

Therefore, Christ, as the Supreme

Sacrifice and Supreme Sacrificial Offering, must be complete and total God and complete and total human. Since the Divine Nature of the Word of God is eternal, this concert of the two natures must have been from the beginning of the existence of the human nature, the Incarnation in the womb of the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary through the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost.

It is not the psychology of Christ which is important, but the Person Who is Christ - the Person in the metaphysical concept. In the physical world it is the individual one can poke with a finger and all that pertains to that unique individual; and in the spiritual world it is the unique individual even though one can not poke that individual with a finger. The Person Jesus Christ, full and complete God and full and complete human, is the unique, sole, exclusive, and only entity possessing both natures. In a sense, we can poke one of Christ's natures with our physical finger but the other Nature we can not poke with our physical finger. (And, as Saint Thomas the Apostle and Martyr discovered, it is not prudent to even contemplate poking Christ with one's finger.)

Likewise, attempting to make one not responsible for and unable to receive the rewards of their conduct is not simply irrational - it is contrary to what God has taught us from the beginning. What human being knew God better than Adam? No one. What human made a better and more complete declaration of God, than Adam? No one. Yet Adam suffered the loss of his natural state of immortality and union with God because of his sin, and in turn lost it for all of us, necessitating a Saviour.

If conduct and belief are not important, as the "once saved always saved" Protestants teach, then why did God give us the Ten Commandments, the Two Great Commandments, and spend so much time teaching us the Beatitudes, the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, and how to develop the natural and Spiritual Virtues? Protestants would have you believe God

did all of this just so that you could ignore what He did and what He taught. Such a belief makes no sense; is not logical; is, simply put, stupid.

While it is not fully accurate to state that the eternity for which you prepare yourself is the eternity which you will receive, it is sufficiently accurate to use as a very generalized "rule of thumb". If one prepares himself or herself for eternity by living a life of discordance with God's instructions as to how one should live his or her life, then one will attain an eternal life which does not include participation in God's life.

This should make very clear the importance of true dogma, and how even something as seemingly insignificant as adding the "filioque clause" to the Nicene Creed will and must lead to endangerment of the immortal soul, to the grave potential of a person's loss of the ability to love God, a person's ceasing to love God, and subsequent eternal residency in the Protestant version of Heaven.

Oh yes, there is a Protestant version of Heaven. It is a place where those go who believed they could sin without consequences as long as they declared Jesus Christ. And there they continue to sin because they did not focus on attempting to love God in this life. Rational people do not desire to go there, but Satan freely chose it in preference to God' Heaven.

Ref: 2 Cor 11: 19-33; 12:1-9; Luke 8:4-15

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CHILDREN'S PAGE

The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism

Q. 1082. How do we say the Rosary, or beads?

A. To say the Rosary or beads we bless ourselves with the cross, then say the Apostles' Creed and the Our Father on the first large bead, then the Hail Mary on each of the three small beads, and then Glory be to the Father, etc. Then we mention or think of the first mystery we wish to honor, and say an Our Father on the large bead and a Hail Mary on each small bead of the ten that follow. At the end of every decade, or ten Hail Marys, we say "Glory be to the Father;" etc. Then we mention the next mystery and do as before, and so on to the end.

The Rule of the Mother of God, as taught and prayed by Saint Seraphim and from ancient times, uses a more ancient form of the Hail Mary and is begun with intention and prayer are made before and after each Hail Mary as well as each decade.

Q. 1083. How many mysteries of the Rosary are there?

A. There are fifteen mysteries of the Rosary arranged in the order in which these events occurred in the life of Our Lord, and divided into five joyful, five sorrowful, and five glorious mysteries.

Q. 1084. Say the five joyful mysteries of the Rosary.

A. The five joyful mysteries of the Rosary are:
1. The Annunciation -- the Angel Gabriel telling the Blessed Virgin that she is to be the Mother of God; 2 The Visitation -- the Blessed Virgin goes to visit her cousin, St. Elizabeth, the mother of St. John the Baptist; 3. The Nativity, or birth, of Our Lord; 4. The Presentation of the Child Jesus in the temple -- His parents offered Him to God; 5. The finding of the Child Jesus in the temple -- His parents had lost Him in Jerusalem for three days.

Q. 1085. Say the five sorrowful mys-

teries of the Rosary.

A. The five sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary are:

1. The Agony in the Garden -- Our Lord was in dreadful anguish and bathed in a bloody sweat; 2. The Scourging at the Pillar -- Christ was stripped of His garments and lashed in a cruel manner; 3. The Crowning with Thorns -- He was mocked as a king by heartless men; 4. The Carriage of the Cross -- from the place He was condemned to Calvary, the place of Crucifixion; 5. The Crucifixion -- He was nailed to the cross amid the jeers and blasphemies of His enemies.

Q. 1086. Say the five glorious mysteries of the Rosary.

A. The five glorious mysteries of the Rosary are:

1. The Resurrection of Our Lord; 2. The Ascension of Our Lord; 3. The Coming of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles; 4. The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin -- after death she was taken body and soul into heaven; 5. The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin -- on entering heaven she was made queen of all the Angels and Saints and placed in dignity next to her Divine Son, Our Blessed Lord.

Q. 1087. On what days, according to the pious custom of the faithful, are the different mysteries of the Rosary usually said?

A. According to the pious custom of the faithful, the different mysteries of the Rosary are usually said on the following days, namely: the joyful on Mondays and Thursdays, the sorrowful on Tuesdays and Fridays, and the glorious on Sundays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Q. 1088. What do the letters I. N. R. I. over the crucifix mean?

A. The letters I. N. R. I. over the crucifix are the first letters of four Latin words that mean Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. Our Lord did say He was king of the Jews, but He also said that He was not their temporal or earthly king, but their spiritual and

heavenly king.

Q. 1089. To what may we attribute the desire of the Jews to put Christ to death?

A. We may attribute the desire of the Jews to put Christ to death to the jealousy, hatred and ill-will of their priests and the Pharisees, whose faults He rebuked and whose hypocrisy He exposed. By their slanders and lies they induced the people to follow them in demanding Our Lord's crucifixion.

Q. 1090. With whom did the Blessed Virgin live after the death of Our Lord?

A. After the death of Our Lord the Blessed Virgin lived for about eleven years with the Apostle St. John the Evangelist, called also the Beloved Disciple. He wrote one of the four Gospels, three Epistles, and the Apocalypse, or Book of Revelations -- the last book of the Bible. He lived to the age of a hundred years or more and died last of all the apostles.

Q. 1091. What do we mean by the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, and why do we believe in it?

A. By the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin we mean that her body was taken up into heaven after her death. We believe in it:

1. Because the Church cannot teach error, and yet from an early age the Church has celebrated the Feast of the Assumption; 2. Because no one ever claimed to have a relic of our Blessed Mother's body, and surely the apostles, who knew and loved her, would have secured some relic had her body remained upon earth.

Q. 1092. What do the letters I. H. S. on an altar or sacred things mean?

A. The letters I. H. S. on an altar or sacred things means the name Jesus; for it is in that way the Holy Name is written in the Greek language when some of the letters are left out.

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(Continued EXORCISM from page 22)
full of grace and truth.

R. Thanks be to God.

A Reading From the Holy Gospel According to Saint Mark

(Mark 16:15-18)

AND He said to them: Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils. They shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them. They shall lay their hand upon the sick, and they shall recover.

A Reading From the Holy Gospel According to Saint Luke

(Luke 10:17-20)

AND the seventy-two returned with joy, saying: Lord, the devils also are subject to us in thy name. And he said to them: I saw Satan like lightning falling from heaven. Behold, I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions and upon all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. But yet rejoice not in this, that spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice in this, that your names are written in heaven.

A Reading From the Holy Gospel According to Saint Luke

(Luke 11:14-22)

AND HE was casting out a devil, and the same was dumb. And when He had cast out the devil, the dumb spoke: and the multitudes were in admiration at it. But some of them said: He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. And others tempting, asked of Him a sign from heaven. But He seeing their thoughts,

said to them: Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation, and house upon house shall fall. And if Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? Because you say that through Beelzebub I cast out devils. Now if I cast out devils by Beelzebub, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore, they shall be your judges. But if I by the finger of God cast out devils, doubtless the kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man armed keepeth his court, those things are in peace which he possesseth. But if a stronger than he come upon him and overcome him, he will take away all his armour wherein he trusted, and will distribute his spoils.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto thee.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Prayer

O Almighty Lord, Word of God the Father, Christ Jesus, God and Lord of all creation! Who didst give to thine apostles the power to tramp underfoot serpents and scorpions; who along with the other mandates to work miracles hast deigned to say: "You shall drive out evil spirits!" Whose mighty command caused Satan to fall like lightning from heaven. Wherefore, in fear and trembling I suppliantly call upon thy holy name: grant unto me, thy most unworthy servant, pardon for all my sins; bestow on me steadfast faith and the power to attack this cruel demon with assurance and fearlessness, fortified by the might of thy holy arm. Through thee, Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, Who shalt come to judge the living and the dead and the world by fire.

R. Amen.

4. Then he fortifies himself and the one possessed with the sign of the Cross, he places the end of the stole on the neck of the latter and, with his right hand laid on the person's head, he says what follows with constancy and firm faith:

V. Behold the Cross of the Lord; begone ye hostile powers!

R. The Lion of Juda's tribe hath conquered, He Who is the rod of David.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto thee.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Prayer

O God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, I call upon thy holy name and humbly entreat thy clemency, that thou wouldst graciously assist me in the assault against this as well as every unclean spirit who now torments the creature fashioned by thy hands. Through the selfsame Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for endless ages.

R. Amen.

Exorcism

I CAST thee out, thou unclean spirit, along with the least encroachment of the wicked enemy, and every phantom and diabolical legion. In the name of our Lord Jesus + Christ, depart and vanish from this creature of God. + For it is He who commands thee, He Who ordered thee cast down from the heights of heaven into the nethermost pit of the earth. He it is Who commands thee, Who once or-

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**EXORCISM OF THE
POSSESSED**
(Continued)

Psalm 53

SAVE me, O God, by thy name, and further my cause by thy power, O God, hear my prayer; give ear to the words of my mouth.

For proud men have risen against me, and men of violence have sought my life; they have not set God before their eyes.

But see -- God is my helper; the Lord supporteth my life.

Let the evil recoil upon my foes, and cut them off in thy faithfulness.

Gladly will I sacrifice unto thee. I will praise thy name, O Lord, for it is good.

In every need He hath delivered me, and mine eye hath seen the confusion of my foe.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, throughout all ages of ages.

All. Amen

V. Preserve thy servant (handmaid),

R. Who places his (her) trust in thee, my God.

V. Be unto him (her), O Lord, a fortress of strength.

R. In the face of the enemy.

V. Let the enemy have no power over him (her).

R. And the son of evil do nothing to harm him (her).

V. Send him (her), Lord, aid from on high.

R. And from Sion watch over him (her).

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto thee.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Prayer

O GOD, Whose nature it is ever to show mercy and to spare, receive our petition, that this thy servant (handmaid), bound by the fetters of sin, may by thy sweet forgiveness be pardoned.

O HOLY Lord, almighty Father, eternal God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who didst one time consign that fugitive and fallen tyrant to everlasting hell fire, Who didst send thy Sole-Begotten into the world to crush that spirit of evil with his bellying, do thou speedily give heed and hasten to snatch from ruination and from the noonday demon a human being, created in thine image and likeness. Strike terror, O Lord, into the beast that lays waste thy vineyard. Grant confidence to thy servants to fight most manfully against that reprobate dragon, lest he dare despise them who put their trust in thee, and least he say with Pharaoh, who once declared: "I know not God, neither will I let Israel go!" Let thy powerful right hand prevail upon him to depart from thy servant, **N.** (Thy handmaid **N.**), **+** so that he may no longer hold captive him (her) whom it has pleased thee to make in thine image and to redeem through thy Son. Thou Who livest and reignest in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and forevermore.

R. Amen.

2. Then he gives the command to the evil spirit as follows:

I COMMAND thee, unclean spirit, whosoever thou art, along with all thine associates who have taken possession of this servant (handmaid) of God, that, by the mysteries of the Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the descent of the Holy Spirit, by the coming of our Lord unto judg-

ment, thou shalt tell me by some sign or other thy name and the day and the hour of thy departure. I command thee, moreover, to obey me to the letter, I who, though unworthy, am a minister of God; neither shalt thou be emboldened to harm in any way this creature of God, nor the bystanders, nor any of their possessions.

3. Next he reads over the possessed person these selections from the Gospel, or at least one of them.

A Reading From the Holy Gospel According to Saint John

Saying this, he signs himself and the possessed on the brow, lips, and breast.

(John 1:1-14)

IN THE beginning was the Word: and the Word was with God: and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was made nothing that was made. In him was life: and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness: and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the light, but was to give testimony of the light. That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. He was in the world: and the world was made by Him: and the world knew Him not. He came unto his own: and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, He gave them power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in His name. Who was born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (genuflect). And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, the glory as it were of the Only-Begotten of the Father,

(Continued EXORCISM on page 23)

CHILDREN'S PAGE



(Continued DEIFICATION from page 1)
 sive is very important - had a decisive transforming action that glorified the human nature of Christ. Succinctly, the Resurrection effectuated a *transfiguration* of Christ's human nature. Within the Body of Christ this transfiguration, this glorification, extends in some measure to every person who is a living member of the Body of Christ. By living member of the Body of Christ here is not meant those who are alive and living in this world or this life, but, rather, all those who are Baptized and not spiritually dead through sin, or, conversely, those who actively share in that essence of God commonly called Grace. Every person incorporated in Christ is deified, each in varying measure in accordance with their individual spiritual health.

To properly comprehend this concept one must concurrently realize that active love of God is the essence of what is commonly referred to as going to Heaven. While Heaven obviously is a physical as well as spiritual place, Heaven also is the active state of love of God wherein God is loved with the same Divine Love with which He loves us - Agape Love, Charity.

While living in this world, in our initial life before our physical death, it is possible and actually often happens that an individual passes from participation in the transfiguration brought on by the Resurrection of Christ, to severance from that measure of Glorification, due to the commission of severe or Mortal sin, and then returns to active participation or to a "state of Grace" through the Sacraments, especially Sacramental Confession and Absolution.

As an individual increasingly controls his unholy inclinations, and his unholliness decreases through his efforts in concert with God assistance, and his holiness increases through his efforts in concert with the God assistance, all for love of God, he correspondingly be-

comes increasingly translucid until God is able, in a sense, to see His own reflection in that individual.

God and man therefore are not opposed to each other for as a man perceives God more and more, that individual perceives an increase in the exaltation of the human nature of Christ as experienced by the individual in his participation in the glorification of Christ's human nature. As that individual increasingly participates in that glorification, God perceives Himself in that individual in ever increasing measure. It is as though God's eyes perceive His own reflection ever more clearly in that individual, and this is pleasing to God, for

It is often said that the Resurrection of Christ is the most important event in history because it is proof of Christ's divinity, proof that Christ is God. While it is proof that Jesus Christ is God, that is not the real importance of the Resurrection. The real importance of the Resurrection is the transfiguration and the glorification of Christ's human nature and our sharing in these as members of the Body of Christ.

Perfection appreciates Perfection and that which strives to attain Perfection.

Of course, this presumes the human individual is actually worshiping the true God and not some mental creation of his own.

When viewed in its purest light, Grace is a deification of the human, or an application of a measure of deification of the individual. But Grace also is a cure, and the Sacraments, in addition to being the source of Grace, also are remedies. However, the Sacraments should never be viewed simply as, exclusively as, or mainly as, spiritual cures and remedies. Too often they are viewed mainly as spiritual cures and remedies, leaving neglected their role in the transfiguration of the individual, their role in the glorification of the individual *while still in this life*. A glorification which, one must be reminded, can be lost through sin.

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Remember these truths as you prepare for and participate in Great Lent, Holy Week, and Pascha. If you remember these truths, you will reap very stable spiritual benefits from your participation, which will lead to the acquisition of a measure and an increasing measure of holiness. It will lead to acquisition and increasing measure of acquisition of the Holy Ghost.

DEUTERONOMY
Deut. 11:22-25

11:22. For if you keep the commandments which I command you, and do them, to love the Lord your God, and walk in all his ways, cleaving unto him, 11:23. The Lord will destroy all these nations before your face, and you shall possess them, which are greater and stronger than you. 11:24. Every place, that your foot shall tread upon, shall be yours. From the desert, and from Libanus, from the great river Euphrates unto the western sea shall be your borders. 11:25. None shall stand against you: the Lord your God shall lay the dread and fear of you upon all the land that you shall tread upon, as he hath spoken to you.

**DIVINELY PROVIDED
 WORLDLY DELIGHTS**

There are those who would take God out of life by abusing all of the delights God has provided for us in this life, through inappropriate or excessive participation in those delights. And there are those who would take God out of life by denying access to or forbidding participation in those delights.

The Miracle at Cana expressly sanctified the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony and all that is proper to the married state and life. It proved the Divinity of Christ and that that Divinity is concurrent with His human nature in one Person. And He did actually provide even better wine for the marriage celebrants as He participated in the celebration.

The delights of this world are to be used or participated in according to the rule of faith. Neither to be abused, nor made a goal in and of themselves, but as ancillary as well as intricate aspects of life as appropriate, the delights of this world are provided to us by God and made accessible to us by God as an aspect of being human.

They reach their fullness in providing delight to us when they are an aspect of holiness.

Some teach there can be nothing holy in the carnal delights, and in truth if the carnal delights are pursued solely for the pleasure one receives from them, then the potential for holiness is greatly diminished.

But if they are pursued in the normal course of living as ancillary aspects to one's proper life, they can be avenues to holiness.

One must remember that one who does something because that is what society expects of them will receive the reward of one who does what society expects of them. One who does something because that is what they wish to do will receive the reward of one who does something because that is what they wish to do.

One who does something because it is the right thing to do will receive the reward of the righteous. One who does something because that is what God desires will receive the reward of one who does God's will.

Proper participation in the delights God has provided means participation in them in accordance with God's will. One must be in a situation where one has the right to participate in the particular delight - and that is not exclusively applicable to the reality that one must be married to the person with whom they have sexual relations.

Good examples of one who is not in a position to participate in particular delights are:

One who must drive a car or operate equipment or perform surgery does not have the right to experience the delights provided by consumption of alcohol within a certain time prior to the activity;

One who is at a play, opera, or movie, does not have the right to experience the delights of expressing their opinion of the performance in a manner which interferes with the performance or the ability of others to experience the delights of the performance.

The person who refrains from such inappropriate experience of delights because such is in accordance with the will of God will receive the reward of one who follows the will of God; while one who refrains from such inappropriate experience of delights because of the potential of being arrested, or of having their spouse berate them, will receive the reward of the law abiding, or of those who are prudent in the marital relations, or perhaps they will receive the reward of the fearful - whatever that may be.

Always remember that the focus of this life must be to love God with every aspect of yourself and the totality of your energy and ability. Proper participation in those delights permissible to you can serve to strengthen your appreciation of the goodness with which God has

blessed you even if your material station in this life is utterly deplorable. And they may serve as a respite from the wear and tear we experience in daily living.

So enjoy the delights of this world; but enjoy them in a holy manner, never allowing them to become a goal.

Ref: Rom 12:6-16; John 2:1-11

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Ezech 18:1-9

18:1. And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: What is the meaning? 18:2. That you use among you this parable as a proverb in the land of Israel, saying: The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the teeth of the children are set on edge. 18:3. As I live, saith the Lord God, this parable shall be no more to you a proverb in Israel. 18:4. Behold all souls are mine: as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, the same shall die. 18:5. And if a man be just, and do judgment and justice, 18:6. And hath not eaten upon the mountains, nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel: and hath not defiled his neighbour's wife, nor come near to a menstruous woman: 18:7. And hath not wronged any man: but hath restored the pledge to the debtor, hath taken nothing away by violence: hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment: 18:8. Hath not lent upon usury, nor taken any increase: hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, and hath executed true judgment between man and man: 18:9. Hath walked in my commandments, and kept my judgments, to do truth: he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God.

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THE PRECIOUSNESS OF FAITH

The crux of Christianity, its foundation, its sole validity, is in the Divinity of Jesus Christ, God. If one does not comprehend as humans are capable of comprehending the awesomeness of God and in comparison the insignificance of humanity, the honor which God hath bestowed upon humanity in making humanity in His image and likeness, and in becoming human while remaining God; the awesomeness in the Father God asking the Son God to become human while remaining God, and to offer Himself to the Father as the sacrificial victim and offering to atone for all the sins of mankind making each human capable of attaining eternal salvation; if one does not believe, comprehend, strive to live, and live at least to the minimal extent, these things, within the human capacity and capability, then that one is not a Christian and except for the potential viability of invulnerable ignorance, that one will not attain eternal happiness, salvation, and joys.

Without Faith, except for the potential viability of invulnerable ignorance, this world is as good as it gets. But with Faith, this world is almost as nothing in comparison with what the next world has to offer.

Belief there is but one, self-existing, omnipotent entity we refer to as God is a logical necessity. Those who profess to not believe there is a God, or who profess to not be sure whether or not there is a God, defy logic and defy necessity.

But Faith in the true God is the most precious gift which can be rejected, accepted and rejected, accepted and lost, accepted and remain stagnant, or accepted and increased.

Solomon is a good example. He became King at about age eighteen. He was filled with wisdom, perhaps being the wisest man ever. He built the Temple and the King's house, perhaps the most magnificent buildings ever. God ap-

peared to him twice. He married Pharaoh's daughter, and converted the Queen of Sheba, which today is Ethiopia - a land which possesses some of the oldest Christian communities in the world. When he died he had seven hundred wives as queens and three hundred concubines. But even though he had talked with God and God with him, he disobeyed God's instruction that the Israelites not marry someone who was not an Israelite for fear the Israelite would be led to worship false gods. He built temples for some of those non-Israelite wives and concubines to worship their false gods, and joined them in worshipping those false gods. He had lost or rejected the Faith he once had accepted and embraced. We hope, pray, and within ourselves believe he returned to Faith before he died at age fifty-eight.

Faith activates Hope. Faith turns love into Charity, the greatest of the Virtues. Faith is the gift of the Holy Spirit, the gift which activates Wisdom, the same Wisdom which is of the Holy Ghost, the same Wisdom which is one of the names of the Holy Ghost, the same Wisdom invoked before the Gospel when we pray, "Wisdom, Let us attend," the same Wisdom which Solomon possessed through Faith, and lost in folly; the same Wisdom we can possess through Faith, and which we too can lose if we chose the foolishness called sin.

Without Faith one does not have God, one is not of God, one can be good to some extent - one can be slightly good according to natural and worldly standards but one can never really be good - but without Faith one can not be holy and therefore can not be truly good. Jesus Himself told us this in simple logic when He said, "**He that is of God heareth the words of God. Therefore you hear them not, because you are not of God.**" (John 8:46-59). With Faith one knows that when Jesus spoke the words, "**I AM**" (supra), He spoke the truth.

Why do people who believe there is a

God act as though there were no God? Because they do not have Faith. Why do people who believe in the true God act as though there were no God? Because they do not have Faith. Why do people who do have Faith act as though they do not? Because they have not strengthened themselves with Grace sufficiently to resist sin.

Without Faith the best one can do is to accomplish some minor level of natural good while maintaining some levels of sin. With Faith it is possible to accomplish not just some minor level of natural good, but major levels of natural good, and, as Faith increases, it is possible to accomplish ever increasing levels of major spiritual good. It is possible to attain nexus to holiness and holiness.

When you or anyone has problems of any type or kind, pray that the one with problems will be given and will accept Faith. Pray Faith will increase in that person, grow, become stronger and stronger until it is the only way of life that person practices.

Always remember the other Virtues and their accouterments, do not automatically evolve, nor are they automatically activated, nor do they simply appear, just because one has Faith. Each, like Faith itself, must be sought, cultivated, practiced so it becomes strong through exercise.

Be conscious of everything of which it is possible to be aware. Especially be aware of what you do, think, and say, suppressing that which is not in accordance with Faith; practicing that which is in accordance with Faith; making every instant of your existence a prayer in Faith.

After all, the hallmark of those who are Faithful to Faith is that they operate Divinely.

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

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HOW CAN WE EXPRESS OUR FAITH AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE? Very few of us are or will be remarkable. So, how can an ordinary person be extraordinary?

When the seed of Faith falls upon what ever good ground there is in one of us, it takes root and grows, sending its roots into all of our being and changing those portions of us that are not spiritually fertile into that which is spiritually fertile. This happens unless we pull the word of God out by the roots, or fail to water it with the heavenly dew of Grace.

There are those who present the appearance of Faith, but in reality are opportunists, seeking their own selfish material betterment without regard to the needs and spiritual betterment of themselves or others. They are like the attractive plant which is poisonous, enticing others to kill themselves with their fruit.

But true Faith focuses on the Kingdom of God to the exclusion of all hazards. When something adverse happens to one who is of Faith, the adverse occurrence is duly noted, but the one of Faith proceeds with the task at hand. And the task at hand always is their own eternal salvation, and eternal salvation of others. The one of Faith looks on their own material betterment as something useful only in-so-far-as it is useful and used for the spiritual betterment of themselves and of others. Otherwise, to those of Faith, material betterment is useless, for it is not permanent, while spiritual betterment is, or can be, permanent.

But when we have Faith, what do we do? How do we improve our own spiritual situation, and that of others?

By way of example, let us contemplate Saint Paul being shipwrecked.

If we wish it, we can all go to sea in a small boat during a storm and become shipwrecked. But that is not what Saint Paul did. He became shipwrecked while

traveling from one place to another for the purpose of spreading the Faith. However, very few of us are in a situation where we can travel from one place to another for the purpose of spreading the Faith. Travel for most of us is limited to an occasional vacation, visiting family and friends, job related matters, establishing a new home, and similar situations.

But we can travel in a very Christian manner and spread the Faith by example. We can be courteous, inquire as to how we may assist those who obviously need assistance without imposing ourselves upon them or others, be patient, anticipate what we should do and what we should avoid, and if we are in a public conveyance such as an airplane we can quietly read the Psalms, the Bible, the life of a Saint, or pray The Rule of the Mother of God (The Rosary), or even just read an interesting book - but not one of those nasty ones..

But if we go around saying "J_E_S_U_S," and attempting to proselytize the captured audience on an airplane we will, hopefully, be justly evicted from the conveyance.

There are times when overt and active proselytizing are appropriate, but they are never appropriate when we impose that activity on others for then we are interfering with their exercise of their free will and we are making that imposition in an unjust manner. We can impinge on the free will of one who wishes to do harm or evil, but we can not impinge on the free will of another in the ordinary course of life.

You may think travel is not an every day thing, but it is for most of us. We travel to and from work, stop at the grocery or school, and even walk from our work station to some place to eat lunch. And every inch we travel in these daily pursuits is an inch in which we can be an example of our Faith without being obnoxious.

Look for the opportunity to show your Faith in every day matters, but exercise

those opportunities in a gentle manner. Be courteous to the cash register operator. Not only avoid making snide remarks while in the check out line, but actually be pleasant - try smiling, it is infectious, provided it is not a stupid grin or a brainless flash of "charm" we often see from celebrities. When someone comments on your generally cheerful attitude, do not say, "I have Je-sus in my heart," for you will be numbered as of no consequence. Instead, with a slight smile, say something like, "When morning came today I woke up, knew my name, and said my morning prayers, so three good things happened. It's a good way to start the day." And leave it at that! And also make sure you are telling the truth, especially about the morning prayers part.

Use the every day things of your life to express your Faith to yourself as well as to others and you will, absolutely will, make a difference. You will spread the Faith of Christ. You will deepen its roots in yourself, as well as spread the seeds of Faith to others. You will embolden those who wish to do good, and those who wish society to be good, by doing good yourself. You will also be teaching others to spread the Faith in a manner which is not obnoxious.

We can change ourselves into holy people by trying to be living examples of how real people should be, and thereby we will change others as well.

Ref: 2 Cor 11: 19-33; Luke 8:4-15

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WHY ARE THE WEEDS TAKING OVER THE FIELDS?

The wheat which is planted, harvested, and processed today, and which has been used for the past several thousand years, is the same as the grain which originally grew in the wilds before cultivation - but then again, it is not the same as that which grew and still grows in the wilds.

It is the same because it is wheat. The wheat which is cultivated wheat and the wheat which is wild wheat are both wheat. But the cultivated wheat has had certain qualities bred to suppression and other qualities bred to enhancement; qualities which are rudimentary in the wild wheat but which are subdued unless the wild wheat is cultivated and bred to strengthen the desirable qualities and diminish the undesirable qualities.

Because of this, cultivated wheat is pollinated with other cultivated wheat to strengthen the inclination to produce more grains per stalk, and to produce grains which are more nutritious, and better able to withstand adverse conditions, than the wild wheat.

Cultivated wheat also has the advantage of being tended, of having someone to prepare the soil for its growth, irrigate it and protect it from parasites, insects, disease, and animals which would consume it before it is ready to be harvested. It is farmed.

No matter how carefully wheat is cultivated, there often are wheat plants which revert to the wilder qualities, or which are weakened or succumb to attacks by parasites, disease, and other adverse conditions.

The transition from wheat to humankind is obvious.

Our parents are supposed to teach us to be Christians - not good Christians but Christians, for there are only those who actually are Christians, and those who are not. Christians, by definition, are

good, or, are attempting to be or become good, or better.

The Christian community is supposed to support and assist our parents in helping us to be Christians. Specific members of the Christian community are supposed to assist us with specific needs, particularly the Priests, who are supposed to provide us with access to Grace, to God's essence, through the Sacraments. Each individual in the Christian community has his and her role just as those who work on a farm have their individual roles, but just as all those who work on a farm generally are familiar with what everyone else does, so too are the members of the Christian community familiar with the work of all other members of the Christian community. And just as a farmer who goes to another farm can generally work with those from the other farm, so too can one from one part of the Christian community work with those from another part of the Christian community.

There are many who proclaim they are part of the Christian community. But if they do not have the Sacraments in Apostolic Succession, they simply are not part of the Christian community, and the grain they produce is poison to all who partake of it for such persons are fed on not believing in the Sacraments and therefore can receive little Divine sustenance. Their roots block out the nourishment God the Farmer provides to them, and they become wild and sew their seeds into the wheat fields often choking out the good wheat like the weeds they have become.

This is a pity because even wild wheat can be tended in such a manner that will enable it to produce a good crop which will nourish as well as provide seed for future crops.

For quite some time many of the hirelings who have been placed in charge of God's farm have allowed the wild wheat to spread its seed across the fields. They have taken the entire crop into the barn. Instead of sorting out the

weed from the crop and disposing of the weed so it can not continue its contamination, they have intermingled the weed seed with the good seed, spread both, cultivated both, with the result the weed is taking over and choking out the crop.

God does not want the wild wheat, or even the weeds, to be taken out of the field least they uproot the good wheat. It also is possible that the wild wheat may be able to be cultivated so that it becomes part of the crop, so tending to it could produce good results. But taking the fruit, the seed, from wheat which refused to be cultivated, and the fruit, the seeds, from the weeds, and mixing them in with the good seed, is stupid as well as contrary to God's instructions.

Ref: Col. 3:12-17; Mat. 13:24-30

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Psalm 90:1-7, 11-16

90:1. . . . He that dwelleth in the aid of the most High, shall abide under the protection of the God of Jacob. 90:2. He shall say to the Lord: Thou art my protector, and my refuge: my God, in him will I trust. 90:3. For he hath delivered me from the snare of the hunters: and from the sharp word. 90:4. He will overshadow thee with his shoulders: and under his wings thou shalt trust. 90:5. His truth shall compass thee with a shield: thou shalt not be afraid of the terror of the night. 90:6. Of the arrow that flieth in the day, of the business that walketh about in the dark: of invasion, or of the noonday devil. 90:7. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand: but it shall not come nigh thee. 90:11. For he hath given his angels charge over thee; to keep thee in all thy ways. 90:12. In their hands they shall bear thee up: lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. 90:13. Thou shalt walk upon the asp and the basilisk: and thou shalt trample under foot the lion and the dragon. 90:14. Because he hoped in me I will deliver him: I will protect him because he hath known my name. 90:15. He shall cry to me, and I will hear him: I am with him in tribulation, I will deliver him, and I will glorify him. 90:16. I will fill him with length of days; and I will shew him my salvation.

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CHRIST DID NOT HAVE AN ADVANTAGE OVER US

For Christ's fasting, prayer, and resistance to temptation to have true meaning for us we must understand that The Word made flesh truly is an unique entity. We must at least understand and, as best is possible, comprehend the true separation of the two natures, Divine and human, in the Person of the Word Incarnate.

Explaining this is a delicate matter to which human language is not readily attuned, and human thought is not readily adapted, because there is no precedent not only in human history but in anywhere.

The Divine Nature of the Word of God, of Jesus Christ, did not control His human nature. The Person, Jesus Christ, the Word of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Word Incarnate, controlled His human nature just as you and I control our human nature. And just as we are effected and affected by our human nature, so to was Jesus Christ the Word of God made Incarnate. Now, with His glorified human nature, He is effected and affected in a manner with which we are not familiar because we do not yet have a glorified human nature. But prior to His Resurrection He was effected and affected exactly the same as we are effected and affected.

When Jesus went into the desert He went because He was lead by the spirit. Was this the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost, or was it spirit in the sense of a sense of what is proper or a sense of duty, or a sense of what must be done, or some other meaning? It seems likely it was the Holy Ghost, but that does not exclude an intermingling of the other possibilities, or of other possibilities which we have not considered.

He was lead into the desert to be tempted by the devil and He prepared for the temptation by fasting for forty days and forty nights. The forty days and forty nights are stated explicitly

because there had and has been a practice of fasting during the daylight and breaking the fast or even feasting in the dark . . . and contemplating the double meaning of feasting in the dark is something which one should do especially considering the practices of many false religions - particularly Islam - when it comes to fasting.

After forty days and nights of fasting Jesus was hungry. Very hungry. So it was natural that the devil should use hunger as the first temptation. When Jesus easily and readily dismissed this temptation the devil used a combination of pride, self-importance, and related temptations, to induce Jesus to sin. Again, Jesus easily and readily dismissed the temptation. Then the devil tempted Jesus with all that the world has to offer, everything, kingdoms, temporal power, and all the delights and desirable things of this world. And Jesus not only easily and readily dismissed the temptations, but also dismissed the devil.

The temptations were real. The temptations appealed to Christ's human nature, just as they would appeal to our human nature. But Jesus was prepared to face the devil and all temptations because He had fasted and because He had used His time in the desert to prepare Himself for what was to come.

The Gospels relate numerous instances where Jesus went off to prepare Himself for something, sometimes by Himself, often in the company of just a select few of His followers. During these times it often is stated that He prayed. He who is God, prayed. He who is all powerful deemed it prudent and even necessary to prepare to face temptation, to prepare to face certain events, and even to prepare to engage in daily activities.

Since He Who is God deemed these practices to be beneficial for Himself, should we not also deem them to be beneficial for ourselves?

How can we expect to overcome temptations, how can we expect to be

successful in special situations, how can we expect to successfully engage in daily activities, if we do not prepare, when God Himself deemed it prudent to prepare?

There is an element which is indispensable if fasting and prayer are to be beneficial, to have any positive effect for us, and it is the same element which was necessary for these to be beneficial to the Word made flesh. Their engagement must be willingly, willfully, with the intent and desire that there be spiritual benefit in conjunction with and as a result of their practice. There can be no element of a grudging engagement for as much as one grudgingly performs, grudgingly fasts, grudgingly prays, to that extent is the effectiveness and benefit forfeited.

Always remember that Jesus Christ did not have what we could easily term "an unfair advantage" in obtaining a positive result from fasting and prayer, and in overcoming temptation. His human nature was the same as ours, as prone and inclined to self preservation, self promotion, ease of life, curiosity, and delights, as is ours. And His Divine Nature did not effect His human nature or His human will. He, Jesus Christ, the entity who until He became incarnate and assumed a human nature, was unique in that there is but one God but was not unique in that there are Three Persons of The Blessed Trinity - He this unique entity of both Divine Nature and of human nature, did these things in this world in His not-yet-glorified-or -transfigured human nature.

Since He was able so to do, so also are we, if we but follow His example. It is the fortitude of the individual, of the person, be it it of Christ, or of you, or of me, which is determinative. We are able to strengthen our fortitude by following Christ's example. So, let us follow His example.

Ref: 2 Cor 6:1-10; Mat. 4:1-11

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METHODS OR MEANS OF ACQUISITION OR ACQUIRING, OF VALUATION OR ESTABLISHING VALUE - And of ENTITLEMENTS and that which it is impossible to earn yet which can only be earned if it is to be acquired - ~ Merit ~

Some “things” have intrinsic value, some are valued or have value given to them, and some are both of innate value and deemed to be valuable; while often that which has intrinsic value is not valued, and that which is valued actually is without value.

When value is given to something the value often is established in a context, sometimes in a general context but often in a specific context. When food is scarce corn has a higher value than when food is plentiful. But corn always is of some value, unless, possibly, you are a silicone life form with no need to synthesize energy. Then it may be of no value - to you.

Professional athletes usually are paid more money than people who are employed in other professions or jobs. This is because of a multitude of factors, which include there being fewer individuals with the ability to perform at the very top levels of the various sports increasing the “value” of such personnel, the fact that the fewer number of employees and relatively restricted equipment and maintenance requirements allows a larger share of profits be paid to individual employees, and the fact that the public is willing to pay what many consider unreasonable prices so-as-to attend events whereat the athletes work or perform. Intrinsically, there is nothing other than the marketplace which makes the pay received by a fullback or a catcher be greater than that received by a plumber. If your toilet is stopped up that plumber suddenly becomes much more valuable to you than the athlete, but you will remain unwilling to pay the plumber what the athlete would earn for working the same amount of time.

What you are able to earn is similarly determined by what it is you do to earn a living, and the value placed on that both by those who hire you and those who obtain what you produce.

There are other “things” which are of value but for which it is impossible to establish, set, or name a value. You received the gift of life from your parents and God. That gift is of immense value, whether or not you value it, but it is impossible to state exactly what is that value.

Connected with value is obtaining the “valuable thing”. If it is money, most often reasonable people with decent standards think in terms of earning money, or earning a living, of working and being paid for the work - even if it is being “on standby” part of the time. One therefore may be paid both for the work they do, and for the ability to be called on to do that work. In both instances the employee earns his pay.

It also is not unusual for someone to be given something of value. This happens every time someone inherits something. It also happens in various cultures on special occasions, such as birthdays, certain holidays, and certain holy days. Occasionally someone who normally would have received something does not because of something they have done or failed to do which the potential or prospective donor deems to be of sufficient severity to warrant withholding the donation or gift.

There is one “thing” which often is viewed as a combination of at least two “things”, **which one is both unable to earn, yet which one must earn;** something which only one human has ever earned.

That “thing” is eternal life. Two of the truths, facts, associated with eternal life are: eternal life belongs to God by God’s very nature; it is impossible for any human to earn eternal life. Into the “mix” regarding eternal life one must place merit. Often the word “merit” confuses

us more than it helps us to comprehend how we attain eternal life, but as a concept associated with justice - particularly divine justice - merit is able to assist us in understanding and comprehension.

While it is impossible for any human to earn eternal life, one human did: Jesus Christ. From the first instant of His human existence Jesus had the complete use of human free will. All of His thoughts, actions, and every aspect of His humanity was from the instant of incarnation, totally in concert with God. He therefore merited eternal life; divine justice required He receive eternal life in His human nature. His human purpose was the salvation of every human - or more accurately, the making of eternal salvation available to every human being. Therefore, in fulfilling His purpose He not only earned eternal life for Himself, attaining His own personal glorification, but also made them - eternal life and personal glorification - available to every human.

This may be difficult to comprehend if one does not really appreciate the reality of the fullness and completeness of Christ’s Divine Nature and the reality of the fullness and completeness of His human nature. Not their “separateness”, for their union is in the Person of Christ at the instant of the Incarnation of the Word. But their fullness and completeness. Christ’s human nature was the same as ours, but at the instant He acquired or assumed it, at the instant of His Incarnation, He permanently, fully, and completely attained concert with God in His human nature, and thereby merited eternal life.

In the Eternal Now the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary was faithful to the Grace, the Divine Life, which made her fit to be and made it fitting for her to be the Mother of God, the Mother of the Word Incarnate. She was faithful from the instant of her conception and never wavered from that faithfulness.

No one else has ever attained that concert.

An interesting property of Grace is that it makes one’s nature - our human nature - inclined to think and to act - to operate - divinely, or in concert with God. Humans in even the most minimal state of Grace participate in the Divine Nature to the extent of their state of Grace.

When one first receives Grace through Sacramental Baptism there is deposited in the person, whether adult or infant, the ability to believe that Jesus Christ is God the Second Person of The Blessed Trinity, the inclination to so believe, and the inclination to act on that belief.

When one operates in concert with God in accordance with that belief, for love of God, then that belief becomes Faith.

But one may retain Faith and **NOT** operate in concert with God. This happens every time one sins, and in severe or mortal sin there is a total loss of Grace but not necessarily the loss of Faith. Indeed, because Faith is not lost, one is driven to Sacramental Confession and Absolution (and Penance). This compelling drive to re-establish union with God is reinforced by Hope, and made overwhelming by Charity - Divine Love.

But those who have only belief, and even those who have Faith, who do not operate divinely, (or at the very least attempt to operate divinely with some consistency) do noting to *merit* eternal life. They do nothing which will invoke divine justice to determine there should be a positive recognition of their life. They do not operate in a manner which will compel divine justice to give the gift of eternal life with God in eternal love (Charity) in heaven. And without this inducement to divine justice, one is not given eternal live and one does not receive eternal life.

Those who think or believe that Faith without operating divinely will result in eternal life do not have true Hope but rather commit the sin of presumption. They presume they will receive that

which is reserved for those who operate divinely, yet they neglect or decline to operate divinely.

Only those who in Faith operate divinely, who think and act in accordance with and in concert with God, have the ability to truly have Hope. All others simply presume, and so do without justification.

For some reason there is a vast multitude which believes it is entitled to the benefits of Christ’s merits, of Christ’s attaining eternal life in His human nature, of Christ’s Incarnation, life, passion, death, and resurrection, without any effort on their own part.

Christ made it very clear we must pick up our cross and follow Him; that we must accept the yoke and burden He has for us; that we must think, desire, and do - that we must operate - in concert with Him; that we must operate divinely; that otherwise we will not have eternal life.

Saint Paul, teaching in concert with God, operating divinely, has made it abundantly clear we must avoid sin, that sin includes amongst other matters desiring and engaging in fornication, attempting to engage in and actual engagement in deceptive or unfair business practices, in placing anything of this world ahead of God, in seeking anything in preference to God.

Yes, it is impossible for us to earn eternal life for it required God to earn eternal life for us and neither we nor any one or more of us is God. But it is a gift which we must earn, a gift we must merit. Eternal life is a gift because it is impossible for us to pay the price to acquire it. Yet, unless we desire, think, and act in concert with God, unless we operate divinely, unless we earn meriting eternal life, we will not induce divine justice to grant us eternal life.

Ref: 1 Thes. 4:1-7; Mat. 17:1-9

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FROM THE BOOK OF DAN

Dan. 3:47-51

3:47. And the flame mounted up above the furnace nine and forth cubits: 3:48. And it broke forth, and burnt such of the Chaldeans as it found near the furnace. 3:49. But the angel of the Lord went down with Azarias and his companions into the furnace: and he drove the flame of the fire out of the furnace, 3:50. And made the midst of the furnace like the blowing of a wind bringing dew, and the fire touched them not at all, nor troubled them, nor did them any harm. 3:51. Then these three, as with one mouth, praised and glorified and blessed God, in the furnace, saying:

CANTICLE:
Dan. 3:52-56

3:52. Blessed art thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers; and worthy to be praised, and glorified, and exalted above all for ever:

and blessed is the holy name of thy glory: and worthy to be praised and exalted above all, in all ages.

3:53. Blessed art thou in the holy temple of thy glory:

and exceedingly to be praised and exalted above all for ever.

3:55. Blessed art thou that beholdest the depths, and sittest upon the cherubims:

and worthy to be praised and exalted above all for ever.

3:56. Blessed art thou in the firmament of heaven:

and worthy of praise, and glorious for ever.

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