



RETURN

The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil
(The Basilians - The Basilian Fathers)
THE ORTHODOX CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE AMERICAS



Volume 21 No. 2 OF THE CHURCH OF MAN WITH GOD JULY 2011 A.D.

**~ CONVERSION AND FAITH ARE
INTELLECTUAL - BASED IN THE INTELLECT ~**
*From Metropolitan Archbishop Lee S. Mc Colloster, S.S.B.
To the flock entrusted into my care:*

When Saint Paul became a follower of Jesus Christ he did not do so as a matter of emotion. He did so based on facts; extremely unusual facts, but still, facts. His experience of meeting Our Saviour, of talking with Him, of being told the reality of Our Lord's Divinity by Our Lord in such an extraordinary manner, made him contemplate



(Continued CONVERSION on page 8)

**LONG BEFORE HITLER,
MUSSOLINI, STALIN,
LENIN, NAPOLEON, THE
KAHN, THERE WAS
LYCURGUS**
**(Not a single bit of moral
dogma is stated herein. Yet, . . .**

From the earliest of civilizations music has been recognized as having a significant effect on individuals and societies.

Lycurgus, recognizing this, persuaded Thales to go over to Lacedaenon, where Thales, exercising his talent as a lyric poet, ". . . performed the part of one of the most ablest lawgivers in the world. The very songs which he composed were exhortations to obedience and concord, and the very measure and cadence of the verse, conveying impressions of order and tranquility, had so great an influence on the minds of the listeners, that they were insensibly softened and civilised,

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WHEN DO YOU SEEK GOD'S HELP

When do you ask God for help? Never or almost never? Do you wait until the storm is sinking your ship? Do you ask for help when you see the storm clouds gathering? Do you ask when you begin your voyage, or when planning it, or are you wise and ask His help when you first awake and all throughout your consciousness so that you also seek His help even in your sleep?

Whether in the tempest of temptation, or surveying the apparent ruin of one's life after the storm of a personal tragedy, most people have at least a fluttering thought of seeking God's help. But most people do not believe

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GOOD PARENTING DOES NOT INSURE A SUCCESS- FUL CHILD, BUT LACK OF PARENTING . . .

A certain man married a decent woman and they had three children. He worked very hard and provided a decent life for his family, sending all of his children to good schools, seeing to their religious instruction, and generally parenting them in a good, proper, and reasonable manner.

(Continued PARENTING on page 6)

HEALING THE HEART OF THE HOLY GHOST? By pursuing God with fidelity.

One of the great mysteries in man's relationship with God is why God gives His mercy to some and withholds His mercy from others applying His justice to them. Why does God give some His grace which is necessary to follow Him, and withhold His grace from others - especially since it is impossible to follow God unless one receives the grace from God necessary to follow Him?

(Continued HEART on page 7)

THE EMPLOYEE OF THE HONEST EMPLOYER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WAGE HE RECEIVES

If you needed your wages so that you could live and would die without them, had worked hard all day, or for the amount of time your employer stipulated, and, when it came time to be paid, someone attempted to prevent you from receiving your wages, would you whimper and think, "That is not fair," or would you initiate some severe action against the interloper? Would you limit your reaction to argument? To litigation? Would you "get physical" if necessary? Would you risk arrest and

(Continued WAGE on page 6)

WHO PREPARES YOUR SPIRITUAL FOOD

Dried Dung Burns Very Readily

The sacred Body and Blood of Christ, Holy Communion, is available to all if they but profess truly what Christ taught and what is preserved in the Orthodox Church, and hopefully in the Roman Church and our other sister Churches of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

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The sole purpose of this publication is to comply with the teachings and instructions of Jesus Christ, second person of the Trinity God, and to further His kingdom; or, in plain language, to get as many of our sorry selves to heaven as is possible.

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*Most Rev. Lee S. Mc Colloster,
Publisher*

LETTERS

(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
Originating From BasilNet ReuNet
HIOC BBS**

The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint Basil - The Basilian Fathers

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

(Continued WEB on page 3)

(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.

We have initiated a simplified method of subscribing to our InterNet mailing lists.

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Enter your e-mail address in the place provided, select the mailing list to which you wish to subscribe, click the **Subscribe** button, and an e-mail will be sent to you to confirm your desire to subscribe to the mailing list.

To confirm your subscription simply follow the instructions in the confirmation message (just click the reply command on your e-mail program without changing anything in the Subject line) and you are subscribed to the mailing list.

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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AS THE YEARS PASS, AND SO DO SOME OF OUR SUB- SCRIBERS . . .

As the years of our publication of **REUNION** pass we have become accustomed to seeing the names of the hundreds to whom we mail the publication - well, at least those to whom we personally send copies. Many more copies are mailed by others, and many receive it through e-mail mailing list, so we are not as familiar or perhaps not familiar at all with their names.

Occasionally one of the recipients corresponds with us, clarifying something, or occasionally encouraging us. Occasionally such an individual enters into eternity without our receiving notice - especially if the individual is elderly, especially those who live alone. Then, after some passage of time, we will receive an issue of **REUNION** returned by the post office, investigate, and find the person has fallen asleep in the Lord. One such individual is Abbot (Dom) Augustine Whitfield (Whitfield).

Dom Augustine followed the Rule of Benedict within the Jurisdiction of the Russian Church Abroad. He possessed what may only be described as a full measure of fierce, gentle holiness, which will for ever effect those with whom he came in contact.

Memory Eternal !

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HOLY INNOCENTS "PHYSICAL PLANT" UP- DATE

Now that the basic structure for the Church building is in place, and even though the Church interior is far from being completed, we have turned our attention to the grounds for the time being.

Though we have our own water well, and the water is excellent, we decided to make provisions to tie into a new sanitary water system being completed. We do not intend to actually tie in to this system, but to have water lines run to the tie in in the event utilizing the government's system becomes necessary. This entailed trenching a distance of fifty feet through drought hardened clay. The first eighteen feet were dug with pick and shovel and required two days labor. The last thirty-two feet were dug with a rented trenching machine and required fifteen minutes plus the rental fee.

The next project also will be on the grounds. A retaining wall for a garden is being constructed and should be completed within a short period of time.

When that is completed we will obtain at least six yards and possibly up to eighteen yards of top soil. This will be used to buttress the concrete drive and walk ways, and to abut the building slabs. This is needed to preserve the stability and lateral strength of the slabs, especially considering the underlying ground is clay. Also, there is very little top soil; the grass and gardens struggle to exist in clay. Clay provides little nourishment to vegetation, even though it is "loaded with" minerals. Since we are accustomed to growing a variety of plants for food, as well as for liturgical ornamentation, and as ancillary to a peaceful atmosphere, some top soil is needed. Clay is as hard as rock when it is dry - it is a mineral. Clay also is extremely slippery when wet, and tends to stick to the bottoms of shoes in layers as well as cause people to slip and fall. Some good grass growing out of some

good top soil will help alleviate the situation. It may require most of the summer months to complete the top soil project due to cost and to the reality that it is not possible for us to do such work in the summer for more than a few hours every few days even using equipment. Age, physical condition, heat, and humidity are factors which in combination force themselves to be considered and result in dire consequences for failure so-to-do.

Once the grounds are basically established we intend to complete setting up the work shop. A few more shelves, work benches, and racks are needed before we will be able to properly attend to the carpentry required to begin completion of the Church interior.

But once the work shop is completed, we intend to return to work on the Church interior.

The Church building is fully functional and has been in constant use since the basic structure was built. Therefore, the delay in completion of the interior will have no effect on its functionality. But it will be good to have it look as nice as possible, in a manner conducive to worship.

PUBLICATIONS, BOOKS, AND REVISIONS IN PROCESS

We remind our clergy and those who utilize our various books, publications, and printed material, that while we complete the basic structure of our new facility, work on revisions and on new material is virtually at a stand still.

This includes all but the bare minimum on **REUNION** as well.

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BEARING WITNESS TO CHRIST WITH A SHIRT !!!

As Father combed his hair after dressing in the morning he noted his hair had passed the stage of imitating that of Albert Einstein and had entered into the realm of ridiculous disarray favored by celebrities arrested for possession of drugs or DWI for their police mug shots.

So after morning Divine Liturgy (Mass) he skipped breakfast and headed for the barber shop.

The new barber, a lady, staunchly Baptist, had taken over the barber shop a couple of years before when the old barber, a man, had retired.

Another old guy in the chair, someone Father recognized, Hungarian Catholic. Young skinny guy waiting - well younger than Father and the old guy in the chair, Assemblies of God and on his third wife was disclosed after a few minutes conversation. A Mom leaving with her pre-teen son, very respectful child as country children often are.

Everybody acknowledged each other as people are wont to do in a barber shop - it is different in a barber shop as compared with a beauty salon. More friendly, and no chemical smells.

An alligator trapper arrived with pictures of a gigantic alligator he recently trapped and relocated. Big son-of-a-gun, the alligator, not the trapper. The trapper - skinny, about 5' 4", perhaps 115 pounds on a wet day with his boots on, French ancestry.

Father's turn in the chair, and as he settled in a lady with her just entering teenage son entered. She glanced at Father, saw his cleric shirt, correctly guessed he is a priest, but probably thought he is Roman Catholic and not Orthodox Catholic.

She and barber greeted each other, then the barber asked Father, "Regular haircut as usual?"

"Yep."

"You don't wish to try something new?"

"Would it help any?" (Big grin)

"Not likely," (Big smile, ladies smile, they do not grin.)

"I don't call no man father," the newly arrived lady challenged.

The old Priest did not rise to the bait, and simply asked the lady barber how her family was doing.

As they talked the lady who 'don't call no man father' interjected, saying, "He's going to visit his aunt," indicating her just entering teenage son. "They're on the coast and he's never been swimming before so I've covered him in the Blood of the Lamb."

"Sounds like you'll be having a lot of fun," the lady barber told the boy. And to his mother she said, "I wouldn't worry about him swimming. They'll take good care of him."

The general conversation in the barber shop then centered on camping and swimming vacations, the 'blood of the lamb' lady constantly reiterating her trust that Jesus would take care of her son because she had covered him in the blood of the lamb.

As she finished cutting Father's hair the lady barber asked, "Any hair spray?"

"I'm still not a girley man," he replied, smiling. "What ever hair there is can pretty much do what ever happens to it, and a comb works easier when there is nothing to 'stick it up'."

As Father paid the lady barber the young teens boy was motioned ahead by the others and, checking to be sure it was OK with his mother, he sat in the barber chair. Most of the time country children are rather polite and he was no exception.

Then, to everyone's surprise, as Father was leaving, the 'blood of the lamb' lady stopped him and asked, "You're a Priest, aren't you?"

"Yes mam," he replied.

"Father," she asked pleadingly, "could you give him a blessing to keep him safe on vacation."

"Sure," he replied. "The first time I gave this blessing was more than twenty years ago, to a young girl who had just been given a sports car. The next day she was in a wreck with an eighteen wheeler. She had to be extracted with the jaws of life, spent two hours in the hospital, and walked out without a bruise. They put an ACE bandage on her knee but that was just window dressing. You want the same blessing."

"Yes Father, please."

"May almighty God bless you and keep you safe in your travels today and throughout your life, and especially on your vacation, in the name of the Father +, and of the Son +, and of the Holy Spirit +, Amen."

And as he gave the blessing with the sign of the cross everyone in the barber shop blessed themselves with the sign of the cross: Baptist, Assemblies of God, fallen away Catholic. But the boy looked at his mother first to be sure it was OK, and probably to see how it was done.

As he left Father said, "I kind of included everyone in the blessing. Hope you'all don't mind."

They all smiled and a few timidly waved at him as he left.

All because he, as is his custom, was wearing his black cleric shirt with the little small white "thingie" in the front of the collar. Obviously a Priest, his black jeans and cowboy boots notwithstanding.

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(Continued WAGE from page 1)

imprisonment? Remember, without your wages you will die. What would you do? To what extent would you go?

If you needed the wages so that you could live, would you do a sloppy job, an inadequate job, clock in and then go fishing knowing your employer would be fully aware of inadequate job performance?

Would you ever even begin to entertain the barest beginning of the concept or thought, that you would work hard all day until just before it was time to be paid, and then walk off the job?

Even if you own your own business or are otherwise self employed, you must satisfy your customers, for your customers are your employers. If all you do is manage your own assets, or live on what you have inherited and have that inheritance managed by others, you must be a wise steward of what you own, otherwise your means of living will disappear and you will become just as destitute as one who has not received his employment wages.

We work so that we can live. We work so we can obtain what is necessary for living, and, if there is any surplus beyond what is necessary for living, so that we can obtain some luxuries. If we are farsighted and have sufficient means we also attempt to provide something extra for when we can no longer work, or for when there is no work.

Why is it that we will see to our physical needs but so often neglect our spiritual needs? Why is it that we can easily perceive the necessity of providing for our bodies but so often fail to perceive the need to provide for our souls? When the soul is hungry it aches just as much as when the body is hungry. When the soul is injured it feels pain just as when the body is injured. When the soul is ill it is in malaise just like the body when it is ill.

We have an inclination to shift responsibility for adverse situations from ourselves to someone else. This is true in our employment as well as in other aspects of our lives. Occasionally someone else or

something else is responsible for adverse employment situations. When the economy is in recession it is not likely that any particular individual is responsible. However, it is entirely possible that a general group or portion of society is responsible or shares responsibility for the recession. If an individual is a part or member of that general group, then that individual shares responsibility for the recession. Also, if an individual knew or should have - could have known of the situation which was leading to recession, could have raised the alarm or been able to mitigate the recession, and did nothing, then that individual shares responsibility for the recession. But such situations are not commonplace. So placing responsibility for adverse employment situations on someone else can be a true statement of reality.

But attempting to make someone else responsible for our own adverse employment situation very often is an attempt to shirk our own responsibility.

Our spiritual world "financial" situation is very similar to our physical world financial situation. That is, except for one area, the area of responsibility.

Too often we blame the Devil for our spiritual poverty or bankruptcy; for our spiritual ills. Is the candy manufacturer responsible for the ills suffered by a diabetic who knows his condition but eats a pound of candy anyway? No, or course not. Likewise, the Devil is not responsible for our giving in to temptation. The diabetic who knowingly eats too much candy is responsible for his own illness, and the sinner is responsible for his own giving in to temptation.

In the same vein, the employee who does not give his employer an honest day's work for an honest day's wage is responsible for his own economic plight.

It should not be difficult to extrapolate these concepts to application in the real world, the spiritual world, the world of morality, the world of God.

Ref: 1 Cor. 9:24-27; 10:1-5; Mat. 20:1-16

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(Continued PARENTING from page 1)

All three of his children married decently and had children, and all three of them eventually divorced - which just shows that no matter how well a child is reared the child's free will, level of maturity in choosing a spouse, and perhaps the "luck of the draw" are factors in the child's domestic life and parenting.

As he advanced in years his daughter remarried and much later his wife died. Eventually he too died and at his funeral a rosary was wrapped in his hands, the same rosary he was praying at the time of his death. His two youngest grand children, in their twenties and born of his daughter in her second marriage, admired the rosary in his hands, even commenting on it and on his practice of praying the rosary.

A family member asked if they prayed the rosary often and each said they did not have a rosary. The family member had two rosaries and gave one to each grandchild. Then one of the grandchildren asked, "How do we use them?"

The family member asked, "You don't know how to pray the rosary?"

"No", one grandchild answered, "we've never prayed the rosary."

The other grandchild then said, "We've never prayed."

Their mother cut in, saying in astonishment, "You don't know how to pray the rosary?"

Both grandchildren said, in perfect harmony, "No!"

Roman Catholic, in their twenties, did not know how to pray the rosary, and have never prayed, apparently not even at their grandfather's funeral mass.

One need not be the Ever Virgin Mary or Saint Joseph to be a good parent, but attempting to emulate them, or doing something more than just giving birth -

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if that is not too much trouble - is a good idea.

The Blessed Ever Virgin Mary was not simply chosen by God the Father to be the mother of His only Begotten Son Incarnate - Jesus Christ God. She was and eternally is the only one, the only creature ever, to be perfect in holiness from the instant of her conception and forever thereafter.

While it is not likely any of us will ever attain that state in this life, we should exercise at the very least a modicum of common sense, especially in rearing our children.

It is impossible to imagine the Virgin Mary saying, "I will not bring Jesus up in any religion but will allow His to chose what ever religion He wishes when He decides He wants to practice some religion." No, she and Saint Joseph taught Him the Jewish faith under Abraham and Moses and saw to it that He practiced that religion, even though they knew He is the object and promise of that religion.

Anyone with any operative level of logic or common sense will recognize the practice of rearing a child without a good religious foundation will insure the child is without religion and will associate with some religion only through happenstance and struggle.

Parents who exhibit and practice care and concern for their children and the well-being of their children might have children who reject religious standards in the children's own lives. But parents who do not exhibit or practice care and concern for their own children, who live lives without religion and therefore without honor, teach their children to live lives without honor, lives without concern for others. That lesson is all too easily learned.

That old man did the best he knew how to do in rearing his children. That his daughter became such a dishonorable parent was not due to a lack on his part,

but on decisions the daughter made exercising her own free will. But to be Roman Catholic and rear at least two children who in the mid twenty years of life do not know how to pray the Lord's Prayer - the Our Father -, the "Hail Mary", or the "Glory Be to the Father", is beyond dishonorable, beyond unimaginable, beyond unconscionable.

Yet it is very common.

The next time a parent states they will allow their child to choose his or her own religion realize you are listening to someone who is at best stupid, at worst without honor, and who has no concern for you, society, their children, family, and ultimately not even for themselves. And that they are dangerous, their children probably will be dangerous, and that you can trust neither them nor their children. For religion is that which establishes standards. And the Queen of Heaven is a very good standard which we will be well served to attempt to meet.

Ref: Ecclus. 24:5,7; Luke 1:26-33

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(Continued HEART from page 1)

Perhaps there is an aspect of God's justice which, in a sense, triggers His being merciful to each individual to whom He grants the grace necessary to follow Him. Perhaps in His omnipotent and infallible knowledge of each person, He is merciful to those who He, in His omnipotent knowledge, knows will accept and use the grace to follow Him, and in that same omnipotent knowledge, He, in perfect justice, withholds that same grace from those whom He knows will reject that grace.

This is such an imperfect speculation as to barely be worthy of being expressed, but it does lead to something of great importance. That thing of great importance is, that while it is impossible for someone to attain eternal life unless God in His mercy gives a person the grace necessary to follow Him, it also is true that not everyone to whom God mercifully gives the grace to follow Him does so, or does so with the fidelity needed to attain eternal life.

We must pursue God with the fidelity required to receive eternal life. Our inclination so to do will increase as our knowledge and understanding of God increase. In-so-far-as a creature can be said to have knowledge and understanding of God, as our knowledge and understanding of God increases so to does the probability or likelihood that we will begin to love God for His own sake, and that our love for God will likewise increase.

It is in our love for God that we begin to mature the desire to live in accordance with God's desires, that we desire to think and live in accordance with the Divine Virtue of Faith which is a gift from God.

We thus begin to spiritually mature so that we desire and attempt to think and act in accordance with Faith - to operate divinely - not just out of fear of eternal damnation, but because we increasingly love God. As our love for God increases, fear of eternal damnation

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becomes less and less of the reason we seek to operate divinely and more and more that love for God becomes the reason and increases the love, desire, and reason for it beyond any measure possibly attainable by fear.

When a person attends Sunday Divine Liturgy because of the Commandment to keep holy the Sabbath Day, the Lord's Day, the element of love for God may be present, but so too are the elements of obedience and fear and perhaps obedience inspired by fear. But when a person attends Sunday Divine Liturgy grateful that God established an order and system whereby that person is able to worship God in the manner which God expressly desires, that gratefulness is of necessity inspired by love for God.

It is that love for God which is the greatest inspirational gift of the Holy Ghost. Raising the dead to life, moving mountains, understanding languages you have never studied or heard, having others hear you in their own language when it is different from the language you speak, all rank in the top of being spectacular and impressive - right up there along with having lightning flash from your finger tips. Often these and similar things are what people think of when considering the gifts of the Holy Spirit. But the most important, enduring, necessary, and spectacular gift of the Holy Spirit is Charity (Agape Love, Divine Love) with which the Holy Ghost often excites the human love natural to us into His own Divine Love.

It is resonance with Charity, with Divine Love, which is the foundation of the peace, comfort, and still but deep resolution towards perfection, which one experiences after Sacramental Confession and Absolution - be it for simple sins or significant sins. In that resonance we appreciate - we like and enjoy - worshiping God in Divine Liturgy. In our own acquisition of the

Holy Spirit in ever increasing measure we ever increase our measure of Divine Love from God, the measure of His Divine Love in our essence, our own distribution of Divine Love, and the extent of our own operating divinely.

We know that God the Father is the Magisterium of The Blessed Trinity. It is the Father who has established the Commandments, rules of conduct, and standards which each person must embrace and make part of their beings, for each person to attain eternal life. We

know that Jesus Christ, God the Son and the only begotten of the Father, is Saviour and Redeemer, who repaired the ability of each human to

effectively embrace the Father's will, and who established Sacraments, procedures, and standards by which we receive the Grace needed to attain the joy of eternal life. The Holy Ghost touches those who are receptive, enabling their harmonious response to the Father, the Son, and to Himself. Perhaps, just perhaps, the Holy Ghost does not restrict Himself to touching just those who are receptive. If so, the heart of the Holy Ghost must be constantly wounded with rejection. Are we able to heal those wounds with our acceptance?

Ref: Acts 2:1-11; John 14:23-31

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(Continued **CONVERSION** from page 1)

his experiences, these facts, and assess them intellectually, resulting in Saint Paul's becoming a Christian. The process took but an instant, but it took place intellectually.

Only after his conversion did emotions become a part of Saint Paul's Faith. Only after the intellectual process did the emotional aspects of being a follower of Christ make their appearance in Saint Paul's life.

And that is true of any real conversion to Christianity. It also is true of any valid practice of the Christian Faith.

Those who believe they are Christians, but whose Christianity is based in emotion and not in intellect, follow a system of belief that is either immature or incomplete or both.

A child or one with diminished mental capacity can fruitfully sustain a belief based in emotion but it will be neither accurate nor complete unless it is also intellectual to some measure.

But an adult or one with normal intellectual ability who relies mainly on emotional belief can not fruitfully sustain anything approaching Faith, and will of necessity be in error, perhaps in gross error.

These are true because emotional comprehension, and understanding based in emotions, are subject to the sway of the very emotions in which they are based, and vary in intensity, and also are swayed by the other emotions, including the personal desires, of the individual.

However, belief based in intellectual comprehension is based in assessment of facts, and with that same intellectual assessment comes either a willful and intentional rejection of Faith or a willful and intentional acceptance of Faith.

Christianity based in emotions is actually something akin to following

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natural instincts. There is very little difference between a totally emotional following of Christ, and the body's succumbing to the desire to eat something tasty and then the person sinking their teeth into some tasty food. And as with tasty food, which the body craves in varying degrees, sometimes desiring a pastry, then chocolate milk, and a day later some beef, and later pasta, and perhaps Chinese food; so too does the dogma which is based in emotion vary with what ever emotional needs one has from time to time.

But Christianity based in the intellect ascertains unchanging truths, and is therefore real.

The emotions have a valid part in conversion and in Faith, for they sustain us, assist us in being desirous of fulfilling The Way, and are an integral part of our very nature. But emotions should never be in control; they should only assist the intellect, and the intellect should be in control.

Ref: Acts. 9:1-22; Mat. 19:27-29



++ *Lee, S.S.B.*

God, please help me love You

(Continued HELP from page 1)

God will set things to right, to the status which existed prior to the trouble.

But if a person seeks God's help in everything, in every aspect of his life, and also does or attempts to do every Godly thing which he should, then he is able to better weather the storms which come his way. He does not fear them to the same extent and with the same intensity as those who do not so do.

Imagine the fatalistic despair of those who believe nature is God, or that the sum total of all life or life forces is God. Such persons must spend their lives seeking the keys to control of nature, or of seeking the keys to utilization of as much of the energy of the life forces as is possible. And they never succeed, for their premise is in error. In observing their failure they are forced in truth to acknowledge their failure, and they have no hope of anything what-so-ever.

It is true that one must rely on one's self, but it is also true that one's self is incapable of fulfilling all of one's needs.

Proper self reliance brings one to the door of reliance on God in all things while continuing to do one's part, and one's part is to do all that one can do. When one does all that he can do in any given situation, and trustingly calls on God for help and relies on God for that help, that person will receive a result which is in accordance with God's will. Perhaps that result will not be apparent until after the person is dead, and perhaps he has already received the result, for God existing in the Eternal Now can easily assist us in the running of time before we actually seek His assistance in this running of time.

You are already on the Voyage of Life. If you have found someone with whom to rid the River of Life, thank the Great Navigator, and ask Him to help you put into the Port of Heaven.

Ref: Rom. 13:8-10; Mat. 8:23-27

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(Continued EUCHARIST from page 1)

But it is not available to those denominations which call themselves churches, but which are not, because they severed themselves from The One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, notably from the Roman Church, and in severance they rejected the true Sacraments. They have substituted soda crackers and grape juice for the true Body and Blood of Christ.

And instead of the cleansing Sacrament of Confession and Absolution received from the Priests who are in Apostolic Succession, using the soap and water which God provided in the Sacrament, they go through motions they have invented but which spread the dirt around without beginning to cleanse.

They have rejected the life giving and life sustaining banquet prepared by God, in favor of something which does not even taste good, and which has neither nourishment nor life for it was prepared by the Cook from Hell who only serves poison.

It is very easy to discern those false churches. Each of them decide what their dogma is, and their dogma changes with the desires of the people. Their favorite sins become approved activities in their ever changing dogma - dogma which they change as needed so that their favorite sins are declared to be approved conduct, even though God has declared them to be sinful and disapproved conduct.

By way of example:

God has condemned homosexual and lesbian relationships and sexual activities. These pretend churches in their beginnings often also condemned these things; but many of them now accept these things and even "ordain" homosexuals and lesbians - even homosexuals and lesbians who openly engage in homosexual and lesbian sexual relationships.

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CHILDREN'S PAGE

The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism

Q. 1208. What care does the Church take in the examination and distribution of relics?

A. The Church takes the greatest care in the examination and distribution of relics.

1. The canonization or beatification of the person whose relic we receive must be certain. 2. The relics are sent in sealed packets, that must be opened only by the bishop of the diocese to which the relics are sent, and each relic or packet must be accompanied by a document or written paper proving its genuineness. 3. The relics cannot be exposed for public veneration until the bishop examines them and pronounces them authentic; that is, that they are what they are claimed to be.

Q. 1209. What should we be certain of before using any relic or giving it to another?

A. Before using any relic or giving it to another we should be certain that all the requirements of the Church concerning it have been fulfilled, and that the relic really is, as far as it is possible for any one to know, what we believe it to be.

Q. 1210. Has God Himself honored relics?

A. God Himself has frequently honored relics by permitting miracles to be wrought through them. There is an example given in the Bible, in the IV Book of Kings, where it is related that a dead man was restored to life when his body touched the bones, that is, the relics of the holy prophet Eliseus.

Q. 1211. Does the first Commandment forbid the making of images?

A. The first Commandment does forbid the making of images if they are made to be adored as gods, but it does not forbid the making of them to put us in mind of Jesus Christ, His Blessed Mother, and the saints.

Q. 1212. How do we show that it is only the worship and not the making of images that is forbidden by the first commandment?

A. We show that it is only the worship and not the making of images that is forbidden by the first commandment:

1. Because no one thinks it sinful to carve statues or make photographs or paintings of relatives or friends; 2. Because God Himself commanded the making of images for the temple after He had given the first commandment, and God never contradicts Himself.

Q. 1213. Is it right to show respect to the pictures and images of Christ and His saints?

A. It is right to show respect to the pictures and images of Christ and His saints, because they are the representations and memorials of them.

Q. 1214. Have we in this country any civil custom similar to that of honoring the pictures and images of saints?

A. We have, in this country, a civil custom similar to that of honoring pictures and images of saints, for, on Decoration or Memorial Day, patriotic citizens place flowers, flags, or emblems about the statues of our deceased civil heroes, to honor the persons these statues represent; for just as we can dishonor a man by abusing his image, so we can honor him by treating it with respect and reverence.

Q. 1215. Is it allowed to pray to the crucifix or to the images and relics of the saints?

A. It is not allowed to pray to the crucifix or images and relics of the saints, for they have no life, nor power to help us, nor sense to hear us.

Q. 1216. Why do we pray before the crucifix and the images and relics of the saints?

A. We pray before the crucifix and the images and relics of the saints because they enliven our devotion by exciting pious affections and desires, and by re-

mindings us of Christ and of the saints, that we may imitate their virtues.

**LESSON THIRTY-SECOND:
From the Second to the Fourth Com-
mandment**

Q. 1217. What is the second Commandment?

A. The second Commandment is: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

Q. 1218. What do you mean by taking God's name in vain?

A. By taking God's name in vain I mean taking it without reverence, as in cursing or using in a light and careless manner, as in exclamation.

Q. 1219. What are we commanded by the second Commandment?

A. We are commanded by the second Commandment to speak with reverence of God and of the saints, and of all holy things, and to keep our lawful oaths and vows.

Q. 1220. Is it sinful to use the words of Holy Scripture in a bad or worldly sense?

A. It is sinful to use the words of Holy Scripture in a bad or worldly sense, to joke in them or ridicule their sacred meaning, or in general to give them any meaning but the one we believe God has intended them to convey.

Q. 1221. What is an oath?

A. An oath is the calling upon God to witness the truth of what we say.

Q. 1222. How is an oath usually taken?

A. An oath is usually taken by laying the hand on the Bible or by lifting the hand towards heaven as a sign that we call God to witness that what we are saying is under oath and to the best of our knowledge really true.

Q. 1223. What is perjury?

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CHILDREN'S PAGE

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A. Perjury is the sin one commits who knowingly takes a false oath; that is, swears to the truth of what he knows to be false. Perjury is a crime against the law of our country and a mortal sin before God.

Q. 1224. Who have the right to make us take an oath?

A. All persons to whom the law of our country has given such authority have the right to make us take an oath. They are chiefly judges, magistrates and public officials, whose duty it is to enforce the laws. In religious matters bishops and others to whom authority is given have also the right to make us take an oath.

Q. 1225. When may we take an oath?

A. We may take an oath when it is ordered by lawful authority or required for God's honor or for our own or our neighbor's good.

Q. 1226. When may an oath be required for God's honor or for our own or our neighbor's good?

A. An oath may be required for God's honor or for our own or our neighbor's good when we are called upon to defend our religion against false charges; or to protect our own or our neighbor's property or good name; or when we are required to give testimony that will enable the lawful authorities to discover the guilt or innocence of a person accused.

Q. 1227. Is it ever allowed to promise under oath, in secret societies or elsewhere, to obey another in whatever good or evil he commands?

A. It is never allowed to promise under oath, in secret societies or elsewhere, to obey another in whatever good or evil he commands, for by such an oath we would declare ourselves ready and willing to commit sin, if ordered to do so, while God commands us to avoid even the danger of sinning. Hence the Church forbids us to join any society in which such oaths are taken by its mem-

bers.

Q. 1228. What societies in general are we forbidden to join?

A. In general we are forbidden to join:
1. All societies condemned by the Church; 2. All societies of which the object is unlawful and the means used sinful; 3. Societies in which the rights and freedom of our conscience are violated by rash or dangerous oaths; 4. Societies in which any false religious ceremony or form of worship is used.

Q. 1229. Are trades unions and benefit societies forbidden?

A. Trades unions and benefit societies are not in themselves forbidden because they have lawful ends, which they can secure by lawful means. The Church encourages every society that lawfully aids its members spiritually or temporally, and censures or disowns every society that uses sinful or unlawful means to secure even a good end; for the Church can never permit anyone to do evil that good may come of it.

Q. 1230. Is it lawful to vow or promise strict obedience to a religious superior?

A. It is lawful to vow or promise strict obedience to a religious superior, because such superior can exact obedience only in things that have the sanction of God or of His Church.

Q. 1231. What is necessary to make an oath lawful?

A. To make an oath lawful it is necessary that what we swear to be true, and that there be a sufficient cause for taking an oath.

Q. 1232. What is a vow?

A. A vow is a deliberate promise made to God to do something that is pleasing to Him.

Q. 1233. Which are the vows most frequently made?

A. The vows most frequently made are the three vows of poverty, chastity and

obedience, taken by persons living in religious communities or consecrated to God. Persons living in the world are sometimes permitted to make such vows privately, but this should never be done without the advice and consent of their confessor.

Q. 1234. What do the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience require?

A. The vows of poverty, chastity and obedience require that those who make them shall not possess or keep any property or goods for themselves alone; that they shall not marry or be guilty of any immodest acts, and that they shall strictly obey their lawful superiors.

Q. 1235. Has it always been a custom with pious Christians to make vows and promises to God?

A. It has always been a custom with pious Christians to make vows and promises to God; to beg His help for some special end, or to thank Him for some benefit received. They have promised pilgrimages, good works or alms and they have vowed to erect churches, convents, hospitals or schools.

Q. 1236. What is a pilgrimage?

A. A pilgrimage is a journey to a holy place made in a religious manner and for a religious purpose.

Q. 1237. Is it a sin not to fulfill our vows?

A. Not to fulfill our vows is a sin, mortal or venial, according to the nature of the vow and the intention we had in making it.

Q. 1238. Are we bound to keep an unlawful oath or vow?

A. We are not bound, but, on the contrary, positively forbidden to keep an unlawful oath or vow. We are guilty of sin in taking such an oath or making such a vow, and we would be guilty of still greater sin by keeping them.

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insomuch that they renounced their private feuds and animosities, and were reunited in a common admiration of virtue." (*Plutarch's Lives, Lycurgus*).

Well, that is one way of looking at what Lycurgus accomplished.

The society with which Lycurgus began was basically a democracy. It is known as Sparta.

Lycurgus persuaded the people that since there were those who owned great tracts of land, and many more who owned but little land, and great numbers who owned no land, that all the land should be divided into equal parcels. That each man should have a certain number of parcels, each woman a smaller number of parcels, and each child a smaller yet number of parcels, each set being deemed of size sufficient to grow crops sufficient for a man, a woman, and a child respectively.

This did not fully equalize the society because it did not effect the monetary wealth or the movable or chattel based wealth. Lycurgus therefore persuaded the populace to change the money system, collecting all the gold and silver coin and exchanging that money base for a money base of iron. He made the iron based coins so large and of so little value as to make use of the iron based coins impractical. In effect, if under the old money system a loaf of bread could have been purchased for one tenth of a silver coin weighing but a few ounces, under his new money system that same loaf of bread would cost an entire iron coin weighing several hundred pounds. The purpose was to make it virtually impossible for the wealthy to utilize their wealth, especially since foreign merchants would not accept the iron coins but only silver or gold, and therefore would not enter into trade with the populace.

By these tactics and measures Lycurgus established a closed system and society which he ruled while seeming to persuade through democratic practices.

In actuality this was the first large scale occurrence of totalitarianism established through democratic tyranny - where a single or small group of people persuaded the majority of a democratic citizenry to take the property of those who had been more industrious, or whose ancestors had been more industrious, to steal the property of the more industrious and re-distribute it to the less industrious. Today we recognize this structure as a totalitarian regime operating under the guise of democratically established socialistic communalism (communism).

Lycurgus' system was complete with small internal societies - today they would be termed cells - to which admission was granted only by unanimous consent under secret ballot. Well, actually the practice was when voting on whether or not to admit a new member the members would roll little balls of bread and toss them into a pot filled with water carried on the head of one of the members. Those who approved accepting the new member would roll the ball round. Those who opposed would flatten the ball before tossing it into the pot. One flat ball and the applicant was rejected. Anyone who revealed anything which was discussed in a meeting was fortunate to receive exile from the group as his punishment.

His system of laws was just as innovative. Termed Rhetras, meaning divine sanctions and revelations, the laws were never to be written down, but were to be learned and ingrained in one's personality and character and verbally handed down generation to generation. Of course, if laws are not written down, a totalitarian ruler finds it much more simple to do what ever he desires than were he forced to at least appear to maintain adherence to what was written. It is a lesson well learned by a certain President of the United States of America who, knowing he would be unable to obtain approval by the United States Senate for many of his appointees, appointed these people as Czars with unlimited authority in areas of his choosing - all in contravention of

the Constitution of the united States of America.

In his wisdom Lycurgus decided that to insure the good education of their youth, he and the other leaders would regulate marriages and even conceptions and birth - and so they did. A married women could conceive by men other than their husband, and a married man was not limited to sexual relations with his wife. Unmarried men and women were encouraged to participate in nude processions and dances - especially in the spring and summer. When they desired to marry the man was lead into an unlighted room in the dark of night for sexual relations with his wife - it often being that husband and wife did not know what the other's face looked like until years after marriage. The children were looked upon as not belonging to their parents but as belonging to the entire community. Homosexuals were not left out of the celebrations, but had their own processions and dances in the fall and winter.

When a child was born it was brought before examiners of its particular tribe and examined for fitness. If it was deemed fit it was allocated an unassigned portion of land for its sustenance. If it was deemed to be less than excellent it was abandoned in the Apothetae, a chasm in the Taygetus.

When a child attained seven years of age it was taken from its parents and reared in a communal home, actually a military company. Children were trained to bear allegiance to their company rather than towards their family. Since Lycurgus and his companions effectively controlled all these military companies, their total control over the entire country was virtually assured.

As the country became more militarily strong and more firmly under the control of Lycurgus and his supporters there evolved a policy of discouraging strangers from visiting or living in the

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country. Not because foreigners might learn some secrets of the country but because foreigners might introduce some ideas or concepts contrary to the order which Lycurgus and his companions had established. Eventually it became policy - remember the laws were not written - that should a citizen express ideas contrary to the order established by Lycurgus, that citizen was ostracized, or even exiled, if they were treated with gentleness.

The life style of the Spartans was not supported through their own individual industry, but, rather through the slavery of the Helots who tilled the parcels of land.

Therefore, the perfect society which Lycurgus established was in actuality dependent on gross injustice inflicted upon others, including the privileged citizenry.

All because of some music and lyrics which Thales made popular.

Need it be mentioned that what written history first attributes to Lycurgus, is again being inflicted upon country after country? Of course it must of needs be mentioned, must be stated.

To paraphrase Abraham Lincoln: there is an independent standard of right and wrong which is not dependent on a popular vote or public opinion.

This is simple truth: Everyone knows it. One can not escape it nor is one able to ignore it though one is able to abandon adherence to it - that is, one is able to abandon adherence to it until such time as it itself imposes itself upon one.

It also is simple truth, that a country, or society, or people, which, at its peak abandons the true God, will fall into some degree of anarchy and deny God given rights to those without power, never to regain its former glory for that former glory was dependent upon its adherence to the true God which it has abandoned. +

CONSEQUENCES OF HATRED

Ayman al-Zawahri, the new leader of Al Qaeda, has a deep hatred for The United States of America and the West, made more personal by the deaths of his wife and two children in a U.S. air strike following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan after the 9-11 attacks - according to a CBS/AP news story of June 16, 2011.

OK, let's get this straight. al-Zawahri hates the USA because after he planned and participated in the September 11, Al Qaeda attacks against the USA, in which almost three thousand Americans and others were killed, and after having previously planned and carried out attacks against American embassies, and European businesses where Americans were customers, and against American Naval vessels, killing hundreds of American citizens, when the USA finally responded to these terrorist / military attacks by Al Qaeda with military attacks against Al Qaeda, and al-Zawahri's wife (wives) and children were killed in that military response, al-Zawahri became upset.

OK, al-Zawahri, and the irrational reporters who attempt to place blame for al-Zawahri hatred of the USA on the USA, pay attention.

THERE ARE CONSEQUENCES FOR EVERYTHING YOU DO!

Politicians who successfully defraud their electorate may believe the consequences are the life style they desire. Those who are not successful may believe the consequences are months or years in jail.

But these are not the real consequences - just the immediate consequences.

The real consequences are meted out by God. He meets out nasty consequences to the nasty, and nice consequences to the nice. It is your butt - you can put it on a cushion or into a grinder. +

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God condemned contraceptives and abortion. These pretend churches in their beginnings often also condemned these things; but many of them now accept the use of contraceptives and the killing of unborn children through any means including the most horrible forms of abortion.

God told us that unless we eat His flesh and drink His blood we will not have life in us. He gave us the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the Sacrament whereby ordinary bread and wine are changed by the Priest who has Apostolic succession, into His body and His blood while retaining the appearances and sensory presentations of bread and wine. He gave us this Sacrament so we could eat His body and drink his blood in a manner acceptable to our senses, so that would have life in us. When Christ God constituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist He did not say the bread represented His body and the wine represent His blood. He said: This is My Body; This is My Blood. But these pretend churches declare the bread and wine represent Christ's body and blood, and many of them use grape juice instead of wine. And none of them have a priesthood which traces itself back to the Apostles and therefore none of them can possibly have received the authority Christ gave to the Apostles, to change bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ.

Why do people ignore the banquet prepared for them by God? They ignore it for a multitude of reasons. Some of them do not wish to wash before the banquet. Others do not wish to eat the food prepared for them, even though it is both the most tasty and the most nourishing of foods. Others desire the taste of the food prepared by Satan even though it will poison them and eventually kill them.

Each of these and all of the other reasons for which people reject the banquet prepared by God, all share in one factor. Those rejecting God's

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banquet desire to consume something other than what God has prepared and they reject God's banquet in preference for what they desire.

Dried Dung Burns Very Readily

***If you go to eat just a snack,
Do your hands have no soapy attack?
At a fast food stop, or a sandwich shop,
Does the dirt from your hands go in
with the slop?***

***If you are invited to the ambassador's
house,
To dine with the ruler of the land;
Do you go there dirty from spreading
manure,
Stinking with sweat and dirty hair?***

***If this is your habit and custom
with you soul as well as your body;
Then diseased will you be, for all
eternity;
For dried dung burns very readily.***

Ref: 1 John 3:13-18; Luke 14:16-24

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SOME OF WHAT THE TRINITY IS, AND IS NOT

From time to time someone makes an attempt to explain the Blessed Trinity: three individual omnipotent persons one God. We use the names for these three persons given to us by one of those persons, Jesus Christ, God, those names being Father, Son, who is that same Jesus Christ, and Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit. The Father also identified Jesus Christ as His Son, calling Jesus Christ, "My beloved Son," which gives us an additional confirmation.

We know the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, but exactly what this means we really do not know except that being eternally begotten means the Son had no beginning just as the Father had no beginning, each always being self existing. We know the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father, but again we do not really know what this means other than that the Holy Spirit also had no beginning and is

self existing. Self existing? Of course, for that is a necessary characteristic of being the deity.

The words begotten and procession distinguish two different relationships, sometimes termed two different forms of generation, but the exact nature of those relationships is also something which we do not know, as is the meaning of the word "generation" as used to describe that relationship.

It is readily apparent that even the dogmatic expressions about God only express indications to the reality.

We do not know these things, the reality, because only God can comprehend these things, only God can comprehend His reality. We simply do not have the mental capability to comprehend these things nor will we ever have the mental capability to comprehend these things unless God gives that capability.

The Blessed Trinity has been compared to a three leaf clover. That is a good start, but totally inadequate, because in that example each Person of the Blessed Trinity is expressed as a leaf and the clover is expressed as God, but in reality each of the Persons is totally and completely God. If in the clover example each of the leaves represents God then we have three Gods but the reality is that there is but one God.

So the three leaf clover is merely an indication, and that is all it was ever intended to be.

There are those who say the Father's perfect knowledge of Himself is the Son and the perfect love the Father and the Son have for each other is the Holy Spirit. But that would mean the three were not equal. It would also mean the son was dependant on the Father, which would mean the Son is not God for He then would not be omnipotent. It would also mean the Holy Spirit was dependent on the Father and the Son, which would make Him less than either of them, again making Him not omnipotent and therefore not God. And neither

the Son and especially not the Holy Spirit would be eternal, for the Son would have been dependent on the Father's self assessment knowledge of Himself and the Holy Spirit dependent on the love from the Father to the Son and its reciprocation, or vica versa. The Father could have had eternal knowledge of Himself that knowledge being the Son but The Holy Spirit would have had to begun existence at the soonest an instant after the Son because His existence would have to begun at the soonest, at the instant of their mutual love.

So this is a good try, but no banana.

Then there is the harmony of sound example. Each Person of the Blessed Trinity is compared to cords of music, each being a different chord combining in a chord. But each would have to be the same chord yet each a different chord, so this example leaves us with the sound of silence.

And that is the perfect example, the sound of silence.

We know that we find God by stripping away everything until we have nothing and in that nothingness we find God and perceive Him through His emanations.

Well, in the sound of silence we likewise find God.

And we especially find God in the sound of silence if that silence includes creatures not attempting to explain the inexplicable, the sole unexplainable which is God.

Ref: Rom. 11:33-36; Mat. 28:18-20

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THE MOST ILLOGICAL OF THE ILLOGICAL

Christ in the Sacred Eucharist is the banquet to which we are all invited and of which we are invited to partake as food for our essence. If we are faithful to God the Blessed Trinity that sacred food will sustain us to eternal life with God.

We are invited to become one with Christ as the Father is one with Jesus and Jesus one with the Father.

This is a concept which can be explored for all eternity without ever completing the exploration. And each aspect of that exploration can also be explored for all eternity without exhausting the exploration of that individual aspect. Exploring that concept is more intriguing than exploring any mystery of physics, science, philosophy, or any other unknown.

Because it is impossible for us to understand or comprehend more than just an insignificant portion of the good which God desires for us we must each trust God sufficiently to attempt to become what God wishes us each to be so that we may each receive the good which God desires for us.

Those who do not trust God apparently do not have the virtue of Faith, for if they had the virtue of Faith it would follow that they would trust God. They may believe in God, and their concept of God may even be accurate, but without the virtue of Faith, belief apparently is not sufficient to induce trust in God.

There is another element or factor which those who have Faith can not comprehend. It is accurate knowledge of God which does *not* lead one to desire union with God but rather desire to be separated from God for all eternity. The reasons for this are beyond the ability of those who have accepted the gift of the virtue of Faith to comprehend.

In the minds of those who have Faith, in a certain sense the motivations of those

who have an accurate concept of God yet reject God, are more unknowable and more incomprehensible than is God. For those with Faith, real, true Faith, rejection of God is illogical, foolish, stupid, and everything negative in that scheme of expression. In simple language those with the virtue of Faith refer to such behavior as bizarre and to such people as weird, for why would anyone prefer an eternity of total torment and unhappiness over an eternity of total joy and happiness?

It simply does not make sense.

God actually invites us to the most joyful existence possible and His requirements for our accepting that joyful existence really are nominal. We often fail in our attempts to meet those requirements, but God has taken our weaknesses into account and given us remedies to our weaknesses.

For those of us who seek what God has offered, and continue attempting to meet the qualifications He has set, the fact that many people reject the offer, or even worse, simply do not care, is simply beyond our ability to comprehend.

A good occasional prayer is: that rejecting God or not caring about God will always be something you simply can not comprehend.

Ref: 1 John 3:13-18; Luke 14:16-24

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SOME “WORKS” OF GOD “APPROPRIATED” TO THE HOLY GHOST

“ . . . if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you . . . ” This statement from Christ, combined with the fact that the Incarnation was accomplished by the Holy Spirit’s overshadowing of the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary, and numerous other activities of the Holy Ghost, and numerous passages of Sacred Scripture, give us a slight insight to aspects of the “internal” operations of God, and aspects of relationships of the Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

In divine works which are external to God the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity of necessity have an equal part. This does **NOT** mean each does one-third of the work. In part this is because their operation is indivisible.

But Sacred Scripture *appropriates* certain activities to certain Persons of the Blessed Trinity. The Incarnation was appropriated by Scripture to the Holy Spirit. Works of life, power, miracles, and teaching the truth after the Resurrection, are generally and usually appropriated to the Holy Spirit.

These are also works of the Father and of the Son as well as of the Holy Spirit because they are works of God. But the Holy Spirit generally is considered the source of such things in a special manner or way which we are unable to express.

It is important to realize this because in realizing it one has a more clear appreciation that when humans seek to exercise divine power the exercise of such power is restricted to situations of God’s choosing and not at the will of the human. It becomes very clear that the human is the agent of the Divine.

It also becomes very clear that the Holy Ghost was the operative of creation, of life including and especially human life, and that He continues to be the Guide, Protector, and Teacher of humankind, as well as the Maintainer of every human life and existence. Yes, the Operative of creation, without in any manner diminishing the Father as Creator.

We stop here because this is enough for the brain cells to “mangle at one time”.

Ref: James 1:17-21; John 16:5-14

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TO THE EXTENT YOU ARE FILLED WITH YOURSELF, IS THE EXTENT YOU EXCLUDE THE HOLY GHOST FROM YOU

What happened when the Apostles and Disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost at Pentecost? What happened was the Apostles and Disciples immediately went about God's business. They immediately proceeded to teach and practice holy things. They exercised God's power for Godly matters, for holy matters.

Not a single one of them exercised God's power to accumulate a large pile of gold, material wealth, worldly prestige, worldly honor, worldly acclaim.

Over time they received donations, established organizations to administer the assets of the Church and to oversee provision of the various physical needs associated with administration of the Church. But they themselves were always approachable and accessible, perhaps through assistants and scheduling, but still approachable and accessible. And not one of them personally profited in a "material of this world" sense.

So when some goof ball requests you send him or her money so they can spread the Gospel from their personal corporate jet airplane while they purchase and wear expensive clothing, consume exotic and expensive food and beverages, and engage in sexual relations with persons to whom they are not married - do not expect the Holy Ghost to be active in that so called preacher, no matter what that goof ball tells you about God having instructed him or her to get money from you.

Some of the Apostles and Disciples built or were instrumental in having built some very impressive church buildings and accessory buildings. Some of those churches and buildings were lavishly appointed, with very expensive altar vessels. That was, and remains, proper, for such edifices and im-

plements are used in the worship the one and only true God *in the manner which He directed*.

But a person who uses his or her religious position as a means of furthering their own person material well being to the exclusion of or to an extent that it in any manner interferes with their operating divinely, has limited their ability to receive the Holy Ghost by that same extent. The more a person is filled with self interest, the less room there is to be filled with the Holy Ghost. Fill yourself with desire for worldly riches and you have no room to be filled with the Holy Ghost. And your deeds or attempted deeds will reflect that with which you are filled.

There is nothing in Sacred Scripture which supports attaining personal material wealth or gain through one's position in the Church. The meeting of material needs and the provision of reasonable material security in the course of performing one's function within the Church, where possible, these are supported by Sacred Scripture.

A person who loves God will keep God's word, will follow God's instructions, primarily as stated in Sacred Scripture. God will dwell in such a person, will make His abode in such a person. And the Father will send the Holy Ghost to such a person, in accordance with God's desires, to accomplish that which God desires. That will be on the spiritual plane, in all probability without a fancy mode of transportation, exotic food, and definitely without numerous sexual partners.

There is nothing wrong or improper with desiring or obtaining material things, provided such things do not become goals in themselves, that they are obtained in a moral manner, and that they are used for not just for good but used to attain holiness. Should you attain or obtain something of the material world which greatly pleases you, continually thank God for it, continually seek to use it for holiness, and continually use it for holiness - not just good

but holy. For there are many people who can be called good, but being good will not assure one of eternal salvation. Only attaining holiness will assure one of attaining eternal salvation.

Therefore, love God and keep His word, simply because He is God, and He will dwell in you, and you in Him.

Ref: Acts 2:1-11; John 14:23-31

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TAKE TIME TO REGULARLY ASSESS YOUR STATUS

We are being sucker punched by the devil every day, all day, and we do not even know it because we do not take the time to assess our spiritual lives and that with which we feed our souls.

Many of us unconsciously braid a spiritual noose from the fibers of TeleVision or the InterNet, or both. With that noose we morally hang ourselves, committing suicide, usually so slowly we are unaware we are dying, or that we are dead. The process is similar to that of cooking a frog. Place a frog in a hot frying pan and the frog will jump out. But put a frog in a room temperature frying pan and slowly increase the heat and the frog will sizzle and be cooked before the frog is aware it is on the menu.

It is not that TV or the World Wide Web are intrinsically evil. They are not, and actually are often used for good. The amount of information available on the InterNet is astounding, and much of it is accurate. But much of it is not - and much of it is nothing more than the unfounded, erroneous opinion of some ignoramus which is believed by many to be the truth, to be fact. While e-mail, texting, and other forms of InterNet based communications are expeditious, when they are substituted for voice or personal contact - face to face - communications they weaken the social skills of their participants. Those social skills are necessary for proper functioning of the individual and of society.

While there is a lot of immoral trash on the

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InterNet, the damage this trash inflicts - remembering that damage is self inflicted - is equaled by the damage done through absorption and acceptance of the opinions of uninformed idiots. The amount of time wasted in blogs, twittering, texting, and such, and the corruption of the processes by which we educate ourselves strangle out intellect and intellectual processes, creating masses of people who are "brain dead" but still walking around - well, texting - they do not seem to walk very much if their average girth is considered. The erosion of the mental capacity and processes also erodes the processes of spiritual life.

While it is possible that the immoral or the drivel from TV or the Web may induce mental and spiritual aversion or repugnance towards such material, thus strengthening the soul and mind against such material and concepts, it is more likely that repeated exposure to such material will result in at least tacit acceptance of such material.

Blogs and twittering are InterNet examples of such acceptance. TeleVision is awash with many more examples of such acceptance.

The reality programs, which actually have nothing to do with reality but are termed reality programs because the characters usually are portrayed by individuals who are not professional actors and actresses, in actuality are noting more than the action versions of Seinfeld. And Seinfeld is a TV program about a bunch of people who do nothing, and they do it badly. The characters accept every form of immorality, and participate in every form of immorality provided their participation is accomplished with the minimum of exertion acceptable to each character. Its aficionados and devotees declare it to be sophisticated humor requiring an advanced intellect for full appreciation. They may not be aware their advanced intellects have been corrupted by continued exposure to propaganda promoting immorality, and their very viewing provides financial support to the promo-

tion of the immorality portrayed in the program.

They have allowed the devil to sucker punch them, and they do not even know the sucker punch has landed.

Another TV program with which viewers place the hangman's noose about their necks and choke off their moral sensitivity is Two and a Half Men. The stories revolve around a character played by Charlie Sheen, who is a hedonist who earns his living by writing jingles - especially children's jingles, whose divorced brother and the brother's pre-teen / young teens son come to live with Sheen. It is much better written, directed, and delivered than Seinfeld, the actor playing the character of the son having a comedic timing and "dead pan" delivery reminiscent of Jack Benny. But the humor and situations are at best vulgar, apparently having every episode involving Sheen in some immoral sexual escapade, presenting every form of pleasure oriented immorality as being acceptable. At the very least viewing this program provides financial support for its purveyors of filth, and its viewers should remember that those who wallow in filth become filthy. (It would be terrible for Sheen if this is the work for which he is remembered.)

Once someone becomes accustomed to viewing such material or to participating in the more wasteful and immoral InterNet activities, breaking from the accustomed activity is very difficult, as is realization of the need so to do.

We must continually remind ourselves that we feed our souls with everything with which we come in contact. Unlike our bodies, which when poisoned usually provide some dramatic indication of poisoning, our souls require assessment if their status is to be determined. When a limb is rotted with gangrene it gives off a stench and possesses a very disturbing appearances. But a poisoned soul is not always as obvious.

Ref: Rom 6:19-23; Mat. 7:15-21

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GOOD STEWARDSHIP IS NEVER ACCOMPLISHED BY FOOLISH, NONSENSICAL STATEMENTS OR POSITIONS

When one hears a religious leader, especially one who is or is supposed to be or is presumed to be within and part of the true church, make an inane statement such as, "Religious freedom is the path to peace," and then expound on the deterrent inflicted when religious freedom is restricted, and the benefits and good which emanate from "somewhere" when everyone is encouraged to practice *what ever* religious beliefs they desire - when this occurs be advised that the one making the promulgation is not or is no longer part of the true church, does not speak for the true church, and betrays Christ in making the promulgation.

Such a person is an unworthy servant - and actually is not a servant of Christ at all but rather is an adversary of Christ.

One should support freedom to practice various religions solely for the purpose of insuring one is able to practice the true religion, to practice the true faith. One should always be leery of allowing a government to interfere with one's personal decisions which do not effect others, and thus it is prudent to support freedom to practice religion. But the freedom to practice religion is the not path to peace, has nothing to do with peace, and provides an unwarranted and undeserved level of respect for false religions and false beliefs.

Leaders of false religions, and members of the true faith who in effect state one religion is as good as another, have betrayed God and so done knowingly. They betray the trust their followers have placed in them to lead morally, in that **these leaders in effect are telling their followers: "Take the list of sins and scratch out the ones you like or wish to do. Scratch our adultery if you wish, and leave in sodomy as a sin**

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if you wish. Rewrite murder to exclude abortion. Put an addendum to thou shalt not steal, and exclude insurance fraud, stealing from the government, and if you work for the government or are an elected federal official add the caveat that social security and medicare taxes can be taken for use in the general budget and never repaid and not be theft. Individualize the list of sins as each of you sees fit."

When the followers of these so called leaders exercise the audacity of changing God's laws not only are the changes *without* effect, but also the reality of evil, sin, goodness, *and* holiness remain as - do - the - penalties - for evil and for sin and - the - rewards - for goodness and holiness.

Just as when the debtor, at the direction of the unfaithful steward, changed his debt papers from stating he owed one hundred barrels of oil to read fifty barrels of oil, yet this did not change the actual debt, so too does following the teachings of evil betrayers of God and betrayers of those whom they are supposed to serve, not change the sinful or holy nature of what God has declared to be sin or to be holy. And just as the debtor knows that when he has paid fifty barrels of oil he continues to owe another fifty, so too does the sinner know, even though he or she may pretend to not know or to not be aware, that sin is sin, is not holiness, and is not sanctioned by God; while holiness is holiness and is sanctioned and encouraged by God.

People do not like to be reminded of these things, and do not like to be reminded of the particulars, especially those such as the reality that oral contraceptives function for the most part by causing an abortion in the early stages of fetal development and therefore is murder by abortion of a baby, a violation of God's direct commandment against murder, and therefore will, generally speaking, damn to hell those who use them, manufacture

them, distribute them, write prescriptions for them, or in any manner promote them or their use.

But were a Priest to not stress this reality from time to time, then that Priest would be an unfaithful steward of that with which God has entrusted the Priest. And even if a Priest were to advise someone that in their particular circumstances use of oral contraceptives is permitted, the Priest's advice would not change the reality that such use is serious sin because even if conception never occurs **the use of such chemicals is a straight forward statement to God that the person intends to murder a baby should it be conceived. And Christ has informed us that the desire and intent to commit the sin is the same as committing the sin.**

Attempting to be a faithful steward often is difficult, not just for Priests, but also for everyone. It often requires one express approval for conduct or processes which are difficult, or may even be to one's own disadvantage. The simple matter of finding a thousand dollars in the street, while initially bringing anticipation of happiness or even financial relief, carries with it the obligation to attempt to find the one to whom the money belongs. The obligation arises out of the significant value of the money found, an obligation which would not exist if the amount of money were of very little value, such as ten cents. This is so even though the ten cents lost by someone for whom that is all the money they had is a disaster while for one who has many millions of dollars the loss of a thousand dollars is insignificant. Of course if the finder knows the ten cents was lost by someone who had nothing else, then the finder is obligated to make every effort to return that which was lost. Contrarily, the fact that the thousand dollars was lost by a multimillionaire, does not remove or lessen the obligation to return the money.

It is therefore obvious that being a faithful steward of that with which God has entrusted us requires thought and consideration, as well as actions or deeds,

all of which must be in accordance with Faith. When a person thinks and acts in accordance with Faith, this is known or called operating divinely.

The good and faithful steward does his or her best to operate divinely and in so doing preserves, strengthens, and increases the prime thing with which that person has been entrusted by God. That prime thing is their own immortal soul.

So, be a good steward - it beats the hell out of being an unfaithful steward.

Ref: Rom. 8:12-17; Luke 16:1-9

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SOME OF THE WISDOM OF SAINT JAMES THE LESS

The various books of the New Testament cover a myriad of dogma, theology, commandments, means of being spiritually strengthened, and virtually every aspect of salvation. They are the source of dogma and in them the early fathers of the church and desert fathers, as well as all valid theologians since then, have the foundation of their dogmatic insights.

Saint Paul is the great theologian providing dogmatic insights which enlighten us today, while all of the writers of the Old Testament and of the New Testament are individually, uniquely essential in their revelations and their guidance.

One of them, however, Saint James, provides us with very plain language, simple, straight forward, easy to understand, dogma, while at the same time providing us with the same very plain language, simple, straight forward, easy to understand guidance in our actions, conduct, and thoughts, as well as the reasons for them - the reasons supporting the guidance he provides.

The precepts in the Epistle of Saint James the Less, the first Bishop of Jerusalem, were followed by all of the Apostles, and written about by all the authors of the vari-

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ous books of the Bible, but not as clearly stated as they are by Saint James the Less.

Therefore, let us consider some of these insights and explanations provided through his Divinely inspired Apostolic endeavors.

What ever we ask for from God, if we ask in faith we will receive. This does not mean that if we believe in God, or that Jesus is God, we will receive that for which we ask from God. One who asks in faith actually thinks and acts in accordance with faith. Therefore, one who asks in faith, asks, at the bare minimum, for that which is in accordance with faith and God, in harmony with faith and God, proper to request from God, and what God desires be asked for from Him. The request must be made without wavering, with utmost confidence the request will be fulfilled by God. If the request is not made in faith, or if there is any wavering, it is unlikely God will grant the request.

When one is tempted that person is not tempted by God but by that person's own concupiscence, by which concupiscence that person is drawn away and allured. "Then, when concupiscence hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin. But sin, when it is completed, begetteth death." (James 1:15) A soul dead in sin.

Focusing on the Ten Commandments without simultaneously focusing on the Two Great Commandments is totally without benefit. This is because while the Ten Commandments prohibit amongst other things stealing, committing adultery, killing or committing murder, and a person may, for example steal without committing adultery or killing, in violating just the one commandment against stealing that person violates both of the Two Great Commandments. The thief violates the commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mat. 12:31), because love precludes stealing. The thief also violates the commandment: "thou shalt

love the Lord thy God, with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength" (Mat 12:30), because stealing is explicitly in violation of God's Ten Commandments and love of God precludes violating God's Ten Commandments. When one violates any of the Ten Commandments that one is telling God, at least in-so-far-as the violated commandment is concerned, that neither God's Commandments nor God's desires or will, nor even God Himself, is of concern in comparison with the person's desire to commit that sin. Such an attitude precludes loving God, at least it precludes loving God with one's whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. Those who seek a loop hole or become nit picky and state a stranger is not their neighbor must consider Christ's statement that everyone is our brother, or our sister, thereby stating everyone is also our neighbor. Besides, one who loves God does not seek loop holes in God's law, and one who acknowledges God's authority knows there are no loop holes in God's law. Therefore, to violate any of the Ten Commandments which deal with relationships between or amongst people also violates both of the Two Great Commandments, while violating any of the Ten Commandments which relate to God, to propriety in reference to God, or in worship of God, also violates the first of the Two Great Commandments.

The human tongue is one of the smallest parts of a person, yet, like the rudder on a ship or the bit in the mouth of a horse, the tongue often sets the course which a person will follow. It is the same tongue which blesses and praises God, and curses men who are made in the same God's image and likeness. The most wild and difficult of beasts are tamed by the nature of man, yet no man can tame his own tongue - or so it seems. Perhaps it is that we only occasionally are successful in controlling it. But this condition is totally wrong, because, just as the sea can not produce sweet water, nor the fig tree bear grapes, nor a spring issue both sweet and bitter water, neither can the

tongue lead one to both holiness and to evil. For just the smallest amount of evil destroys all of the holiness.

Saint James the Less - the Apostle who knew what he was talking about and passed it on to us in a manner impossible to misunderstand.

Ref: 1 Cor. 4:9-15; Mat. 20:20-23; James 1-5; Mat. 12:30-31

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THE PUZZLE OF THOSE WHO INTENTIONALLY REJECT GOD AND WHO DO NOT DESIRE TO GO TO HEAVEN

In the parable of the Pharisee and the sinner we have two individuals with different perspectives regarding holiness and sinfulness, regarding the requirements to be holy and the requirements to be a sinner, and their own, individual, respective statuses.

Both of these individuals, however, share the desire to not be sinners, to be holy, and to attain union with God.

There are at least two other types of individuals: the individuals for whom God is not an important aspect of their lives nor is eternal salvation or union with God; and there are the individuals who are totally opposed to God and who expressly do not desire eternal union with God.

It is possible to comprehend something of the person for whom God is not an important aspect of their lives, and for whom eternal union with God also is not important. Perhaps these are matters which they have not seriously considered. Perhaps their concept of the hereafter is inaccurate. Perhaps they believe God is so nice that hell really is a concept designed to scare us. Perhaps they are wrapped up in concern or pursuit of things of this world in a measure which obscures viable consideration of the hereafter. Or perhaps

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there is some other obstacle.

The individuals who are truly a puzzle are those who are totally opposed to God and who expressly do not desire eternal union with God.

By any measure of moral sanity they are impossible to comprehend as is their opposition to God.

Ref: 1 Cor. 12:2-11, Luke 18:9-14

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AN OVERBLOWN SENSE OF SELF IMPORTANCE, OF SELF RIGHTEOUSNESS, EASILY RESULTS IN ETERNAL DAMNATION AND SERVES AS AN OBSTACLE TO MORAL RECOVERY

To make an image which is easy to visualize, substitute a person's personal hygiene and the status of their clothing for the state of a person's soul, mind, and heart.

If a person has been rolling around in the dirt and filth, working up a sweat and letting it dry out, gotten crusty, grody, and nasty, and been in that condition for a period of time sufficient for them to become acclimated to the condition, that individual may not perceive their need for a cleansing bath, shower, or washing, and a change of clothing.

We could call such people the unaware, or the ignorant.

But that person is greatly different from the person who holds the position that simply because they are who they are, they have no need to bathe or to change their clothing. For such people, in their mind, in their opinion, it is impossible they or their clothing should or could ever become dirty or in need of cleaning.

We would be justified in calling these people, stupid. Unfortunately, such peo-

ple govern our country, are the celebrity role models for the masses, and are in administrative positions in every organization - even including various jurisdictions of the true church. They are stupid, but usually they are amongst the most successfully manipulative and scheming of individuals. They make statements which serve their own interests without knowing whether or not their statements are accurate, and so do in a very convincing manner. Most such individuals have long ago mastered the art of appearing to be knowledgeable, knowing, intelligent, and to appear to be acting without self interest. Since their statements and positions serve to enhance their own esteem, to stroke their own egos, and usually are in actuality made without study or knowledge of that of which they speak beyond what will serve their own self interests, usually their statements are inaccurate and their positions harmful.

Remembering this is an analogy, it is not their hygiene and clothing which are rancid, but their hearts, minds, and souls.

Their overblown sense of their own importance and their desire to be important are obstacles to their ability perceive their own situation, their own status, their need for cleansing, revision, and rejuvenation, their ability to effectuate their own moral recovery, and pave a wide and easily traveled path to eternal damnation for themselves and their followers.

They are fooled by their concept of themselves, by their own self image, by their own appearances. Be careful lest you also be fooled by their projection of their self images and self concepts; lest you be fooled by their appearances and pay the consequences in suffering.

Ref: 1 Cor. 12:2-11; Luke 18:9-14

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WOMEN MUST CEASE INTERFERING WITH MEN EXERCISING GOD GIVEN MASCULINE QUALITIES

We know that the Mother of God, the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary, was and remains the epitome of human holiness, our best example, our most fervent protector, and deserves every title and acknowledgment of her holiness.

Though holiness and even the attempt to be or attain holiness are rare these days, there is one particular example she provides which is virtually totally lost in today's world. It is not an example of holiness we usually expect.

The example in her that is virtually lost in today's world is, she raised her Son, Jesus Christ, to be a full fledged, honorable, **MAN** who refused to back down from what He knew was right, Who would give no quarter or compromise against evil, Who fought against evil, Who pulled His own weight, and Who definitely was not only not a pansy but was the opposite of being a pansy. Yes, Jesus Christ was and remains kind, gentle, compassionate, being the epitome of all things gentlemanly. But while Christ is the perfect gentleman, Christ was and is an individual of standards, principles, unbending and unyielding, actively engaging in both persuading those who are bent to go to hell to reform while simultaneously battling against them and should they not yield, damning them to hell for all eternity.

It is part of a woman's makeup to avoid conflict and to seek peace. It is difficult to engage in a woman's traditional domestic and non-domestic activities in an environment of uncertainty, or turmoil, or danger. Therefore women seek tranquility. But every woman who allows this desire for tranquility to dictate her course in life soon finds herself under the authority of someone else. If that authority is benevolent towards her, she may be unaware of her true condition, and may bask and grow under that benevolence. Of course there are many

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women who seek the control and authority they believe is exercised by men seemingly simply because they are men, but such women lack a firm grasp of reality just as do those who seek tranquility virtually at any cost. The concept expressed in the phrase and the phrase itself, "Why can't we all just get along together," in all likelihood was first expressed by a woman, and definitely was formulated by a woman.

Women of today and mothers of today emasculate their sons, husbands, and the men in their lives, by insisting that, "We all try to get along together," when that is impossible if one is to follow the path to honor in the service of God. This is because the only means by which one can, "Get along with," evil is to abandon some aspect of holiness, some aspect of goodness, some aspect of following God. And when such an abandonment is made, evil has won.

Women seek an organized, civilized, environment, for that is the easiest environment in which to raise children - note it is the easiest environment in which to raise children, but not necessarily the best environment in which to raise children. Husbands may die, become incapacitated, or even leave, and thereby remove such an environment or the potential for such an environment. But if society or the government provides such an environment or even just the potential for such an environment, then a woman is inclined to accept it. Likewise a woman is inclined to oppose anything which upsets such an environment.

In their opposition to anything which may upset such an environment women

oppose men exercising those very qualities given to men by God which prompt men to oppose evil, support goodness and holiness, thereby providing the very environment women desire.

Women of today generally do not follow the example given to them by the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary, either in conducting their lives, or in conducting their lives as women, and especially not in their conduct as mothers and their influence upon men.

Women of today and mothers of today emasculate their sons, husbands, and the men in their lives, by insisting that, "We all try to get along together," when that is impossible if one is to follow the path to honor in the service of God. This is because the only means by which one can, "Get along with," evil is to abandon some aspect of holiness, some aspect of goodness, some aspect of following God. And when such an abandonment is made, evil has won.

You should be assured of this: If Jesus has been Incarnate in the world of today, The Blessed Ever Virgin Mary would not have ever watched a soap opera on TV, Jesus would have never seen the TV shows "Sponge Bob Square Pants" or "Ren and Stimpy", "Sesame Street" would be questionable viewing, while "Between the Lions" might have a chance of being acceptable viewing for a young Jesus Christ in the mind of His mother. And she would have been correct in her assessment. If there was a child who was bullying Jesus, Saint Joseph would have taught Jesus how to box, and when to use that skill, with the approval of the Ever Virgin Mary - even though she would have not liked fighting. For she knew, and knows, that if something is worth having, it is something for which it is worth fighting, and that very often one must fight to obtain it, maintain it, or keep it. Holiness is such a thing, for it is the ultimate of that which is worth having.

Jesus Christ has already won the battle against evil He has made eternal salvation available to each of us. Obtaining eternal salvation is our task. No one can do that for any of us. We each must do

it for ourselves; we each must obtain for ourselves that eternal salvation which Jesus has made available to each of us and to all of us. We are able to so do only to the extent we are able to subdue our own inclinations which are contrary to holiness and those temptations which the devil is able to place in our path. This requires fortitude, and men were selected by God to practice, display, and lead in fortitude.

Do all women of today encourage and pressure the men in their lives to be pansies? No. But a sufficiently large percentage of them do, resulting in the world being in the most sorry and immoral of states. Finding a woman who encourages the men in her life to be honorable men willing and able to battle against evil and for holiness is very difficult.

As women today influence men to more and more become pansies, to seek the easy way, to compromise, to abandon honor, and to abandon active battle and warfare against evil, more and more of society and civilization will be abandoned and savagery established in its place, and more and more humans will go to hell. An examination of the abortion situation will confirm this, as will an examination of the current state of every society on Earth.

If women of today really desire to emulate the Ever Virgin Mary, they should encourage the men in their lives to imitate Christ: Who came not to bring peace but the sword with which evil is defeated.

Women should raise men, not pansies.

And men should be men, ignoring and overcoming any attempt to effeminate them.

Ref: Ecclus. 24:11-20; Luke 10:38-42

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THE CHURCH HISTORY OF EUSEBIUS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

The Plan of the Work.

1 It is my purpose to write an account of the successions of the holy apostles, as well as of the times which have elapsed from the days of our Saviour to our own; and to relate the many important events which are said to have occurred in the history of the Church; and to mention those who have governed and presided over the Church in the most prominent parishes, and those who in each generation have proclaimed the divine word either orally or in writing.

2 It is my purpose also to give the names and number and times of those who through love of innovation have run into the greatest errors, and, proclaiming themselves discoverers of knowledge falsely so-called have like fierce wolves unmercifully devastated the flock of Christ.

3 It is my intention, moreover, to recount the misfortunes which immediately came upon the whole Jewish nation in consequence of their plots against our Saviour, and to record the ways and the times in which the divine word has been attacked by the Gentiles, and to describe the character of those who at various periods have contended for it in the face of blood and of tortures, as well as the confessions which have been made in our own days, and finally the gracious and kindly succor which our Saviour has afforded them all. Since I propose to write of all these things I shall commence my work with the beginning of the dispensation of our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ.

4 But at the outset I must crave for my work the indulgence of the wise, for I confess that it is beyond my power to produce a perfect and complete history, and since I am the first to enter upon the subject, I am attempting to traverse as it

were a lonely and untrodden path. I pray that I may have God as my guide and the power of the Lord as my aid, since I am unable to find even the bare footsteps of those who have traveled the way before me, except in brief fragments, in which some in one way, others in another, have transmitted to us particular accounts of the times in which they lived. From afar they raise their voices like torches, and they cry out, as from some lofty and conspicuous watch-tower, admonishing us where to walk and how to direct the course of our work steadily and safely.

5 Having gathered therefore from the matters mentioned here and there by them whatever we consider important for the present work, and having plucked like flowers from a meadow the appropriate passages from ancient writers, we shall endeavor to embody the whole in an historical narrative, content if we preserve the memory of the successions of the apostles of our Saviour; if not indeed of all, yet of the most renowned of them in those churches which are the most noted, and which even to the present time are held in honor.

6 This work seems to me of especial importance because I know of no ecclesiastical writer who has devoted himself to this subject; and I hope that it will appear most useful to those who are fond of historical research.

7 I have already given an epitome of these things in the Chronological Canons which I have composed, but notwithstanding that, I have undertaken in the present work to write as full an account of them as I am able.

8 My work will begin, as I have said, with the dispensation of the Saviour Christ,--which is loftier and greater than human conception,--

9 and with a discussion of his divinity; for it is necessary, inasmuch as we derive even our name from Christ, for one who proposes to write a history of the Church to begin with the very origin of

Christ's dispensation, a dispensation more divine than many think.

CHAPTER II.

Summary View of the Pre-existence and Divinity of Our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Since in Christ there is a twofold nature, and the one--in so far as he is thought of as God--resembles the head of the body, while the other may be compared with the feet,--in so far as he, for the sake of our salvation, put on human nature with the same passions as our own,--the following work will be complete only if we begin with the chief and lordliest events of all his history. In this way will the antiquity and divinity of Christianity be shown to those who suppose it of recent and foreign origin, and imagine that it appeared only yesterday

2 No language is sufficient to express the origin and the worth, the being and the nature of Christ. Wherefore also the divine Spirit says in the prophecies, "Who shall declare his generation?" For none knoweth the Father except the Son, neither can any one know the Son adequately except the Father alone who hath begotten him.

3 For alone who beside the Father could clearly understand the Light which was before the world, the intellectual and essential Wisdom which existed before the ages, the living Word which was in the beginning with the Father and which was God, the first and only begotten of God which was before every creature and creation visible and invisible, the commander-in-chief of the rational and immortal host of heaven, the messenger of the great counsel, the executor of the Father's unspoken will, the creator, with the Father, of all things, the second cause of the universe after the Father, the true and only-begotten Son of God, the Lord and God and King of all created things, the one who has received dominion and power, with divinity itself, and with might and honor

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from the Father; as it is said in regard to him in the mystical passages of Scripture which speak of his divinity: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

4 "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made." This, too, the great Moses teaches, when, as the most ancient of all the prophets, he describes under the influence of the divine Spirit the creation and arrangement of the universe. He declares that the maker of the world and the creator of all things yielded to Christ himself, and to none other than his own clearly divine and first-born Word, the making of inferior things, and communed with him respecting the creation of man.

5 "For," says he, "God said, Let us make man in our image and in our likeness." And another of the prophets confirms this, speaking of God in his hymns as follows: "He spake and they were made; he commanded and they were created." He here introduces the Father and Maker as Ruler of all, commanding with a kingly nod, and second to him the divine Word, none other than the one who is proclaimed by us, as carrying out the Father's commands. All that are said to have excelled in righteousness and piety since the creation of man, the great servant Moses and before him in the first place Abraham and his children, and as many righteous men and prophets as afterward appeared, have contemplated him with the pure eyes of the mind, and have recognized him and offered to him the worship which is due him as Son of God.

7 But he, by no means neglectful of the reverence due to the Father, was appointed to teach the knowledge of the Father to them all. For instance, the Lord God, it is said, appeared as a common man to Abraham while he was sitting at the oak of Mambre. And he, immediately falling down, although he saw a man with his eyes, nevertheless worshiped him as God, and sacrificed to him as Lord, and confessed that he was

not ignorant of his identity when he uttered the words, "Lord, the judge of all the earth, wilt thou not execute righteous judgment?"

8 For if it is unreasonable to suppose that the unbegotten and immutable essence of the almighty God was changed into the form of man or that it deceived the eyes of the beholders with the appearance of some created thing, and if it is unreasonable to suppose, on the other hand, that the Scripture should falsely invent such things, when the God and Lord who judgeth all the earth and executeth judgment is seen in the form of a man, who else can be called, if it be not lawful to call him the first cause of all things, than his only pre-existent Word? Concerning whom it is said in the Psalms, "He sent his Word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions."

9 Moses most clearly proclaims him second Lord after the Father, when he says, "The Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord." The divine Scripture also calls him God, when he appeared again to Jacob in the form of a man, and said to Jacob, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name, because thou hast prevailed with God." Wherefore also Jacob called the name of that place "Vision of God," saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

10 Nor is it admissible to suppose that the theophanies recorded were appearances of subordinate angels and ministers of God, for whenever any of these appeared to men, the Scripture does not conceal the fact, but calls them by name not God nor Lord, but angels, as it is easy to prove by numberless testimonies.

11 Joshua, also, the successor of Moses, calls him, as leader of the heavenly angels and archangels and of the supramundane powers, and as lieutenant of the Father, entrusted with the second rank of sovereignty and rule over all, "captain of the host of the Lords" al-

though he saw him not otherwise than again in the form and appearance of a man. For it is written:

12 "And it came to pass when Joshua was at Jericho that he looked and saw a man standing over against him with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went unto him and said, Art thou for us or for our adversaries? And he said unto him, As captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and said unto him, Lord, what dost thou command thy servant? and the captain of the Lord said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy."

13 You will perceive also from the same words that this was no other than he who talked with Moses For the Scripture says in the same words and with reference to the same one, "When the Lord saw that he drew near to see, the Lord called to him out of the bush and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, What is it? And he said, Draw not nigh hither; loose thy shoe from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. And he said unto him, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."

14 And that there is a certain substance which lived and subsisted before the world, and which ministered unto the Father and God of the universe for the formation of all created things, and which, is called the Word of God and Wisdom, we may learn, to quote other proofs in addition to those already cited, from the mouth of Wisdom herself, who reveals most clearly through Solomon the following mysteries concerning herself: "I, Wisdom, have dwelt with prudence and knowledge, and I have invoked understanding. Through me kings reign, and princes ordain righteousness.

15 Through me the great are magnified, and through me sovereigns rule the earth." To which she adds: "The Lord

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created me in the beginning of his ways, for his works; before the world he established me, in the beginning, before he made the earth, before he made the depths, before the mountains were settled, before all hills he begat me. When he prepared the heavens I was present with him, and when he established the fountains of the region under heaven I was with him, disposing.

16 I was the one in whom he delighted; daily I rejoiced before him at all times when he was rejoicing at having completed the world." That the divine Word, therefore, pre-existed and appeared to some, if not to all, has thus been briefly shown by us.

17 But why the Gospel was not preached in ancient times to all men and to all nations, as it is now, will appear from the following considerations. The life of the ancients was not of such a kind as to permit them to receive the all-wise and all-virtuous teaching of Christ.

18 For immediately in the beginning, after his original life of blessedness, the first man despised the command of God, and fell into this mortal and perishable state, and exchanged his former divinely inspired luxury for this curse-laden earth. His descendants having filled our earth, showed themselves much worse, with the exception of one here and there, and entered upon a certain brutal and insupportable mode of life.

19 They thought neither of city nor state, neither of arts nor sciences. They were ignorant even of the name of laws and of justice, of virtue and of philosophy. As nomads, they passed their lives in deserts, like wild and fierce beasts, destroying, by an excess of voluntary wickedness, the natural reason of man, and the seeds of thought and of culture implanted in the human soul. They gave themselves wholly over to all kinds of profanity, now seducing one another, now slaying one another, now eating human flesh, and now daring to wage

war with the Gods and to undertake those battles of the giants celebrated by all; now planning to fortify earth against heaven, and in the madness of ungoverned pride to prepare an attack upon the very God of all.

20 On account of these things, when they conducted themselves thus, the all-seeing God sent down upon them floods and conflagrations as upon a wild forest spread over the whole earth. He cut them down with continuous famines and plagues, with wars, and with thunderbolts from heaven, as if to check some terrible and obstinate disease of souls with more severe punishments.

21 Then, when the excess of wickedness had overwhelmed nearly all the race, like a deep fit of drunkenness, beclouding and darkening the minds of men, the first-born and first-created wisdom of God, the pre-existent Word himself, induced by his exceeding love for man, appeared to his servants, now in the form of angels, and again to one and another of those ancients who enjoyed the favor of God, in his own person as the saving power of God, not otherwise, however, than in the shape of man, because it was impossible to appear in any other way.

22 And as by them the seeds of piety were sown among a multitude of men and the whole nation, descended from the Hebrews, devoted themselves persistently to the worship of God, he imparted to them through the prophet Moses, as to multitudes still corrupted by their ancient practices, images and symbols of a certain mystic Sabbath and of circumcision, and elements of other spiritual principles, but he did not grant them a complete knowledge of the mysteries themselves.

23 But when their law became celebrated, and, like a sweet odor, was diffused among all men, as a result of their influence the dispositions of the majority of the heathen were softened by the lawgivers and philosophers who arose on every side, and their wild and savage brutality was changed into mildness, so

that they enjoyed deep peace, friendship, and social intercourse. Then, finally, at the time of the origin of the Roman Empire, there appeared again to all men and nations throughout the world, who had been, as it were, previously assisted, and were now fitted to receive the knowledge of the Father, that same teacher of virtue, the minister of the Father in all good things, the divine and heavenly Word of God, in a human body not at all differing in substance from our own. He did and suffered the things which had been prophesied. For it had been foretold that one who was at the same time man and God should come and dwell in the world, should perform wonderful works, and should show himself a teacher to all nations of the piety of the Father. The marvelous nature of his birth, and his new teaching, and his wonderful works had also been foretold; so likewise the manner of his death, his resurrection from the dead, and, finally, his divine ascension into heaven.

24 For instance, Daniel the prophet, under the influence of the divine Spirit, seeing his kingdom at the end of time, was inspired thus to describe the divine vision in language fitted to human comprehension: "For I beheld," he says, "until thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was a flame of fire and his wheels burning fire. A river of fire flowed before him. Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.

25 He appointed judgment, and the books were opened." And again, "I saw," says he, "and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and he hastened unto the Ancient of Days and was brought into his presence, and there was given him the dominion and the glory and the kingdom; and all peoples, tribes, and tongues serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom shall not be

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 destroyed."

26 It is clear that these words can refer to no one else than to our Saviour, the God Word who was in the beginning with God, and who was called the Son of man because of his final appearance in the flesh. But since we have collected in separate books as the selections from the prophets which relate to our Saviour Jesus Christ, and have arranged in a more logical form those things which have been revealed concerning him, what has been said will suffice for the present.

CHAPTER III.

The Name Jesus and also the Name Christ were known from the Beginning, and were honored by the Inspired Prophets.

1 It is now the proper place to show that the very name Jesus and also the name Christ were honored by the ancient prophets beloved of God.

2 Moses was the first to make known the name of Christ as a name especially august and glorious. When he delivered types and symbols of heavenly things, and mysterious images, in accordance with the oracle which said to him, "Look that thou make all things according to the pattern which was shown thee in the mount," he consecrated a man high priest of God, in so far as that was possible, and him he called Christ. And thus to this dignity of the high priesthood, which in his opinion surpassed the most honorable position among men, he attached for the sake of honor and glory the name of Christ.

3 He knew so well that in Christ was something divine. And the same one foreseeing, under the influence of the divine Spirit, the name Jesus, dignified it also with a certain distinguished privilege. For the name of Jesus, which had never been uttered among men before the time of Moses, he applied first and only to the one who he knew would receive after his death, again as a type and

symbol, the supreme command.

4 His successor, therefore, who had not hitherto borne the name Jesus, but had been called by another name, Auses, which had been given him by his parents, he now called Jesus, bestowing the name upon him as a gift of honor, far greater than any kingly diadem. For Jesus himself, the son of Nave, bore a resemblance to our Saviour in the fact that he alone, after Moses and after the completion of the symbolical worship which had been transmitted by him, succeeded to the government of the true and pure religion.

5 Thus Moses bestowed the name of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, as a mark of the highest honor, upon the two men who in his time surpassed all the rest of the people in virtue and glory; namely, upon the high priest and upon his own successor in the government.

6 And the prophets that came after also clearly foretold Christ by name, predicting at the same time the plots which the Jewish people would form against him, and the calling of the nations through him. Jeremiah, for instance, speaks as follows: "The Spirit before our face, Christ the Lord, was taken in their destructions; of whom we said, under his shadow we shall live among the nations." And David, in perplexity, says, "Why did the nations rage and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth set themselves in array, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ"; to which he adds, in the person of Christ himself, "The Lord said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

7 And not only those who were honored with the high priesthood, and who for the sake of the symbol were anointed with especially prepared oil, were adorned with the name of Christ among the Hebrews, but also the kings whom the prophets anointed under the influ-

ence of the divine Spirit, and thus constituted, as it were, typical Christs. For they also bore in their own persons types of the royal and sovereign power of the true and only Christ, the divine Word who ruleth over all.

8 And we have been told also that certain of the prophets themselves became, by the act of anointing, Christs in type, so that all these have reference to the true Christ, the divinely inspired and heavenly Word, who is the only high priest of all, and the only King of every creature, and the Father's only supreme prophet of prophets.

9 And a proof of this is that no one of those who were of old symbolically anointed, whether priests, or kings, or prophets, possessed so great a power of inspired virtue as was exhibited by our Saviour and Lord Jesus, the true and only Christ.

10 None of them at least, however superior in dignity and honor they may have been for many generations among their own people, ever gave to their followers the name of Christians from their own typical name of Christ. Neither was divine honor ever rendered to any one of them by their subjects; nor after their death was the disposition of their followers such that they were ready to die for the one whom they honored. And never did so great a commotion arise among all the nations of the earth in respect to any one of that age; for the mere symbol could not act with such power among them as the truth itself which was exhibited by our Saviour.

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**ENCHIRIDION
ON FAITH, HOPE, AND
LOVE**

by
Saint Augustine

CHAPTER XXIV

The Solution to Present Spiritual Enig-
mas to Be Awaited in the Life of the
World To Come

94. And thus it will be that while the reprobated angels and men go on in their eternal punishment, the saints will go on learning more fully the blessings which grace has bestowed upon them. Then, through the actual realities of their experience, they will see more clearly the meaning of what is written in The Psalms: "I will sing to thee of mercy and judgment, O Lord"[199] -- since no one is set free save by unmerited mercy and no one is damned save by a merited condemnation.

95. Then what is now hidden will not be hidden: when one of two infants is taken up by God's mercy and the other abandoned through God's judgment -- and when the chosen one knows what would have been his just deserts in judgment -- why was the one chosen rather than the other, when the condition of the two was the same? Or again, why were miracles not wrought in the presence of certain people who would have repented in the face of miraculous works, while miracles were wrought in the presence of those who were not about to believe. For our Lord saith most plainly: "Woe to you, Chorazin; woe to you, Bethsaida. For if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the miracles done in your midst, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." [200] Now, obviously, God did not act unjustly in not willing their salvation, even though they could have been saved, if he willed it so. [201]

Then, in the clearest light of wisdom, will be seen what now the pious hold by faith, not yet grasping it in clear

understanding -- how certain, immutable, and effectual is the will of God, how there are things he can do but doth not will to do, yet willeth nothing he cannot do, and how true is what is sung in the psalm: "But our God is above in heaven; in heaven and on earth he hath done all things whatsoever that he would." [202] This obviously is not true, if there is anything that he willed to do and did not do, or, what were worse, if he did not do something because man's will prevented him, the Omnipotent, from doing what he willed. Nothing, therefore, happens unless the Omnipotent wills it to happen. He either allows it to happen or he actually causes it to happen.

96. Nor should we doubt that God doth well, even when he alloweth whatever happens ill to happen. For he alloweth it only through a just judgment -- and surely all that is just is good. Therefore, although evil, in so far as it is evil, is not good, still it is a good thing that not only good things exist but evil as well. For if it were not good that evil things exist, they would certainly not be allowed to exist by the Omnipotent Good, for whom it is undoubtedly as easy not to allow to exist what he does not will, as it is for him to do what he does will.

Unless we believe this, the very beginning of our Confession of Faith is imperiled -- the sentence in which we profess to believe in God the Father Almighty. For he is called Almighty for no other reason than that he can do whatsoever he willeth and because the efficacy of his omnipotent will is not impeded by the will of any creature.

97. Accordingly, we must now inquire about the meaning of what was said most truly by the apostle concerning God, "Who willeth that all men should be saved." [203] For since not all -- not even a majority -- are saved, it would indeed appear that the fact that what God willeth to happen does not happen is due to an embargo on God's will by the human will.

Now, when we ask for the reason why not all are saved, the customary answer is: "Because they themselves have not willed it." But this cannot be said of infants, who have not yet come to the power of willing or not willing. For, if we could attribute to their wills the infant squirmings they make at baptism, when they resist as hard as they can, we would then have to say that they were saved against their will. But the Lord's language is clearer when, in the Gospel, he reproveth the unrighteous city: "How often," he saith, "would I have gathered your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks, and you would not." [204] This sounds as if God's will had been overcome by human wills and as if the weakest, by not willing, impeded the Most Powerful so that he could not do what he willed. And where is that omnipotence by which "whatsoever he willed in heaven and on earth, he has done," if he willed to gather the children of Jerusalem together, and did not do so? Or, is it not rather the case that, although Jerusalem did not will that her children be gathered together by him, yet, despite her unwillingness, God did indeed gather together those children of hers whom he would? It is not that "in heaven and on earth" he hath willed and done some things, and willed other things and not done them. Instead, "all things whatsoever he willed, he hath done."

[199] Ps. 100:1 (Vulgate); cf. Ps. 101:1 (R.S.V.).

[200] Matt. 11:21.

[201] This is one of the rare instances in which a textual variant in Augustine's text affects a basic issue in the interpretation of his doctrine. All but one of the major old editions, up to and including Migne, here read: *Nec utique deus injuste noluit salvos fieri eum possent salvi esse SI VELLENT* (if they willed it). This would mean the attribution of a decisive role in human salvation to the human will and would thus stand out in bold relief from his general stress in the rest of the Enchiridion and elsewhere on the primacy and even irre-

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sistibility of grace. The Jansenist edition of Augustine, by Arnauld in 1648, read *SI VELLE* (if *He* willed it) and the reading became the subject of acrimonious controversy between the Jansenists and the Molinists. The Maurist edition reads *si vellet*, on the strength of much additional MS. evidence that had not been available up to that time. In modern times, the *si vellet* reading has come to have the overwhelming support of the critical editors, although Riviere still reads *si vellent*. Cf. Scheel, 76-77 (See *Bibl.*); Riviere, 402-403; J.G. Krabinger, *S. Aurelii Augustini Enchiridion* (Tubingen, 1861), p. 116; Faure-Passaglia, *S. Aurelii Augustini Enchiridion* (Naples, 1847), p. 178; and H. Hurter, *Sanctorum Patrum opuscula selecta* (Innsbruck, 1895), p. 123.

[202] Cf. Ps. 113:11 (a mixed text; composed inexactly from Ps. 115:3 and Ps. 135:6; an interesting instance of Augustine's sense of liberty with the texts of Scripture. Here he is doubtless quoting from memory).

[203] 1 Tim. 2:4.

[204] Matt. 23:37.

CHAPTER XXV

Predestination and the Justice of God

98. Furthermore, who would be so impiously foolish as to say that God cannot turn the evil wills of men -- as he willeth, when he willeth, and where he willeth -- toward the good? But, when he acteth, he acteth through mercy; when he doth not act, it is through justice. For, "he hath mercy on whom he willeth; and whom he willeth, he hardeneth." [205]

Now when the apostle said this, he was commending grace, of which he had just spoken in connection with the twin children in Rebecca's womb: "Before they had yet been born, or had done anything good or bad, in order that the electing purpose of God might continue -- not through works but through the divine calling -- it was said of them,

"The elder shall serve the younger." [206] Accordingly, he refers to another prophetic witness, where it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau have I hated." [207] Then, realizing how what he said could disturb those whose understanding could not penetrate to this depth of grace, he adds: "What therefore shall we say to this? Is there unrighteousness in God? God forbid!" [208] Yet it does seem unfair that, without any merit derived from good works or bad, God should love the one and hate the other. Now, if the apostle had wished us to understand that there were future good deeds of the one, and evil deeds of the other -- which God, of course, foreknew -- he would never have said "not of good works" but rather "of *future* works." Thus he would have solved the difficulty; or, rather, he would have left no difficulty to be solved. As it is, however, when he went on to exclaim, "God forbid!" -- that is, "God forbid that there should be unfairness in God" -- he proceeds immediately to add (to prove that no unfairness in God is involved here), "For he says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will show pity to whom I will show pity.'" [209] Now, who but a fool would think God unfair either when he imposes penal judgment on the deserving or when he shows mercy to the undeserving? Finally, the apostle concludes and says, "Therefore, it is not a question of him who wills nor of him who runs but of God's showing mercy." [210]

Thus, both the twins were "by nature children of wrath," [211] not because of any works of their own, but because they were both bound in the fetters of damnation originally forged by Adam. But He who said, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," loved Jacob in unmerited mercy, yet hated Esau with merited justice. Since this judgment [of wrath] was due them both, the former learned from what happened to the other that the fact that he had not, with equal merit, incurred the same penalty gave him no ground to boast of his own distinctive merits -- but, instead, that he should glory in the abun-

dance of divine grace, because "it is not a question of him who wills nor of him who runs, but of God's showing mercy." [212] And, indeed, the whole visage of Scripture and, if I may speak so, the lineaments of its countenance, are found to exhibit a mystery, most profound and salutary, to admonish all who carefully look thereupon "that he who glories, should glory in the Lord." [213]

99. Now, after the apostle had commended God's mercy in saying, "So then, there is no question of him who wills nor of him who runs, but of God's showing mercy," next in order he intends to speak also of his judgment -- for where his mercy is not shown, it is not unfairness but justice. For with God there is no injustice. Thus, he immediately added, "For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, 'For this very purpose I raised you up, that I may show through you my power, and that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.'" [214] Then, having said this, he draws a conclusion that looks both ways, that is, toward mercy and toward judgment: "Therefore," he says, "he hath mercy on whom he willeth, and whom he willeth he hardeneth." He showeth mercy out of his great goodness; he hardeneth out of no unfairness at all. In this way, neither does he who is saved have a basis for glorying in any merit of his own; nor does the man who is damned have a basis for complaining of anything except what he has fully merited. For grace alone separates the redeemed from the lost, all having been mingled together in the one mass of perdition, arising from a common cause which leads back to their common origin. But if any man hears this in such a way as to say: "Why then does he find fault? For who resists his will?" [215] -- as if to make it seem that man should not therefore be blamed for being evil *because* God "hath mercy on whom he willeth and whom he willeth he hardeneth" -- God forbid that we should be ashamed to give the same reply as we see the apostle giving: "O man, who are you to reply to God? Does the molded object say to

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the molder, "Why have you made me like this? Or is not the potter master of his clay, to make from the same mass one vessel for honorable, another for ignoble, use?"[216]

There are some stupid men who think that in this part of the argument the apostle had no answer to give; and, for lack of a reasonable rejoinder, simply rebuked the audacity of his gainsayer. But what he said -- "O man, who are you?" -- has actually great weight and in an argument like this recalls man, in a single word, to consider the limits of his capacity and, at the same time, supplies an important explanation.

For if one does not understand these matters, who is he to talk back to God? And if one does understand, he finds no better ground even then for talking back. For if he understands, he sees that the whole human race was condemned in its apostate head by a divine judgment so just that not even if a single member of the race were ever saved from it, no one could rail against God's justice. And he also sees that those who are saved had to be saved on such terms that it would show -- by contrast with the greater number of those not saved but simply abandoned to their wholly just damnation -- what the whole mass deserved and to what end God's merited judgment would have brought them, had not his undeserved mercy interposed. Thus every mouth of those disposed to glory in their own merits should be stopped, so that "he that glories may glory in the Lord." [217]

[205] Rom. 9:18.

[206] Rom. 9:11, 12.

[207] Cf. Mal. 1:2, 3 and Rom. 9:13.

[208] Rom. 9:14.

[209] Rom. 9:15.

[210] Rom. 9:15; see above, IX, 32.

[211] Eph. 2:3.

[212] Rom. 9:16.

[213] 1 Cor. 1 :31; cf. Jer. 9:24. The religious intention of Augustine's emphasis upon divine sovereignty and

predestination is never so much to account for the doom of the wicked as to underscore the sheer and wonderful gratuity of salvation.

[214] Rom. 9:17; cf. Ex. 9:16.

[215] Rom. 9:19.

[216] Rom. 9:20, 21.

[217] 1 Cor. 1:31.

CHAPTER XXVI

The Triumph of God's Sovereign Good Will

100. These are "the great works of the Lord, well-considered in all his acts of will"[218] -- and so wisely well-considered that when his angelic and human creation sinned (that is, did not do what he willed, but what it willed) he could still accomplish what he himself had willed and this through the same creaturely will by which the first act contrary to the Creator's will had been done. As the Supreme Good, he made good use of evil deeds, for the damnation of those whom he had justly predestined to punishment and for the salvation of those whom he had mercifully predestined to grace.

For, as far as they were concerned, they did what God did not will that they do, but as far as God's omnipotence is concerned, they were quite unable to achieve their purpose. In their very act of going against his will, his will was thereby accomplished. This is the meaning of the statement, "The works of the Lord are great, well-considered in all his acts of will" -- that in a strange and ineffable fashion even that which is done against his will is not done without his will. For it would not be done without his allowing it -- and surely his permission is not unwilling but willing -- nor would he who is good allow the evil to be done, unless in his omnipotence he could bring good even out of evil.

101. Sometimes, however, a man of good will wills something that God doth not will, even though God's will is much more, and much more certainly,

good -- for under no circumstances can it ever be evil. For example, it is a good son's will that his father live, whereas it is God's good will that he should die. Or, again, it can happen that a man of evil will can will something that God also willeth with a good will -- as, for example, a bad son wills that his father die and this is also God's will. Of course, the former wills what God doth not will, whereas the latter does will what God willeth. Yet the piety of the one, though he wills not what God willeth, is more consonant with God's will than is the impiety of the other, who wills the same thing that God willeth. There is a very great difference between what is fitting for man to will and what is fitting for God -- and also between the ends to which a man directs his will -- and this difference determines whether an act of will is to be approved or disapproved. Actually, God achieveth some of his purposes -- which are, of course, all good -- through the evil wills of bad men. For example, it was through the ill will of the Jews that, by the good will of the Father, Christ was slain for us -- a deed so good that when the apostle Peter would have nullified it he was called "Satan" by him who had come in order to be slain.[219] How good seemed the purposes of the pious faithful who were unwilling that the apostle Paul should go to Jerusalem, lest there he should suffer the things that the prophet Agabus had predicted![220] And yet God had willed that he should suffer these things for the sake of the preaching of Christ, and for the training of a martyr for Christ. And this good purpose of his he achieved, not through the good will of the Christians, but through the ill will of the Jews. Yet they were more fully his who did not will what he willed than were those who were willing instruments of his purpose -- for while he and the latter did the very same thing, he worked through them with a good will, whereas they did his good will with their ill will.

102. But, however strong the wills either of angels or of men, whether good or evil, whether they will what

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God willeth or will something else, the will of the Omnipotent is always undefeated. And this will can never be evil, because even when it inflicts evils, it is still just; and obviously what is just is not evil. Therefore, whether through pity "he hath mercy on whom he willeth," or in justice "whom he willeth, he hardeneth," the omnipotent God never doth anything except what he doth will, and doth everything that he willeth.

[218] Ps. 110:2 (Vulgate).

[219] Matt. 16:23.

[220] Acts 21:10-12.

CHAPTER XXVII

Limits of God's Plan for Human Salvation

103. Accordingly, when we hear and read in sacred Scripture that God "willeth that all men should be saved,"[221] although we know well enough that not all men are saved, we are not on that account to underrate the fully omnipotent will of God. Rather, we must understand the Scripture, "Who will have all men to be saved," as meaning that no man is saved unless God willeth his salvation: not that there is no man whose salvation he doth not will, but that no one is saved unless He willeth it. Moreover, his will should be sought in prayer, because if he willeth, then what he willeth must necessarily be. And, indeed, it was of prayer to God that the apostle was speaking when he made that statement. Thus, we are also to understand what is written in the Gospel about Him "who enlighteneth every man." [222] This means that there is no man who is enlightened except by God.

In any case, the word concerning God, "who will have all men to be saved," does not mean that there is no one whose salvation he doth not will -- he who was unwilling to work miracles among those who, he said, would have repented if he had wrought them -- but

by "all men" we are to understand the whole of mankind, in every single group into which it can be divided: kings and subjects; nobility and plebeians; the high and the low; the learned and unlearned; the healthy and the sick; the bright, the dull, and the stupid; the rich, the poor, and the middle class; males, females, infants, children, the adolescent, young adults and middle-aged and very old; of every tongue and fashion, of all the arts, of all professions, with the countless variety of wills and minds and all the other things that differentiate people. For from which of these groups doth not God will that some men from every nation should be saved through his only begotten Son our Lord? Therefore, he doth save them since the Omnipotent cannot will in vain, whatsoever he willeth.

Now, the apostle had enjoined that prayers should be offered "for all men"[223] and especially "for kings and all those of exalted station,"[224] whose worldly pomp and pride could be supposed to be a sufficient cause for them to despise the humility of the Christian faith. Then, continuing his argument, "for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour"[225]-- that is, to pray even for such as these [kings] -- the apostle, to remove any warrant for despair, added, "Who willeth that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." [226] Truly, then, God hath judged it good that through the prayers of the lowly he would deign to grant salvation to the exalted -- a paradox we have already seen exemplified. Our Lord also useth the same manner of speech in the Gospel, where he saith to the Pharisees, "You tithe mint and rue and every herb." [227] Obviously, the Pharisees did not tithe what belonged to others, nor all the herbs of all the people of other lands. Therefore, just as we should interpret "every herb" to mean "every kind of herb," so also we can interpret "all men" to mean "all kinds of men." We could interpret it in any other fashion, as long as we are not compelled to believe that the Omnipotent hath

willed anything to be done which was not done. "He hath done all things in heaven and earth, whatsoever he willed,"[228] as Truth sings of him, and surely he hath not willed to do anything that he hath not done. There must be no equivocation on this point.

[221] 1 Tim. 2:4.

[222] John 1:9.

[223] 1 Tim. 2:1.

[224] 1 Tim. 2:2.

[225] 1 Tim. 2:3.

[226] 1 Tim. 2:4.

[227] Luke 11:42.

[228] Ps. 135:6.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The Destiny of Man

104. Consequently, God would have willed to preserve even the first man in that state of salvation in which he was created and would have brought him in due season, after the begetting of children, to a better state without the intervention of death -- where he not only would have been unable to sin, but would not have had even the will to sin -- if he had foreknown that man would have had a steadfast will to continue without sin, as he had been created to do. But since he did foreknow that man would make bad use of his free will -- that is, that he would sin -- God prearranged his own purpose so that he could do good to man, even in man's doing evil, and so that the good will of the Omnipotent should be nullified by the bad will of men, but should nonetheless be fulfilled.

105. Thus it was fitting that man should be created, in the first place, so that he could will both good and evil -- not without reward, if he willed the good; not without punishment, if he willed the evil. But in the future life he will not have the power to will evil; and yet this will not thereby restrict his free will. Indeed, his will will be much freer, because he will then have no

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power whatever to serve sin. For we surely ought not to find fault with such a will, nor say it is no will, or that it is not rightly called free, when we so desire happiness that we not only are unwilling to be miserable, but have no power whatsoever to will it.

And, just as in our present state, our soul is unable to will unhappiness for ourselves, so then it will be forever unable to will iniquity. But the ordered course of God's plan was not to be passed by, wherein he willed to show how good the rational creature is that is able not to sin, although one unable to sin is better.[229] So, too, it was an inferior order of immortality -- but yet it was immortality -- in which man was capable of not dying, even if the higher order which is to be is one in which man will be incapable of dying.[230]

106. Human nature lost the former kind of immortality through the misuse of free will. It is to receive the latter through grace -- though it was to have obtained it through merit, if it had not sinned. Not even then, however, could there have been any merit without grace. For although sin had its origin in free will alone, still free will would not have been sufficient to maintain justice, save as divine aid had been afforded man, in the gift of participation in the immutable good. Thus, for example, the power to die when he wills it is in a man's own hands -- since there is no one who could not kill himself by not eating (not to mention other means). But the bare will is not sufficient for maintaining life, if the aids of food and other means of preservation are lacking.

Similarly, man in paradise was capable of self-destruction by abandoning justice by an act of will; yet if the life of justice was to be maintained, his will alone would not have sufficed, unless He who made him had given him aid. But, after the Fall, God's mercy was even more abundant, for then the will itself had to be freed from the bondage in which sin and death are the masters. There is no way at all by which it can be

freed by itself, but only through God's grace, which is made effectual in the faith of Christ. Thus, as it is written, even the will by which "the will itself is prepared by the Lord"[231] so that we may receive the other gifts of God through which we come to the Gift eternal -- this too comes from God.

107. Accordingly, even the life eternal, which is surely the wages of good works, is called a gift of God by the apostle. "For the wages of sin," he says, "is death; but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."[232] Now, wages for military service are paid as a just debit, not as a gift. Hence, he said "the wages of sin is death," to show that death was not an unmerited punishment for sin but a just debit. But a gift, unless it be gratuitous, is not grace. We are, therefore, to understand that even man's merited goods are gifts from God, and when life eternal is given through them, what else do we have but "grace upon grace returned"[233]?

Man was, therefore, made upright, and in such a fashion that he could either continue in that uprightness -- though not without divine aid -- or become perverted by his own choice. Whichever of these two man had chosen, God's will would be done, either by man or at least concerning him. Wherefore, since man chose to do his own will instead of God's, God's will concerning him was done; for, from the same mass of perdition that flowed out of that common source, God maketh "one vessel for honorable, another for ignoble use"[234]; the ones for honorable use through his mercy, the ones for ignoble use through his judgment; lest anyone glory in man, or -- what is the same thing -- in himself.

108. Now, we could not be redeemed, even through "the one Mediator between God and man, Man himself, Christ Jesus,"[235] if he were not also God. For when Adam was made -- being made an upright man -- there was no need for a mediator. Once sin, however, had widely separated the human

race from God, it was necessary for a mediator, who alone was born, lived, and was put to death without sin, to reconcile us to God, and provide even for our bodies a resurrection to life eternal -- and all this in order that man's pride might be exposed and healed through God's humility. Thus it might be shown man how far he had departed from God, when by the incarnate God he is recalled to God; that man in his contumacy might be furnished an example of obedience by the God-Man; that the fount of grace might be opened up; that even the resurrection of the body -- itself promised to the redeemed -- might be previewed in the resurrection of the Redeemer himself; that the devil might be vanquished by that very nature he was rejoicing over having deceived -- all this, however, without giving man ground for glory in himself, lest pride spring up anew. And if there are other advantages accruing from so great a mystery of the Mediator, which those who profit from them can see or testify -- even if they cannot be described -- let them be added to this list.

[229] Another example of Augustine's wordplay. Man's original capacities included both the power not to sin and the power to sin (*posse non peccare et posse peccare*). In Adam's original sin, man lost the *posse non peccare* (the power not to sin) and retained the *posse peccare* (the power to sin) -- which he continues to exercise. In the fulfillment of grace, man will have the *posse peccare* taken away and receive the highest of all, the power not to be able to sin, *non posse peccare*. Cf. On Correction and Grace XXXIII.

[230] Again, a wordplay between *posset non mori* and *non possit mori*.

[231] Prov. 8:35 (LXX).

[232] Rom. 6:23.

[233] Cf. John 1:16.

[234] Rom. 9:21.

[235] 1 Tim. 2:5 (mixed text).

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AS THE YEARS PASS, AND SO DO SOME OF OUR SUBSCRIBERS . . .
 As the years of our publication of **REUNION** pass we have become accustomed to seeing the names of the hundreds to whom we mail the publication - well, at least those to whom we personally send copies. page 4

HOLY INNOCENTS “PHYSICAL PLANT” UPDATE Now that the basic structure for the Church building is in place, and even though the Church interior is far from being completed, we have turned our attention to the grounds for the time being. page 4

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LONG BEFORE HITLER, MUS-SOLINI, STALIN, LENIN, NAPOLEON, THE KAHN, THERE WAS LYCURGUS (Not a single bit of moral dogma is stated herein. Yet, . . . Lycurgus . . . persuaded Thales to go over to Lacedaenon, where Thales, exercising his talent as a lyric poet, ". . . performed the part of one of the most ablest lawgivers in the world. page 1

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And charging the judges, he (Josaphat) said: Take heed what you do: for you exercise not the judgment of man, but of the Lord: and whatsoever you judge, it shall redound to you. Let the fear of the Lord be with you, and do all things with diligence: for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor desire of gifts. (2 Paralipomenon Chapter 19:6-7)

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