



REUNION

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



Volume 21 No. 3

OF THE CHURCH

OF MAN WITH GOD

September 2011

~ WHAT KIND OF "GUY" IS JESUS? ~

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

The Law established by God for mankind can not in and of itself give eternal life, although in and of itself, if followed, it will establish the most just, fair, merciful, stable, and perfect society it is possible to establish under the Natural Law. It also facilitates making the Two Great Commandments an intrinsic aspect of a person's essence, and a person's inclination and ability to and actual performance of



operating divinely and attaining eternal salvation.

But all of these matters are best considered in the light of example given to us by Christ Himself - in that seemingly impossible to attain phrase, "Imitation of Christ".

Imitating Christ is much more simple than most believe, much less inhibiting and much less restrictive than many believe, and much more taxing and restrictive than many wish or desire. Our concupiscence may lead us not only to the more readily acknowledged sins of the flesh, such as sexual desires and gluttony, but also to the less readily acknowledged but equally devastating emotional sins such as desire for celebrity or power. Our concupiscence

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PRIDE - THE INTELLECT'S ACCOMPLICE TO TEMPTATION

The basis or foundation of the initial or original temptation of Adam was the temptation of pride, and that temptation is an aspect of every temptation every human experiences. Adam could not know, and the word "know" is very important, Adam could not know temptation of the flesh before

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DO NOT ACCEPT A FIGMENT AS THE REAL GOD

The followers of the devil are persistent, roaming wherever they are able, seeking to capture and to lead astray every person possible, especially the elect - especially those of the True Church.

There is absolutely no difference amongst the followers of the devil. What difference is there between the actor or actress who displays inappro-

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FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND OUR MOST IMPORTANT TASK

Empirically - that is, simply by casual observance - it is obvious that, generally, most of those who populate this world at this time have little concern about the commission of sins. Generally, those committing sins are not concerned about the sins they are committing, and those who happen to not be actively sinning at the time are not concerned about the sins they observe being committed.

This is very much not in concert, not in tune, with God's concern regarding

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THE INITIAL AND CONTINUING FOCUS OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY IS TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF ANY OTHER "THING" CALLED A RELIGION

When the various religions are contemplated, including the various false religions which term themselves Christian, all but one share a multitude of aspects including their basic foundations. That one, the true Christian religion founded by Jesus Christ, that true Church, is so markedly and extremely different in its foundation that its very difference is often overlooked, missed, and not comprehended by the other religions. It also is so basic as to be presumed to be understood by the followers of the true religion and members of the True Church.

Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, as well as the various offshoots of Christianity which are not part of the

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SAY, "GOOD NIGHT LORD"

Something most people rarely do, or fail to do with sufficient frequency, is to be thankful - thankful to God, of course.

We can begin our thanksgiving not just for what we have, not for what we do not have, but for our existence. For every person God has created there are billions of billions of people He could have created, but He did not create them. Perhaps He loves the ones He created more than the ones He did not create - that is a Divine criteria to which we are not privy.

A person's thanking God for creating
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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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Telephones / electronic addresses:
Holy Innocents Orthodox Church
25401 Lorin Wall Rd.
Holden, Louisiana 70744 USA
(225) 294-2233
(504) 298-3867
frlee@reu.org
BBS ftp telnet://reu.org
<http://www.reu.org>

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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.)

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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

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

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

BIBLE-DAY

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

SERMONS

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

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

STUDIES

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

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

ONE-BODY

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

REU_PUB

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

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

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

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The Society of Clerks Secular of Saint
Basil
at
Holy Innocents Orthodox Church
~ Retreat House ~
25401 Lorin Wall Road
Holden, Louisiana 70744
U. S. A.
(225) 294-2233 / (504) 298-3867

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

We have experienced an increase in Roman Catholics seeking Sacramental Confession and Absolution from us. Apparently it has become customary or common for an increasing number of Roman Catholic priests to use variations in the form for administration of absolution. Again, apparently, some of these variations in form are so nebulous or vary so greatly from the traditional as to leave the penitent unsure as to whether or not they have been given absolution.

Absolution is not the place for innovation. One should be very careful to adhere to the approved form, which is:

O Lord God, of the salvation of Thy servants, gracious, bountiful and long-suffering, who repentest Thee concerning our evil deeds, and desirest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live: Show Thy mercy now upon Thy servant N., and grant unto him (*her*) an image of repentance, forgiveness of sins, and deliverance, pardoning his (*her*) every transgression, whether voluntary or involuntary. Reconcile and unite him (*her*) unto Thy holy Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom also are due unto Thee dominion and majesty, now, and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

After this prayer the Priest pronounceth the Absolution over the

Penitent, who kneeleth humbly, saying as follows, in completion of the Holy Sacrament of Confession:

May our Lord and God Jesus Christ, through the grace and bounties of His love towards mankind, forgive thee my child, N., all thy transgressions. And I His unworthy Priest, through the power given unto me by Him, do forgive and absolve thee from all thy sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Depending on circumstances it is permissible for the first portion to be omitted. The last paragraph, however, should be as hereinabove written.

This is not the only approved form. But any form used should be one which has been in common use and approved for several hundred years by The True Church.

We have cards with this printed on it available by sending a SASE to The S.S.B. c/o Holy Innocents with such a request.

These cards are also available on our web site in the files area, file name ABSOLUT4.ZIP (in Microsoft Publisher format)

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SERMONS

It would serve every person who gives a sermon without having prepared it with diligence, **OR** extensive thought and contemplation - which means much more than five minutes, **OR** who teaches (delivers) a sermon without it being written out, **OR** without at least extensive notes, **to tape record or even better videotape each such sermon and then listen to it or watch it without interruption.**

You may well be embarrassed or even horrified at what you hear, or see and hear.

A well prepared sermon completely written out, or at the very least with extensive notes, is always much better than an extemporaneous sermon - even though many who usually give extemporaneous sermons usually believe their extemporaneous sermons are much better than a (or their) sermon which is written out.

Very often there is more than a minor element of pride underlying those who prefer giving extemporaneous sermons. "I know this stuff," they think to themselves. Concurrent there often is an equally strong element of laziness, good old common sloth, inspiring the preference of an extemporaneous sermon over a written sermon. After all, writing the thing requires time, effort, and - gasp! - thought!! Horror or horrors, mental activity is required!

Those who prefer the seeming or actual spontaneity of the extemporaneous sermon forget that the purpose of a sermon is to accurately teach. It may be entertaining to some extent, but entertainment is not its purpose. Accurate, viable, timely, and useful instruction as to how to avoid eternal damnation and how to attain eternal salvation are the sole purpose of a proper sermon.

It is not unusual for an extemporaneous sermon to be so long, to consume such a great amount of time, that the congregation is in no mood to attend to the business of being in Church - which is to worship God and "get some holies", and possibly a few other things.

It is not unusual for the one giving an extemporaneous sermon to "mis-speak" or say something which is not accurate or even (and unfortunately, often) teach something which is totally in error; often being totally unaware of the error.

One who properly writes a sermon will use the occasion to check what is being

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written, what is being taught. The finished product is available for review - and the writer will be well served to not just review the sermon, but to do so in a manner which imitates actual delivery of the sermon. Reading it aloud is not always necessary, but at the very least mentally speaking the sermon is a must. (But avoid over rehearsing. Actually, do not rehearse. Just be sufficiently familiar with the sermon so-as-to avoid "messaging up".) Not only will this provide an opportunity to check continuity, but also will expose potential problems in phrasing. Actually voicing the sermon will provide the additional opportunity of avoiding "tongue twisters", awkward phrasing, awkward pauses or lack of a pause where one really is needed, and other similar potential problems. But this may also be readily accomplished mentally.

If your written out sermon is too boring for you to read it, why inflict it upon your congregation?

If your written out sermon is too long for you to comfortably read it, by what right do you intend to condemn your congregation to its arduous character?

In a liturgical worship setting a sermon usually or often is nothing more than an ancillary complement. It should never be even remotely considered, or even worse, presented, as a university lecture. If the one giving a sermon wishes to give a university lecture, the one giving the sermon should give a university lecture - in a university class.

Every sermon should be a gem of teaching. Even if it repeats a lesson often taught it often is possible to present the lesson from a different aspect, in a different light, very often using contemporary events - but when using contemporary events one must avoid demeaning or ridicule. But empha-

sizing overt evil emanating from an individual or group is permissible provided an expression of desire for the reformation and salvation of the individual or group is also expressed. So too is illuminating the effects of such evil permissible, with the same or similar caveats.

If a sermon is worth giving, *why would the one who is giving the sermon NOT wish to retain a written*

For a carefully written sermon is instructive to the writer as well as to the congregation. And the fullness of the instruction is delivered when the sermon is formally delivered to the congregation.

record of the sermon? (And if it is not worth giving, why give it?)

Also, maintaining a record of your sermons allows you ready access to an archive of your own work. Should you be "dry" in preparing a sermon, you will have a ready library from which to draw. Often when one is "dry" one will find the simple process of reviewing one's sermons for the same feast, or same scripture, or similar topic, unleashes very welcome inspiration.

Another advantage of a written sermon is impossible for one who delivers an extemporaneous sermon to experience. Even if the subject matter of the extemporaneous sermon is one with the one giving the sermon is very familiar, when it is said and done, it is gone. But with a written sermon, even one well prepared and reviewed, if it is written a day or so prior to its being delivered, the one giving the sermon is experiencing it anew - often as though it is for the first time. And in presenting the written sermon the one who wrote it and is delivering it often is taught by their own sermon. It is not unusual for such a one to say within themselves, "I must remember this. It will help me spiritually." For a carefully written sermon is instructive to the writer as well as to the congregation. And the fullness of the instruction is delivered when the sermon is formally delivered to the congregation.

Even if your congregation is you, write your sermon. And deliver it in its appropriate place. Everyone in your congrega-

tion deserves your best.

Of course, so doing requires the devotion of time, thought, and diligence. Considering it is being done for Christ, in the Name of Christ, in fulfillment of one's divinely instituted office, to assist others in attaining eternal salvation - well, do you want to do a sloppy job or do you want to do your best?

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THE GENIUS AUTOMOBILE DRIVER
(Humor??, thank you Paul)

A man recently saw a distraught young lady weeping beside her car. "Do you need some help?" he asked.

She replied, "I knew I should have replaced the battery to this remote door unlocker. Now I can't get into my car. Do you think they (pointing to a distant convenience store) would have a battery to fit this?"

"Hmmm, I don't know. Do you have an alarm, too?" he asked.

"No, just this remote thingy," she answered, handing it and the car keys to the man.

As he took the key and manually unlocked the door, he replied, "Why don't you drive over there and check about the batteries. It's a long walk . . ."

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(Continued GUY from page 1)

may also lead us to intellectual sins, which often satiate emotional desires, such as imposing overtly excessive restrictions, punishments, and such, upon ourselves or others, and making overbearingly oppressive assessments of our own holiness or that of others - although this last is less of a problem in these times, than it was in the past; and, here, one must be concerned about laxness just as much as one must be concerned about excessiveness or severity.

So, what is a person to do? The answer is simple: imitate Christ. Some people ask the question, "What would Jesus do?" and are ridiculed for asking that question. Those who ridicule in this instance are the ones who deserve ridicule, for while they may deem themselves to be too sophisticated to consider such a question, and while what God would do in a certain situation may not be what is proper or even possible for a human to do, yet a truthful, honest, considered, and insightful answer will at the very least provide a guide to those seeking direction.

Though most of the New Testament is concerned with Christ's teachings and miracles which confirmed His Divinity and His right to teach, and contains little of His every day activities, there actually is a wealth of information about His habits and customary activities. Judicious and proper application or use of this information is a fruitful guide.

Prior to engaging in any planned major activity, Jesus prayed and fasted. His prayers were straightforward and to the point, always including His desires and subordinating them to the will of His Father, as exemplified by His prayer in the garden where He asked that He not drink the cup of His passion but that if it was His Father's will then He would drink of the cup.

Jesus preceded the beginning of His public life with a forty day retreat of fasting and prayer in the desert. This was not the type of fasting such as that done at Ramadan which the Moslems practice, wherein no food is eaten during the daytime followed

by feasting and partying after sundown. It was fasting which caused hunger and discomfort for the full twenty-four hours of each of the forty days, and reduced the natural carnality of the human nature so-as-to make it more properly subservient to the spiritual. The prayer was not that of mindless generalities, but rather focused, intentional, and purposeful - reminiscent of His prayer in the Garden at the beginning of His Passion.

Jesus welcomed crowds, but also welcomed solitude or relative solitude with a few friends. He would often take refuge of sorts in the mountains, the desert, and on boats. It was to one of these three places He would go when overtly pressed by the crowds. The value to Him of a brief respite-retreat was immense.

Jesus lead a life of perfect chastity. He did not and does not require others so do, but does require each of us be chaste in accordance with his or her station in life. (Mat: 19:12) Yet, unlike Saint John the Forerunner (the Baptist), Jesus did not lead an especially austere life, for the Jews commenting on Saint John's austerity in food and garments and saying Saint John had a devil, also condemned Christ calling Him a glutton and a wine drinker, and a friend of publicans and sinners. (Mat. 11:18-19) What Jesus did was to simply enjoy that which was available and also proper for Him to enjoy, in a proper manner, without engaging in excess or being obsessive.

Saint John the Forerunner and his followers, as well as the Pharisees, fasted regularly, but while Jesus fasted in important situations, neither Jesus nor His disciples fasted as a routine matter. Jesus definitely did not live a life of luxury - Mary Magdalene, Martha, and Lazarus were much more wealthy than He - and while it can not be said that He lived a "comfortable" life, neither did He live a life of poverty. Perhaps it could be said that fiscally or financially, Jesus lived a life of sufficiency with neither excess nor want.

Regarding the law - both that of God and that of man - Jesus conformed with the

requirements of Mosaic Law, but more especially within Mosaic Law's propriety, thus working miracles even on the Sabbath, and allowing His disciples to pluck ears of grain on the Sabbath (Mat. 12:1-12). He did so not just because, "the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath" but more especially because, "it is lawful to do a good deed on the Sabbath days". He lived the law as it was intended to be lived. His comment regarding the actual payment of taxes, based on the coin used for payment which coin had the likeness of Caesar - Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and to God that which is God's - is generally applicable to the laws of men, always remembering both that God's law is superior and that man's law can not validly be used as either an excuse or as a reason to commit sin.

Jesus also had, and has, a lively sense of humor. His verbal exchange with the woman at the well is one double entente after another both combined with and in the form of alliterational onomatopoeia or alliteration and onomatopoeia. It is quite witty. Each of us can easily confirm that Jesus continues to have a lively sense of humor even to this very day, by simply looking into the mirror.

From these and other examples in both scripture and private writings we have a fairly good idea of what kind of person Jesus was, and is. While one should never presume Jesus will not hold them accountable for their life, and will definitely condemn eternally to Hell those whom He judges deserve Hell, one should also never be afraid of Jesus. He is quite likable.

Ref: Gal. 3:16-22; Luke 17:11-19

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

(Continued FOCUS from page 1)

True Church, basically recommend, present, or require the following of their own rule books for living. The individual rule books are the foundations of each respective religion, each written by humans and claiming some form of foundation in divine inspiration. Animism, which is the basic foundation of the religious concepts of the American Plains Indians and of the Japanese, Polytheism, Shamanism, and Pantheism which the West collectively terms Paganism, and similar religions, present various views and opinions regarding the reality of the world in which we live with a correlated view and opinion regarding any life after life in this world. Scientologists and religions similar to Scientology basically believe we all are immortal spiritual beings, gods if you will, but that most of us have forgotten we are gods and should seek to regain that lost knowledge.

Pick your religion and you will find something along these lines as its basic premise, foundation, focus, or what ever.

Until you examine the True Church, true Christianity.

The initial and continuing focus of true Christianity is NOT a book, a rule book, dogma, doctrine, a way of life, a philosophy, how to get to heaven, how to please God, or anything along those lines or along the lines of anything propounded by any other "thing" called a religion. The initial and continuing focus of true Christianity is the knowledge, the imitation, and the love, of a particular Person, Jesus Christ, God.

Most religions require one first become familiar with their primary book, or rule book. Islam requires at least a minimal familiarity with the Koran, after which one is expected to emulate and imitate Islam's Prophet Mohammed, to attain a purpose. Judaism requires you follow the rules, to attain a purpose. Animism and similar religions basically inform you as to what to expect when you die, occasionally with a marginal ability to

effect the outcome.

But true Christianity's basic "requirement", and "requirement" is a very inadequate word in this instance, is to know, love - with the hope and desire that love will change to Charity -, and imitate Jesus Christ, God (not to mention, to worship Him as well, but one will do that either voluntarily or involuntarily, eventually, in heaven or hell).

It is very true that God intervened in humanity rather often when Divine intervention is contemplated - His actual creation aside. Noah (Noe), Abraham, Moses, Jacob, Judah, Joseph, David, and many others experienced and were the conduits of Divine intervention. But Jesus Christ is, quite simply and at essence, the Word Incarnate - direct, Personal, "hands on" as it were, Divine intervention.

And the proof of the viability and reliability of this active, Personal intervention, is not just in the impossible occurrences such as the raising from the dead of the son of the widow of Naim, but also the Resurrection from the dead of the Incarnate, of the Person Jesus Christ in His human nature and the concurrent Glorification of His humanity. A Glorification of which a glimpse was given at the Transfiguration.

Once the basic requirements of being a true Christian are met, of knowing, loving, and imitating Jesus Christ, God, the Divine Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, are initiated in that person, impelling that person to the reception of the Sacraments, Baptism being the first for it opens the ability to reception of the other Sacraments - as appropriate.

Of course, implicit in the knowing, loving, and imitating of Jesus Christ, God, is the embracing of His Divinity, His Passion, Death, and Resurrection for the redemption of humankind, but not even remotely is there a requirement for any great theological knowledge. Only the barest, without even the requirement one be able to read.

A Moslem can, at best, hope to be a servant of Allah, who is a distant and demanding master. A Jew must be a faithful observer of the rule and ritual book to attain a comfortable life in this world and something nebulous in the next. The other religions and the false Christian religions focus on manipulating "whatevers" to get "goodies".

But True Christianity desires establishing a personal friendship with God now and for all eternity. And with the Incarnation there is the permanent establishment of God as integral in and to humankind.

Ref: Gal. 5:25-26; 6:1-10; Luke 7:11-16

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(Continued PRIDE from page 1)

his fall because all his powers remained in the order in which they had been created by God, with the flesh subject to the intellect. A disorder in the intellect was required to liberate the flesh from the intellect, and that disorder was achieved in Adam's succumbing to the intellectual temptation to be God's equal in knowing good and evil. That temptation, while prompted by the Devil through Eve and also by Eve, was actualized as a temptation by Adam's internal intellectual processes. Adam therefore was an accomplice in his own initial temptation which lead to his original sin. *(As an aside: one should note it is impossible that Christ would ever be such an accomplice, all His temptations being external in source, and that source not being of the flesh but of Satan - the only possible source of attempted temptation or seduction of Christ.)*

One might say, "That's nice," and wonder of its significance. The significance is the operation of pride and the reality that each of us is an accomplice in every temptation we experience whether it be a temptation to sin or a temptation to transgress. To keep matters simple, remember a sin can be one of commission or of

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(Continued **PRIDE** from page 7)

omission - where we do what we should not or fail to do what we should where the "doing" or "failure" is a sin. To transgress is not always a sin, but it does include failure to do a good when readily possible and recognized, and may even include the failure to recognize the possible good which could be done. But pursuit of this avenue will take us too far afield from the direction we wish to pursue.

When Jesus asked the Pharisees and lawyers if it was lawful to heal on the sabbath day, and they declined to answer, He was teaching them the reality that their pride in knowledge of the letter of the law had blinded them to the spirit and the intention of the law. Basically, the spirit and intention of the law's prohibition against any kind of physical labor on the sabbath day was to provide time for worship of God, thanksgiving to God, and rest for humans. It was not intended to prohibit the doing of good, and especially was it not intended to prohibit being holy. And, curing the ill is both good and holy, and for an ill person in desperate circumstances, it is an immediate necessity the withholding of which would be both evil and sinful.

By advising prudence in seating one's self when a guest, so that one is not asked to move to a lower place so that another may take the preferred place, and also so that one may be moved from a lowed place to a higher and more preferred place, Jesus was giving an instruction against blindly acting in a prideful manner. He was especially warning against presumption which often has pride as its foundation.

One's sense of self esteem, or of self worth, often are exaggerated beyond a reasonable level by one's pride leading one to think or to act in a presumptive manner without the right so-to-do.

As did the Pharisees and lawyers, and, perhaps, as do many of both the "common folk" as well as the "celebrities" of today.

Even though most of us do not really believe we have a problem with pride, a little mental activity in the preventive maintenance mode would prove to be beneficial to most of us in restraining pride. For what we actually seek in the spiritual improvement arena is the assistance of God the Father, that we be strengthened in our inner man by the Holy Spirit, that we be made mighty in inner strength of holiness, the intellect of the soul overriding both the impulses and the rebellion of the flesh, the intellect never succumbing to becoming an accomplice of the flesh.

Ref: Eph. 3:13-21; Luke 14:1-11

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(Continued **FIGMENT** from page 1)

priate sexuality for public consumption, and the member of the Jehovah's Witnesses, or member of any other organization which lacks the Sacraments and Apostolic Succession, who prowls the streets of the cities, and drives the country roads, seeking victims to lead away from the Sacraments and the True Church?

There is no difference between the two, for both seek the eternal damnation of their prey.

They can not and do not, "**love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind,**" for they do not believe in the Lord God - they believe in a god they have created, they do not know the true God, or if they know Him they oppose Him, they reject Him. One can not and does not love another whom they do not know, or who exists only in their own mind, or whom they oppose and reject. While it is quite possible to love one whose actions or purposes one opposes or rejects, it is not possible to love one whom one opposes and rejects. And it is never possible to love one whom one does not know or who does not exist or who exists only in one's mind.

Do these promoters of evil and damnation, "**love thy neighbour as thyself,**" . . . ?

No.

Some of them love themselves to the exclusion of all others and of all else.

Some of them loath and hate themselves, are devoid of love of self. Being without even sufficient self love to enable the seeking of eternal salvation for themselves, they lack the ability to love themselves and to love others, or anything.

When asked why they follow their course, many of these people will spout well practiced phrases which often initially sound and seem reasonable but which upon reflection and the even the most bare of inspection are easily revealed as meaningless noise. When the request is made, of those who cite to Sacred Scripture, to give logical, rational explanations which maintain concordance with traditional Sacred Scripture or traditional - and not modern - translations of Sacred Scripture, and required to abandon their own false interpretations, they fall silent. Of course, those who do not pretend to base their positions in Sacred Scripture will posit a logic which is self defeating and meaningless on its face - often being so ridiculous as to be laughable were it not for the spiritual and therefore temporal damage they wreck.

Saint Paul constantly reminds us in a multitude of subtle as well as straight forward ways, that it is not sufficient for the attainment of eternal salvation that we be good, but that it is necessary that we be holy.

Some fortunate individuals apparently find this to be an easy task. Undoubtedly they have attained a measure of success in their attempt to focus on the attainment of holiness. Undoubtedly they exerted more effort in that endeavor than those of us who who still struggle. But they are fortunate not in having been

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given anything which we have not been given. They are fortunate in that they have exercised the fortitude required to attain some measure of success in pursuit of holiness, while we who still struggle have not.

But we may also attain that goal. And we shall if we but ignore the devil, gird our loins, and follow Christ.

Ref: Eph. 4:1-6, Mat. 22:35-46

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(Continued FORGIVENESS from page 1)

our sins.

Our Lord often publicly forgave the sins of those who were brought to Him suffering with various illnesses - sometimes forgiving their sins before He cured their ailments.

That is logical, it makes sense, because His purpose in becoming incarnate, becoming man, was to be the offering which would enable man to re-establish a good, holy relationship with God. He came to correct the human condition, or, more correctly, He came to make it possible for each individual human to establish a good, holy relationship with God, the potential for which had been damaged by sin.

His actively, publicly forgiving of the sins of various individuals paralleled His actively, privately forgiving the sins of various individuals. It foretold His continuing to forgive sins through the Sacrament He established and the ability to grant and to administer that Sacrament which He gave to His priests, continuing that ability to those with true Apostolic Succession to this very day.

Forgiving sins obviously was, and since we are referring to God it is appropriate to say, is, very important to Our Lord. Since He is God, what is important to Him should also be important to every human.

What happens when Sins are forgiven?

The penitent establishes a good, holy, meaningful relationship with God. That is good. The penitent also becomes sinless, without sin, and also attains some measure of holiness.

Being both without sin, and possessing at least some measure of holiness, is a condition we each should attempt to attain and once attained, improve. Why? Well, one good reason is because this is important to God, and if we are rational, it therefore should be important to each of us. (Of course, it does not hurt to remember, realize, and appreciate the reality that the condition of being holy is required to enter into eternal union with God, the only alternative being eternal damnation separated from God. Which do you prefer?)

Those who have a true grasp of, or some measure of comprehension or understanding of, Christianity, of true Christianity, know this, and understand this. But they do not always remember this. Those without a true comprehension of Christianity rarely know this, and therefore rarely have anything to remember.

Of course, as we are reminded every day, there are an uncountable number of people for whom this is of no significance. These people, for whom this is of no significance, steal, kill, rape, and generally suck the life's blood from whomever they are able.

Never forget, that just because getting to heaven is important to you does not mean it is important to everyone else.

But also never forget, that since Our Lord established its importance, getting to heaven is the most important task you have, and everyone else has, even those who ignore that task.

Ref: 1 Cor. 1:4-8, Mat. 9:1-8

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(Continued GOOD NIGHT from page 1)

him or her is proper. It is something a person should do frequently. It would not be improper to also thank God for loving you, to ask Him to continue loving you, and to assist you in loving Him. Doing that once or twice a day is something which could prove beneficial, but it should not be done out of a sense of obligation or duty. It should arise as a natural aspect of one's relationship with God. If there is someone living in the same place you live, surely when you see them upon arising you wish them a good morning, and before retiring for the evening you wish them a good night. The "good morning" might be a grumbled growl until you have had your first cup of coffee, but surely it is there, somewhere.

Well, God is always there when you awaken, as well as when you go to sleep. Can anyone think of a good reason to NOT say good morning to God upon awakening or at least upon arising, and good night upon retiring to sleep? Of course, just a little thought will open the realization one really is not wishing God to have a good morning, or a good evening. When one, upon arising, says, "Good morning, Lord," one actually is greeting God, and thanking God for everything, including the past day, and the immediately past night. One is asking God to continue being active in their life - and it is a good idea to arise so one has time sufficient to pray more properly, as soon as the coffee is finished brewing.

But at the very least, greet God with a "Good morning, Lord" and seal your day with a "Good night, Lord". It would not hurt to include the Ever Virgin Mary, and perhaps your guardian angel once in a while.

What ever adverse circumstances you experience, whether it be doing without a necessity such as food, shelter, clothing, medical care, or coping with something you do not desire or which is harmful, such as flood waters, a dreaded disease, or the mean, nasty, and un-

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CHILDREN'S PAGE

The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism

Q. 1239. What is forbidden by the second Commandment?

A. The second Commandment forbids all false, rash, unjust, and unnecessary oaths, blasphemy, cursing, and profane words.

Q. 1240. When is an oath rash, unjust or unnecessary?

A. An oath is rash when we are not sure of the truth of what we swear; it is unjust when it injures another unlawfully; and it is unnecessary when there is no good reason for taking it.

Q. 1241. What is blasphemy, and what are profane words?

A. Blasphemy is any word or action intended as an insult to God. To say He is cruel or find fault with His works is blasphemy. It is a much greater sin than cursing or taking God's name in vain. Profane words mean here bad, irreverent or irreligious words.

Q. 1242. What is the third Commandment?

A. The third Commandment is: Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

Q. 1243. What are we commanded by the third Commandment?

A. By the third Commandment we are commanded to keep holy the Lord's day and the great feasts or holydays of obligation, on which we are to give our time to the service and worship of God.

Q. 1244. What are great feasts or holydays of obligation?

A. Great feasts or holydays of obligation are special feasts of the Church on which we are bound, under pain of mortal sin, to hear Divine Liturgy (Mass) and to keep from servile or bodily labors when it can be done without great loss or inconvenience. Whoever, on account of their circumstances, cannot give up work on holydays of obligation should

make every effort to hear Divine Liturgy (Mass) and should also explain in confession the necessity of working on holydays.

Q. 1245. How are we to worship God on Sundays and great feasts or holydays of obligation?

A. We are to worship God on Sundays and great feasts or holydays of obligation by hearing Divine Liturgy (Mass), by prayer, and by other good works.

Q. 1246. Name some of the good works recommended for Sunday.

A. Some of the good works recommended for Sunday are: The reading of religious books or papers, teaching Catechism, bringing relief to the poor or sick, visiting the Blessed Sacrament, attending Vespers, Rosary or other devotions in the Church; also attending the meetings of religious sodalities or societies. It is not necessary to spend the whole Sunday in such good works, but we should give some time to them, that for the love of God we may do a little more than what is strictly commanded.

Q. 1247. Is it forbidden, then, to seek any pleasure or enjoyment on Sunday?

A. It is not forbidden to seek lawful pleasure or enjoyment on Sunday, especially to those who are occupied during the week, for God did not intend the keeping of the Sunday to be a punishment, but a benefit to us. Therefore, after participating in divine Liturgy (Mass) we may take such recreation as is necessary or useful for us; but we should avoid any vulgar, noisy or disgraceful amusements that turn the day of rest and prayer into a day of scandal and sin.

Q. 1248. Are the Sabbath day and the Sunday the same?

A. The Sabbath day and the Sunday are not the same. The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, and is the day which was kept holy in the old law; the Sunday is the first day of the week, and

is the day which is kept holy in the new law.

Q. 1249. What is meant by the Old and New Law?

A. The Old Law means the law or religion given to the Jews; the New Law means the law or religion given to Christians.

Q. 1250. Why does the Church command us to keep the Sunday holy instead of the Sabbath?

A. The Church commands us to keep the Sunday holy instead of the Sabbath because on Sunday Christ rose from the dead, and on Sunday He sent the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles.

Q. 1251. Do we keep Sunday instead of Saturday holy for any other reason?

A. We keep Sunday instead of Saturday holy also to teach that the Old Law is not now binding upon us, but that we must keep the New Law, which takes its place.

Q. 1252. What is forbidden by the third Commandment?

A. The third Commandment forbids all unnecessary servile work and whatever else may hinder the due observance of the Lord's day.

Q. 1253. What are servile works?

A. Servile works are those which require labor rather of body than of mind.

Q. 1254. From what do servile works derive their name?

A. Servile works derive their name from the fact that such works were formerly done by slaves. Therefore, reading, writing, studying and, in general, all works that slaves did not perform are not considered servile works.

Q. 1255. Are servile works on Sunday ever lawful?

A. Servile works are lawful on Sundays when the honor of God, the good of our

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CHILDREN'S PAGE

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neighbor, or necessity requires them.

Q. 1256. Give some examples of when the honor of God, the good of our neighbor or necessity may require servile works on Sunday.

A. The honor of God, the good of our neighbor or necessity may require servile works on Sunday, in such cases as the preparation of a place for Divine Liturgy (Holy Mass), the saving of property in storms or accidents, the cooking of meals and similar works.

LESSON THIRTY-THIRD: From the Fourth to the Seventh Commandment

Q. 1257. What is the fourth Commandment?

A. The fourth Commandment is: Honor thy father and thy mother.

Q. 1258. What does the word "honor" in this commandment include?

A. The word "honor" in this commandment includes the doing of everything necessary for our parents' spiritual and temporal welfare, the showing of proper respect, and the fulfillment of all our duties to them.

Q. 1259. What are we commanded by the fourth Commandment?

A. We are commanded by the fourth Commandment to honor, love and obey our parents in all that is not sin.

Q. 1260. Why should we refuse to obey parents or superiors who command us to sin?

A. We should refuse to obey parents or superiors who command us to sin because they are not then acting with God's authority, but contrary to it and in violation of His laws.

Q. 1261. Are we bound to honor and obey others than our parents?

A. We are also bound to honor and obey our bishops, pastors, magistrates, teach-

ers, and other lawful superiors.

Q. 1262. Who are meant by magistrates?

A. By magistrates are meant all officials of whatever rank who have a lawful right to rule over us and our temporal possessions or affairs.

Q. 1263. Who are meant by lawful superiors?

A. By lawful superiors are meant all persons to whom we are in any way subject, such as employers or others under whose authority we live or work.

Q. 1264. What is the duty of servants or workmen to their employers?

A. The duty of servants or workmen to their employers is to serve them faithfully and honestly, according to their agreement, and to guard against injuring their property or reputation.

Q. 1265. Have parents and superiors any duties toward those who are under their charge?

A. It is the duty of parents and superiors to take good care of all under their charge and give them proper direction and example.

Q. 1266. If parents or superiors neglect their duty or abuse their authority in any particular, should we follow their direction and example in that particular?

A. If parents or superiors neglect their duty or abuse their authority in any particular we should not follow their direction or example in that particular, but follow the dictates of our conscience in the performance of our duty.

Q. 1267. What is the duty of employers to their servants or workmen?

A. The duty of employers to their servants or workmen is to see that they are kindly and fairly treated and provided for, according to their agreement, and that they are justly paid their wages at the proper time.

Q. 1268. What is forbidden by the fourth Commandment?

A. The fourth Commandment forbids all disobedience, contempt, and stubbornness towards our parents or lawful superiors.

Q. 1269. What is meant by contempt and stubbornness?

A. By contempt is meant willful disrespect for lawful authority, and by stubbornness is meant willful determination not to yield to lawful authority.

Q. 1270. What is the fifth Commandment?

A. The fifth Commandment is: Thou shalt not kill.

Q. 1271. What killing does this commandment forbid?

A. This commandment forbids the killing only of human beings.

Q. 1272. How do we know that this commandment forbids the killing only of human beings?

A. We know that this commandment forbids the killing only of human beings because, after giving this commandment, God commanded that animals be killed for sacrifice in the temple of Jerusalem, and God never contradicts Himself.

Q. 1273. What are we commanded by the fifth Commandment?

A. We are commanded by the fifth Commandment to live in peace and union with our neighbor, to respect his rights, to seek his spiritual and bodily welfare, and to take proper care of our own life and health.

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(Continued **GOOD NIGHT** from page 9)

cooperative neighbor's dog barking all night, your very existence enables you to attain the pinnacle of what could be desired, or to reject that attainment.

We each have been invited to the wedding and the wedding feast of eternal salvation by virtue of our very existence. God even provides the wedding garments for each of us to wear. We are able to decline the invitation for all of us are invited but not forced, or even attempt to attend wearing something inappropriate. We are even able to initially decline the invitation, and later accept it, until such time as our access to the wedding and wedding feast is fixed in place by our death. But even accepting the invitation does not assure one of remaining at the feast, for we must be rid of even the slightest semblance of discord with God, and be clothed in harmony and concert with God from our outermost to out innermost.

Tonight, before you go to sleep, tell God, "Good night Lord. I love you. Thank you," and rest easy.

Ref: Eph. 4:23-28, Mat. 22:2-14

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THE DIVINE PERSON - THE HUMAN PERSON

Obviously those who believe in one god have no real religious commonality with those who believe in more than one or many gods. But while those who believe in many gods are able to readily acknowledge the "reality" of the many gods of another religion, and even argue as to whose gods are more powerful, it is not true that those who believe in one god, monotheist, are able to readily acknowledge the reality of the one god in which other monotheist believe.

Protestants believe in a god who allows them - humans - to establish dogma, morality, the application of the Ten Commandments and the Two Great Commandments; a god who can be manipu-

lated, coerced, and whose standards for human thought and conduct may be readily ignored - especially in situations where there may be coercion, fraud, or attainment of a desired goal or effect without excessive violence, force, maiming, or death. That god is not much of a god - really nothing more than an initiator of creation who set some loose standards and walked away. **"He ain't real."**

Moslems believe in a severe taskmaster god who is more like a slave owner with humankind being the slaves of that god. That god is said to be merciful to those who seek mercy from him concurrent with repentance, and grants great rewards to those who obey his instructions - but that obedience must be slavish - the obedience a slave gives, with fear being a prime motivator. The rewards that god gives are very materialistic and sensual - sexually sensual - and include a heaven where those who go to heaven receive sloe eyed, swelling breasted virgins who after sexual intercourse become virgins again, and small boys. He commands his followers enslave or kill all who do not convert to his religion, or his followers' "brand" of his religion, such non-conformist people being called infidels. Their god further commands his followers lie to infidels, especially where his followers may profit from lying or harm may come to infidels through the lying, and instructs his followers they have no obligation to fulfill their contractual obligations with infidels if his followers can profit from not fulfilling the contract, or if it suits their purpose, or if it will cause harm to the infidel. **"He ain't real either."**

It seems obvious that Protestants are able to readily worship the Moslem god, but Moslems are not able to worship the Protestant god.

We true Christians, however, are not able to worship either of their gods, nor are we able to worship with them or they with us, for the God we worship is God and the god or gods they worship are not - their god is a god of their own invention and therefore does not exist -

"He ain't real either."

God, the true God, is absolute. What He has decreed in our past, in the history of mankind, holds true in the present time of mankind, for God is outside of time and does not change. God is absolute, ultimate, not to be swayed, unable to be deceived or manipulated. He is not a slave holder and no human is His slave, though a wise human will seek to be His servant, to live and to exist under His rule. He is both the source and the example of every noble quality and characteristic, being so and being such in perfection. Thus both His justice and His mercy, as well as every other noble quality and characteristic, are one, being categorized by humans as aspects for better and easier comprehension and appreciation. He has explained to us, and we accept, that there is but one God, but that God is three Persons, each Person being divine, each of the same substance, each with all the qualities and aspects of personhood, yet being but one God.

We are able to communicate with God, to talk with and to Him, and to hear Him or, more accurately, to receive communication from God. It is difficult to comprehend talking with the Blessed Trinity, or having a relationship with the Blessed Trinity, but it is a simple matter to comprehend talking with or having a relationship with one or more or each of the Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

Saint Dismas, the Good Thief, at a glance from the Divine Person Jesus Christ God, instantly accepted the relationship offered to him by Our Lord In acknowledging the Divinity of Christ, the justice of his own crucifixion, and the injustice of Christ's crucifixion, and in begging forgiveness from this Divine Person Jesus, Saint Dismas attained eternal salvation in the last moments of his life.

It was in recognizing that particular Divine **PERSON**, in establishing a positive relationship with that **PERSON**,
(Continued **PERSON** on page 13)

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that Saint Dismas was able as it were to harmonize with God, person to PERSON.

Thus, even though those of other religions may be monotheists, we can not pray with them nor can they pray with us, for the god to whom they pray does not exist, being of their own invention. While the God to whom we pray is God, His being and existence being in Himself in His very nature.

Remember your own personhood comes from being made in the image and likeness of God. Since our very ability to think comes from His continued support, we are able to, as it were, "think talk" with God - not just to God but with God. Those who do this as constantly as they are able may, perhaps, before they die, establish with God a bond similar to that which Saint Dismas established.

Ref: Is. 59:1-4; Luke 23:39-43

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UNFAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP IS BETRAYAL AND DISHONORABLE

What is your reaction to and attitude towards a government employee who, for money, provides important information to a foreign government?

What is your reaction to and attitude towards a football or baseball player, or any athlete who is a member of a team, who in return for money shaves points or does not play his or her best or causes the team to lose?

What is your reaction to and attitude towards a member of the military who sells the next day's battle plans to the enemy?

What is your reaction to and attitude towards a police officer who arrests someone without regard to their innocence or guilt?

What is your reaction to and attitude towards a priest who tells people it is permitted to use oral or medicinal contracep-

tives? Remember, these forms of contraceptives actually do not prevent conception, but, rather, abort - kill - the baby.

What is your reaction to and attitude towards every federal representative, senator, president, and judge, since the inception of Social Security, and later, Medicare, considering the undeniable and well documented fact that the greater part of the money collected for these two programs has been spent on other projects, mostly not repaid and when repaid so done at well below the then current interest rates, all not only with out opposition by any of these officials other than some "lip service", repeat, not only without opposition by these officials but also with the active support of every one of the individuals who have held these various offices during the entire period of time the programs have been in existence?

What is your reaction to and attitude towards the mother who drowns all of her children, or slits their throats killing them?

What is your reaction to and attitude towards the father who shoots to death every member of his family, and then, often, kills himself?

An unfaithful steward betrays the trust with which he or she has been endowed thus acting in the most dishonorable manner possible.

The priest or bishop who in any manner leads anyone to even consider the viability of any religion other than the one holy catholic and apostolic church, in its many different jurisdictions, is an unfaithful steward of God and of mankind. Actually, in the current situation of the Western or Latin Rite of the Roman Catholic Church part of the true church, a faithful steward must urge caution in considering its viability due

to its change in liturgy, ordination practices, and obvious lack of belief in the reality of the Eucharist being God on the part of a significant portion of its clergy and religious.

The priest or bishop who in any manner even begins to suggest one religion is as good as another, or that members of other religions have a real good chance of going to heaven, is not only an unfaithful steward of God and mankind, but also is a disciple of the devil, a liar, and, to put it delicately, a dishonorable piece of self made garbage.

What about the person who knows their spouse is a spy, but does not turn the spouse in because they enjoy the extra money the spying provides?

The priest or bishop who in any manner even begins to suggest one religion is as good as another, or that members of other religions have a real good chance of going to heaven, is not only an unfaithful steward of God and mankind, but also is a disciple of the devil, a liar, and, to put it delicately, a dishonorable piece of self made garbage.

What about the person who knows a sports athlete is shaving points, and makes money gambling accordingly?

What about the person who uses forms of contraceptives which cause abortion knowing this is how the so called contraceptive works, thus knowing the unholiness and evil of the practice even though the practice was condoned by

their priest?

Not only is the unfaithful steward an abomination, but also are abominations, those who knowingly take advantage of, use, or utilize their fruits, especially those who use their fruits as their fruits were intended.

It is possible to admire the craftsmanship, fervor, and enterprise of evil well done, just as it is possible to admire the craftsmanship, fervor, and enterprise of anything which is done well. But in the instance of evil, the admiration should be grudgingly granted with the accom-

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panying wish or desire that it had been done for good and that those who would be good and holy would exercise similar levels of craftsmanship, fervor, and enterprise.

Always remember it was, and is, the unfaithful stewards who split the true church asunder, keep it in turmoil, teach, preach, and live evil, and harm others as well as themselves. Always remember that no matter how attractive, well mannered, or nice, the unfaithful stewards - or stewardesses - may be, they are unfaithful, without honor, evil people who, though they may from time to time seem to produce something good, are capable of producing only evil.

God really is so nice it is difficult to accept as fact, that anyone would desire to betray God. But we know there are such people. They are all over the place. Don't become one of them.

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

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THE GENIUS AT McDONALD'S (Humor??, thank you Paul)

A customer perusing the menu at McDonald's focused on Chicken McNuggets. The menu offered orders of 6, 9, or 12 pieces.

The customer ordered, "a half dozen nuggets."

The teenage counter clerk said, "We don't have half dozen nuggets,"

"You don't?" the customer replied

"We only have six, nine, or twelve," the clerk replied.

"So I can't order a half dozen nuggets, but I can order six?" asked the customer

"That's right," said the clerk

So the customer shook his head and ordered six McNuggets. ~+~

THE BLACK LETTER IS A GUIDE TO THE SPIRIT AND TO ASSIMILATION AND ACQUISITION OF THE SPIRIT

The explicit instructions which God has given to us, sometimes referred to as 'black letter law' or 'the letter of the law', are guides which assist us to ascertain the spirit, not just of the law, but the spirit which God wishes to be instilled in us. By knowing, following, and appreciating the foundation of the letter of God's law we have tools through which we are able to assimilate the law's spirit as well as not merely goodness, but Holiness and Godliness. Use of these tools, combined with assimilation of the spirit, are means by which one may acquire the Holy Spirit.

It is difficult to compare a single activity in which people commonly engage, with the complexities of real life, so-as-to provide a viable concept which faithfully examines the true role the spirit of anything holds in comparison with its letter or iron clad guidelines.

Perhaps driving an automobile, or flying an airplane, will assist in making the two different roles more viable to the mind and imagination.

Two of the more common traffic regulation devices are the speed limit sign and the three color traffic light.

Normally a speed limit sign indicates the maximum speed allowed on that particular portion of the road on which the sign is placed. But if a light rain has just fallen the road may be slick and a prudent driver will drive at a speed which allows greater control of the vehicle. The letter of the law states the sign speed is the maximum speed, but the purpose of stating the speed limit on the sign is to set the normal safe driving speed, to establish a safety perimeter

which if exceeded creates a dangerous situation. The spirit of that regulation is safety, and a wet road surface changes the elements which must be considered.

With a three color traffic light signal, normally, a green light signals the driver may proceed and has the right of way, a yellow light signals the driver should proceed with caution being prepared to instantly stop or maneuver, and a red light signals the driver must stop and only proceed when instructed by the signal light or some other signal or direction.

Under certain circumstances it is permissible for a driver to accelerate within the speed limit when a signal light turns yellow, so-as-to pass through the intersection while the light is yellow and before it turns red. But if a driver makes

Use of these tools, combined with assimilation of the spirit (of the law), are means by which one may acquire the Holy Spirit.

this a customary practice the driver is ignoring the spirit of the law which attempts to instill caution in the driver faced with a yellow light. Ignoring this caution may easily lead to the driver

causing an accident. Even when the traffic light is green a driver should exercise caution at an intersection because there may be cross traffic which is unable to stop, or a negligent driver approaching the intersection, or an emergency vehicle whose driver is ignoring safety protocol.

Just as the driver who ignores the safety reminder intrinsic in traffic regulatory signs increases their risk of being involved in or causing a collision, so too does an airplane pilot who excessively relies on the airplane's auto pilot run the risk of injury. While such devices are extremely reliable, a little icing on the air speed indicator, especially in more modern airplanes with computer assisted controls, may easily cause the auto pilot to react in a manner which is not warranted, causing a crash and injury or death.

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God's instructions to us are very similar.

It is not sufficient to just know God's instructions, His stated "do's" and "don'ts", but also to study them and comprehend the social and especially the spiritual reasons for them. If we simply follow the letter of God's law we may possibly attain eternal salvation, but if we know the "why" of God's law we will be better able to assimilate the spirit of God's law into our lives and our reactions to different circumstances. Living within the spirit of God's law, and reacting to circumstances within the spirit of God's law, makes it more likely we will live and react in a spiritually and morally acceptable manner.

We will thereby accept the responsibility which is ours for while God establishes the guidelines of living, we each are the ones who live our own individual lives.

We can cruise on auto pilot from time to time, but we must always be ready to grasp hold of the controls of our life.

If you do not know how to drive and wish to learn, it behooves you to learn slowly, ask questions when necessary, or obtain instruction, make prudent driving practices second nature, and practice them at all times. If you do not know how to fly an airplane, and wish to learn, it is prudent to learn under a qualified instructor and never stop practicing and learning, making prudent flying practices second nature. Since living in a manner which attains eternal salvation is much more important than driving of piloting an airplane, being thoroughly familiar with God's instruction book, and living the spirit of its instructions so that they become the most natural part of your life, is of utmost importance.

Ref: 2 Cor. 3:4-9; Luke 10:23-37

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WELL, HOW DO WE DO THAT?

"No man can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one, and love the other: or he will sustain the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon . . . Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you."

If you seek the kingdom of God and His justice you will do your best to live in accordance with the will of God and His instructions which are very explicit. If you do this you will be doing your best to attain eternal salvation and also as a by-product will be doing your best to obtain the necessities of life and many of those luxuries of this world which are in conformity with God's will. If those who effect your life, such as your employer, government officials, spouse, family, and friends, also seek the kingdom of God and His justice, then there will be few obstacles to the positive effects of your living in accordance with God's will.

Those who live in accordance with God's will earn their own way, accept assistance when offered only when necessary and only when the assistance harms no one, and offer assistance when there is a need which the recipient can not fill and when it will not harm those for whom the one rendering assistance is responsible.

But if you do not place seeking to live God's will as your prime goal you do not have much of a potential of attaining the kingdom of God. If you place any of the delights or even any of the necessities of this world in any position of desirability or primacy then to that measure you will serve obtaining those necessities or delights and not serve God. If you live in this manner and still retain some faint desire to attain heaven then you will be constantly reminded of your failure to measure up to God's standards not just in the few ways experienced by those who make God their prime focus, but in virtually all ways.

The letter of God's law will always be in your face for you will constantly be violating it.

Anyone who disagrees with this not only is in error but also is a fool. Some few will accurately know they seek to and generally do serve God and not mammon. The rest will inquire as to **how** do we successfully serve God and not mammon; **how do we successfully seek first the kingdom of God, and His justice?**

We so do by making this - seeking first the kingdom of God - instinctive and natural, innate in our life. Well, **how do we that?**

Some attempt this by going into solitude, thinking they will thereby avoid temptation. But most temptations come from within ourselves and not from outside sources. The devil may prompt us, sway us, and even occasionally act far beyond those boundaries. But for the most part the temptations we experience come from within ourselves and the temptations to which we succumb also come from within ourselves.

We can seek to avoid the near occasions of sin when those are external, but we can never avoid ourselves.

Therefore, we must change ourselves.

Well, **how do we that?**

Prayer is so standard an answer that it seems trite or even a cliché. But it is the prime answer, provided coupled with prayer are acts and thoughts which are in conformity with prayer.

Partially this means that in practical application one must correct or undo sin immediately upon realization one has sinned. When you take a pen from work and realize it, bring it back as soon as possible. When you say the fish that got away was three feet long immediately recant and say it really was six inches long. Even if it is embarrassing, and especially if it is embarrassing, immedi-

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ately correct the wrong, immediately correct the error.

There are a multitude of situations where this is very difficult not just because of the embarrassment or potential embarrassment but because of logistics.

By way of example, if you are watching TV or a movie and an actor or actress is displaying various body parts in a lewd or an enticing manner and you react in a very normal but animalistic manner, it is very difficult to apologize to the actress or actor, especially since that reaction is the reaction they desired. But since the reaction the actor or actress desired is totally inappropriate, pray for them. And apologize to God and pray to God for forgiveness for treating that which He created in His own image and likeness as though it were trash thus treating God as though He were trash. And if you are married you may think apologizing to your spouse would be appropriate, but that may cause more problems. Therefore, instead of apologizing to your spouse, especially if your spouse is unaware of your transgression, be a better spouse yourself.

If you apply these generalities, their concerts, and their harmonies, you will begin to be in harmony with God and therefore with the Spirit. Even though you will continue to have to deal with mammon, you will begin to serve God and not mammon.

And THAT is how you do it! Well, part of it anyway.

Ref: Gal. 5:16-24, Mat. 6:24-33

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THE GENIUS MOTHER (Humor??, thank you Paul)

A mother called 911 very worried asking the dispatcher if she needs to take her child to the emergency room. The child had eaten ants. The dispatcher told her to give the child some Benadryl and he should be fine. The mother said, "I just gave him some ant killer." Dispatcher, "Rush him in to the hospital emergency room!"

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WHAT IS THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY, THE MOST AMAZING?

What are your candidates for the most extraordinary, the most amazing?

When we contemplate extraordinary things, amazing things, the enumeration of them by any one individual will likely overlap those enumerations made by other people. Some things will be common to most lists.

But when it comes to the most extraordinary, the most amazing, individuals may well disagree.

Two candidates for the most extraordinary, most amazing come to mind.

One, that God would, and does, invite us to be with Him for all eternity, united with Him, in complete and total happiness, in joy of every nature possible.

The other, that many people reject God's offer, thus subjecting themselves to eternal separation from God, in complete and total unhappiness, in total misery of every nature possible.

Of course, this brings to mind a third candidate, that many people act as though they may disregard God's instructions and God will, not just from time to time as happens when many of us sin, but as a way of life: rejecting all or most of the Sacraments, especially Confession - Absolution, and the Eucharist; accepting, supporting, allowing, or not vigorously opposing abortion, homosexual and lesbian relations, and other perversions; engaging in, minimalizing, or marginalizing extramarital sexual intercourse; failing to raise their children, and to educate their children in both secular learning and in matters of religion; manipulating others for their own advantage; engaging in downright theft; lying to the masses and enslaving them through any means be it force of arms or economic measures; leading others astray from the true Church and God's true teachings and

presenting their own desires and perversions of God's truth as being valid; taking God's name in vain and making references to God commonplace slang, and other serious sins which kill the soul and make hell its only possible place of eternal abode - that people engage in such activities and yet anticipate or believe they will go to a better place called heaven when they die.

Some think it is extraordinary, amazing, that a large segment of society believes it may sponge off the rest of society - but those who think this is amazing must place in the scale the reality that a large segment of society has been paid by politicians through government programs which on their surface state they assist those who are unable to assist themselves, but which in actuality are avenues through which politicians are able to channel money by which the politicians purchase both the support of those who receive the money, and also purchase the souls of the recipients of the money.

What is extraordinary and amazing, is that neither the politicians nor those whom they purchase perceive anything immoral or wrong in any manner with these arrangements. It also is extraordinary and amazing that both these politicians and the ones they purchase expect to go to heaven.

Always remember that heaven is not a right. It is earned. Christ made it possible for each person to attain eternal salvation, but it is up to each person to actually attain it.

Please remember the words of Christ when He said, "many are called, but few are chosen," and do everything possible to be amongst the chosen - according to God's expressed will and not some permissive opinion expressed by a heretic or an apostate.

Oh, what is the most extraordinary, the most amazing?

Is it that God actually wants each of us

(Continued **AMAZING** on page 17)

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with Him for all eternity and does so much to make that possible, to assist that in happening?

Or is it that so many people think God will welcome them into heaven and have them be with Him for all eternity when they have spent their lives spitting in His face?

Ref: Eph. 4:23-28, Mat. 22:2-14

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DIVINE AND HUMAN AUTHORITY

Some of the obstacles to easy recognition and acknowledgment of Divine authority

Why is it so difficult for people to reflectively acknowledge the ultimate authority of God and the reality that God not only innately possesses ultimate power and authority, but also exercises that authority and that power? Concurrently, why is it that even those who reflectively acknowledge these realities so often not only fail to live in accordance with these realities, but also readily, often, and even reflectively, live in manners contrary to these realities?

It could be that we simply are contrary by nature. Like Henry the mule in *The Little Rascals*. When Buckwheat was asked why Henry would not do what he was supposed to do, Buckwheat replied, “ ’cause he contrary.” Perhaps we are simply “contrary”.

But it is more likely that our experience with humans in positions of authority does not prepare us for the reality of God Who is Authority.

When dealing with human authority, depending on whether we are exercising authority or it is being exercised over us, and depending on the manner in which it is exercised and how it effects us, we may be compliant, acquiescent, confrontational, fearful, joyful, disgusted, or hold a myriad of other in-

tellectual and emotional positions. Our exercise of authority and its exercise over us by another human may also be voluntary or involuntary, both on our part and on the part of others. But whether we are the authority or another is exercising it over us, in all our human experiences it is another human or other humans with which we are dealing. Our experience with applied authority is with other humans.

We therefore have no every day experience by which we are able to become familiar with Divine authority. We must rely on intellect and Faith to establish the proper relationship with God in His exercise of Divine authority.

We constantly encounter human authority. Our daily experiences with employment supervisors, traffic regulations and enforcement officers, receipt of utility bills with the requirement we pay them, purchase of goods and payment of sales taxes or value added taxes, and even family gatherings, all entail encounters with authority. Those encounters are overt and obvious.

But God’s authority, although it is the ultimate, absolute, constantly exercised, reaches to all and everywhere, and will not be denied, is not as overt and obvious as the various forms of human authority with which we come in contact daily.

We therefore have an inclination or tendency to ignore it or to not take it into consideration.

The personality of those in authority also is a factor which must be considered. Even the best human will from time to time exhibit arrogance in conjunction with a position of authority. But God never exhibits arrogance for God is never arrogant. Some humans actually have a management style which includes being aloof or even nasty. But God not only is never aloof, never nasty, but actually is nice.

If we wish to live wisdom, we will thank God Who is Authority for being the way

He is. We will contemplate God as Authority. We will contemplate and study the ramifications of not simply yielding to the Ultimate Authority, but actually becoming in harmony with God as Authority. We might also contemplate and study the ramifications of opposing or being disharmonious with the Ultimate Authority.

Everyone who has the use of reason exercises authority in some manner every day. Even those on the lowest rungs of society and power at the very least exercise some form of authority over themselves every day. We will be wise if we contemplate how to exercise that authority which we do possess, in a manner consistent with the Divine Authority. If someone does not wish to contemplate how to exercise their authority in a manner consistent with God as Authority, well, we constantly attempt to cure ignorance through education. But there is no cure for stupid.

Ref: Col. 1:12-20, John 18:33-37

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THE GENIUS AT WALMART
(Humor??, thank you Paul)

A customer was checking out Walmart with just a few items when the next customer put their things on the belt close to the first customer. The first customer picked up a 'divider' the store keeps by the cash register and placed it between the items so they would not get mixed.

After the cashier had scanned all of the first customer’s items, she picked up the 'divider', looking it all over for the bar code so she could scan it.

Not finding the bar code, she said to the customer, “Do you know how much this is?” The customer said to her, “I’ve changed my mind; I don’t think I’ll buy that today.”

She said “OK,” the customer paid and left, the cashier having no clue to what had just happened.

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CONTEMPLATING FORGIVENESS IN A MANNER WHICH MAY LESSEN THE POTENTIAL FOR NEEDING IT AGAIN

Forgiveness is very simple, yet multi faceted, with deep aspects.

Whether it be a creditor, one who has been wronged, or one to whom another is obligated in some form or another, that one is able to forgive.

If forgiveness is offered by one in a position so-to-do, does forgiveness exist in and of itself? Perhaps there are some circumstances where it does exist in and of itself; but for the most part forgiveness does not exist unless it is requested, given, and accepted. The desire to receive forgiveness may be presumed, and if it is offered and accepted, the presumption was correct.

But if a debtor, or a wrongdoer, or the one who owes the obligation, does not acknowledge the debt or the wrong they have wrought or the obligation they owe, then that person will neither seek forgiveness nor accept forgiveness if it is offered. Such a person neither can, nor is able, to seek forgiveness or to accept forgiveness if it is offered. The situation is similar to that wherein there is a perfectly sane and mentally competent person who is dying of thirst, but who does not believe or think they are dying of thirst, and who does not believe there is water present, and who does not believe there is a drinking glass present - even though there is someone present with water in a drinking glass - and someone expecting the thirsty person to ask for or accept the offer of a glass of water.

In such a situation forgiveness does not happen, it does not exist, and the thirsty person dies of thirst.

Being the recipient of forgiveness carries with the receipt and acceptance of that forgiveness an obligation to think and to act in accordance with that for-

giveness. One must seek to avoid the need for forgiveness, especially the same forgiveness, in the future, though it may occur, and one must readily grant forgiveness to others when it is sought - even without a formal request; for do we not also receive and accept forgiveness when it is offered even though we have not formally requested it?

Giving or granting forgiveness does not include the abandonment of prudence. If a money debt was forgiven there is no obligation associated with forgiveness that another loan be made. If the use of a vehicle was made and the vehicle made inoperable by the one using it, forgiveness does not require the use of a vehicle in the future. If a trust or a confidence was betrayed, forgiveness does not require one trust or entrust a confidence to the betrayer in the future.

But the one to whom forgiveness was granted should do everything possible to establish within themselves the qualities of responsibility and trustworthiness, and to make them so predominantly operative in their life as to be acknowledged by the one who granted the forgiveness.

Maintaining prudence in association with forgiveness of that which is based in the material world is easy compared to that which is based in character, especially where honor or trust are involved.

Even though the one granting forgiveness may be placed in a very dire situation by the loss of money or material property, that is as if it were nothing when compared to what is faced by the one who has forgiven spousal infidelity, or the attacks of their child, or the betrayal by one whom they had the right to trust.

When we seek forgiveness from God, and worry about transgressing God again, perhaps it will assist us in being faithful to God if we compare ourselves to the adulterous spouse, or the child of any age who attacked the parent, or the betrayer of one who had the right to ex-

pect fidelity from us - like the buddy in the foxhole during battle.

Ref: Eph. 6:10-17, Mat. 18:23-35

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WHEN YOUR "LEAVEN" IS MEDIOCRITY

Everyone is a pattern for others to follow. Everyone is a grain of seed which provides a nestling place for others. Everyone acts as leaven, to some extent permeating and effecting all with whom they come in contact.

Some of us, perhaps most of us, are shining examples of mediocrity. Some of us are mediocrely bad or evil. Some of us are mediocrely good or holy. But most of us probably are mediocrely mediocre.

Our mediocrity inspires many to be just as we are - mediocre. But in some it inspires the pursuit of more energetic behavior: which can be for evil or for holiness.

There are a few, very simple, steps each of us is able to take, which will change us from mediocrity to the more exemplary.

One step is regular attendance of and participation in Divine Liturgy, especially on Sundays, Holy Days, and Great Feasts. But it must not be grudging attendance and participation. It must be that one desires to attend and participate, and when the subject is brought up, to mention it in a desirable manner.

By way of example, if someone invites you to an event which conflicts with your ability to attend and participate in Sunday Divine Liturgy, do not say, "I have to go to Church," or, "I have to go to Divine Liturgy," or, "I have to go to Mass." Tell the person, "I *want* to go to Divine Liturgy (or Church, or Mass), and it is at the same time." Then, you

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may wish to add, "Perhaps I can join you later," or if it is appropriate, tell them, "So I will not be able to join you."

Make it clear that worshiping God in the manner He has instructed and requested is very important to you, and something you find both desirable and enjoyable.

Avoid thinking of it as primarily an obligation, and never express it as being primarily an obligation - do not say, "I *have* to go to Church — groan!" Do not say or think, "I have to get my Church obligation out of the way so I can do this other thing." Anticipate worshiping

God in a formal liturgical manner as being an enjoyable and desirable activity and you will implant that concept into the minds of all with whom you come in contact when that subject is mentioned.

Also avoid even thinking of any religious obligation as an **o_b_l_i_g_a_t_i_o_n** or a duty. Think of it an opportunity to express your love and appreciation to God, especially appreciation for the benefits God makes available to you through fulfilling the "obligation". Remember, while it is an obligation in many Church Jurisdictions, that everyone go to Sacramental Confession and receive Sacramental Absolution, and receive the Sacred Eucharist, during Great Lent, those who fulfill these obligations receive the benefit of a clean soul, and a soul filled with the living Christ.

If you live this reality in your mind, your attitude will effect in a positive manner with and to everyone with whom you come in contact.

When you engage in any activity, whether at work or elsewhere, always

attempt to do your best. But do not be ridiculous. If you are making a temporary wood brace it probably does not need to be sanded and varnished. But it should be sufficiently well constructed to serve its purpose. If you are working

on something and believe there is a defect in design or manufacture, or that the design or manufacture can be easily improved, mention it to someone up the chain of command.

Y o u w i l l f i n d y o u r s e l f p l a n -

ning what you do more carefully. Perhaps you will not have the talent, means, or wherewithal, to do or accomplish something to the best extent or highest levels of perfection. But you will raise the quality of what you do.

Pursue excellence in what ever it is you do. If someone asks you why you pursue excellence you may be inclined to say, "If it is worth doing it is worth doing well," or you might try saying, "God does not make garbage, and neither do I." More importantly, think that way. Think to yourself, "God will not and does not make garbage, and neither will or do I."

Have a positive attitude. Even though society may be falling into the depths of hell all around you, if you remember that if you operate divinely - which is to

think and to act in accordance with the Divine Virtue of Faith, you will be entitled to have and will have the Divine Virtue of Hope - which is primarily a viable and realistic hope for your own eternal salvation. These, combined with Charity - which is Divine Love - which, if you operate divinely, you will reciprocate with God as well as extend to, offer to, and practice towards others, will induce a positive, holy attitude in you.

There is nothing mediocre about a positive, holy attitude. It is a wonderful leaven for you to spread, a very beneficial seed for you to plant.

Do not be obnoxious about being a member of the True Church, a part of the Body of Christ. But never hide it. Too many Priest hide the fact they are a Priest by not or only rarely wearing any form of clerical garb. Many monks, nuns, and members of religious orders have also "laicized" their attire. Together they have planted the seed of distancing themselves from public display of their vocation and of any devotion to God, and that seed has taken root in the laity. Their leaven of poison has sickened great portions of the Church.

Vomit forth that poison and refresh yourself from the fountain of life. And do not hide the fact that you are so doing.

One final comment. A very few places are blessed in that they do not have this problem of mediocrity in the sense that they do not hide their devotion to God. But even these places often have the more common, age old, problem of failure to consistently oper-

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Pursue excellence in what ever it is you do. If someone asks you why you pursue excellence you may be inclined to say, "If it is worth doing it is worth doing well," or you might try saying, "God does not make garbage, and neither do I." More importantly, think that way. Think to yourself, "God will not and does not make garbage, and neither will or do I."

Too many Priest hide the fact they are a Priest by not or only rarely wearing any form of clerical garb. Many monks, nuns, and members of religious orders have also "laicized" their attire. Together they have planted the seed of distancing themselves from public display of their vocation and of any devotion to God, and that seed has taken root in the laity. Their leaven of poison has sickened great portions of the Church.

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ate divinely. With God help all who seek so to do will overcome this problem. To the extent one openly pursues operating divinely, to that extent one plants seeds of attempting to attain holiness in others and cultivate holiness in one's self. For those for whom this is the situation, don't break your arms patting yourselves on your backs. Persistence in seeking holiness is not as desirable as actually attaining holiness.

Ref: 1 Thes. 1:2-10, Mat. 13:31-35

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A "THOUGHT" ON CONTEMPORATING GOD IN AN UNOBTUSIVE MANNER

Part of the reason we are tempted to sin, whether it be temptation from our own inclinations, our own concupiscences, or from exterior sources such as the devil, is to continually test our love of and for God and our focus on God.

There are a multitude of sins which we commit which we would not commit or would be less likely to commit if we had a better focus on God. That does not mean that if you are engaged in an extremely dangerous activity, such as operating dangerous equipment as part of your employment, that you should be contemplating the mystery of The Blessed Trinity, and prayerfully singing the Twenty-Sixth Psalm, while operating that equipment. But at the very least, when the dangerous activity is completed, you should have enough focus on God to thank God for your safety, the employment, and for assisting you in doing good work. You might include your guardian angel in that thanks, as well as your patron saint.

Our focus on God should at the very least be constantly, in a sense, shadowing, in our minds, in our thoughts. We should be

at the very least, constantly and continually aware of God, aware of His existence, His having created us, His maintaining us in existence, and His enabling every one of our thoughts and deeds, holy or sinful.

This awareness will greatly facilitate our overcoming sinful inclinations and temptations. It will also facilitated the inducement to our becoming and being holy, maintaining a state of holiness, and our increasing in holiness.

In part, we establish and strengthen our love for God in the desire to overcome temptation because of that love for God. Even if the desire to overcome sinful temptation has its initial foundation in the desire to avoid eternal damnation, reason clearly establishes the desirability that we strengthen that foundation with the desire to love God, and attempt to make that foundation indestructible with actual, active love for and of God. What is nice is that God provides us

with the very love we need for this purpose. He provides us with Charity, His own Divine Love.

Every time we overcome a temptation to sin we strengthen our love for God and our ability to overcome sinful temptations in the future. And if we are able to increase our awareness of God so that we are more and more aware of God, and ever increasingly more and more aware of God, eventually we will attain

a level of awareness of God, and a level of appreciation of and love for God, which will assist us in overcoming those more "spontaneous" sins which we wish we could simply pluck out of our lives like a piece of lint on our clothing.

With each advance in this process comes an attack against the very process itself. That attack against attaining holiness comes in part from the devil and those who oppose God. It also comes from ourselves, from our fallen nature which desires to have its own way, from our own sinful desires, inclinations, and

concupiscences, which, as it were, seem to take on a life and will of their own. Actually, they come from that aspect of our selves which we have failed to bring under control and which attempt to reassert themselves in predominance in our lives.

Many of the properties and abilities associated with these aspects of our lives are integral in our personalities. They therefore serve a useful purpose each having the potential for good or evil. Without these properties and abilities we would think and act as mindless robots. It is very difficult to segregate the "useful to holiness" aspects of these inclinations from the "damnation to hell" aspects of these inclinations, so that we can

encourage the good ones and control or even, possibly, eliminate the evil ones. But to the extent that we are able so-to-do, to that extent we will strengthen our souls without turning ourselves into mindless robots.

Every time we overcome a temptation to sin we strengthen our love for God and our ability to overcome sinful temptations in the future. And if we are able to increase our awareness of God so that we are more and more aware of God, and ever increasingly more and more aware of God, eventually we will attain a level of awareness of God, and a level of appreciation of and love for God, which will assist us in overcoming those more "spontaneous" sins which we wish we could simply pluck out of our lives like a piece of lint on our clothing.

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In a very real sense, abomination of desolation of which Christ warned us, is and has been present amongst us, and our ancestors. We need not await that judgment of the world, nor would it benefit us to know the exact day and hour and whether or not we will be physically alive on that day and at that hour.

We should not live in anticipation of that day and hour. We should live in anticipation of our own individual standing before the judgment throne of Christ. But more importantly, we should reject the abomination of desolation which encourages us to live as though we were animals with only a limited time of existence and therefore desiring to fulfill every animal appetite we have. Such an attitude is more desolate than anything a person can possibly imagine.

No, we instead must determine to think and act, to live, the more holy life, thus restraining and perhaps even destroying that which is within us which would abominable to God and desolate of eternal life.

Ref: Col. 1:9-14, Mat. 24:15-35

THE GENIUS IN THE OFFICE
(Humor??, thank you Paul)

A woman at work was seen putting a credit card into her floppy drive and pulling it out very quickly.

When asked as to what she was doing, she said she was shopping on the Internet and they kept asking for a credit card number, so she was using the ATM "thingy".

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A PRAYER - PRAYER SUBJECTS

A good prayer which is proper for each of us to pray at any time (and which we should pray now), is:

God, thank You for creating me. There are so many others whom you could have created instead of me, but you chose to create me instead of all of those others. Thank You.

Thank You for my birth as well. Every day thousands of children you have created are denied birth. Every year millions of children you have created are killed, and many die because of accidents or medical reasons. But You arranged for my conception to be of loving parents under the protection of a guardian angel and preserved me from the mishaps which attend birth.

You arranged for me to live after the establishment of opportunity for eternal salvation which you provided through the Incarnation, birth, sacrificial passion and death, and resurrection of your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Thank you for this opportunity. Please continue to assist me to grasp this most bountiful opportunity for which uncountable millions awaited.

Lord, I ask more of You. I pray that I will live a life worthy of the great love, the great Charity, You have bestowed upon me. I am only able to do this with Your continued assistance, for which I pray.

And I pray that together, You and I, we will have me attain eternal salvation and also assist others in attaining eternal salvation, so that at my death You will say to me, "Well done My good and faithful servant."

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WILL BEING THE TARGET OF AN ATTEMPTED MURDER CHANGE THE POSITION OF ONE WHO SUPPORTED ABORTION ON DEMAND?

"... love thy neighbour as thyself."
(Rom 13:9)

A woman member of the United States House of Representatives recently was shot in the head and apparently is on the road to some form of recovery. One of the congresswoman's assistants ran to help her, possibly saving her life by compressing the wounds. He risked his life to assist her. A sitting Federal Judge was killed at the same time, apparently shot by the same person who shot the member of Congress, the Judge having been shot and killed as he pushed to safety another man who had also been shot. A nine year old girl was also killed in the same action, and the woman who accompanied the girl was also shot while attempting to protect the girl.

These people who, at the risk of their own lives, came to the aid of others who were in danger, may have so done out of a multitude of impulses. We prefer to attribute to them the highest of motives, which must include love of neighbor.

We really do not know and have no means of knowing very much about the victims of this action except for one, the Congresswoman.

The Congresswoman has a perfect pro-abortion voting record. She apparently never met a situation in which she would oppose an abortion.

Not much love there. Not much love evident in this pro-abortion Congresswoman.

Perhaps her recent experience will induce a change in her pro-abortion position. We can hope it will. We may never know, but God will know.

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

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THE CHURCH HISTORY OF EUSEBIUS

BOOK I.

CHAPTER III. (continued)

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

11 He (our Saviour), although he received no symbols and types of high priesthood from any one, although he was not born of a race of priests, although he was not elevated to a kingdom by military guards, although he was not a prophet like those of old, although he obtained no honor nor pre-eminence among the Jews, nevertheless was adorned by the Father with all, if not with the symbols, yet with the truth itself.

12 And therefore, although he did not possess like honors with those whom we have mentioned, he is called Christ more than all of them. And as himself the true and only Christ of God, he has filled the whole earth with the truly august and sacred name of Christians, committing to his followers no longer types and images, but the uncovered virtues themselves, and a heavenly life in the very doctrines of truth.

13 And he was not anointed with oil prepared from material substances, but, as befits divinity, with the divine Spirit himself, by participation in the unbegotten deity of the Father. And this is taught also again by Isaiah, who exclaims, as if in the person of Christ himself, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore hath he anointed me. He hath sent me to preach the Gospel to the poor, to proclaim deliverance to captives, and recovery of sight to the blind."

14 And not only Isaiah, but also David addresses him, saying, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. A scepter of

equity is the scepter of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hast hated iniquity. Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Here the Scripture calls him God in the first verse, in the second it honors him with a royal scepter.

15 Then a little farther on, after the divine and royal power, it represents him in the third place as having become Christ, being anointed not with oil made of material substances, but with the divine oil of gladness. It thus indicates his especial honor, far superior to and different from that of those who, as types, were of old anointed in a more material way.

16 And elsewhere the same writer speaks of him as follows: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool"; and, "Out of the womb, before the morning star, have I begotten thee. The Lord hath sworn and he will not repent. Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedec."

17 But this Melchizedec is introduced in the Holy Scriptures as a priest of the most high God, not consecrated by any anointing oil, especially prepared, and not even belonging by descent to the priesthood of the Jews. Wherefore after his order, but not after the order of the others, who received symbols and types, was our Saviour proclaimed, with an appeal to an oath, Christ and priest.

18 History, therefore, does not relate that he was anointed corporeally by the Jews, nor that he belonged to the lineage of priests, but that he came into existence from God himself before the morning star, that is before the organization of the world, and that he obtained an immortal and undecaying priesthood for eternal ages.

19 But it is a great and convincing proof of his incorporeal and divine unction that he alone of all those who have ever existed is even to the present day called Christ by all men throughout the world,

and is confessed and witnessed to under this name, and is commemorated both by Greeks and Barbarians and even to this day is honored as a King by his followers throughout the world, and is admired as more than a prophet, and is glorified as the true and only high priest of God. And besides all this, as the pre-existent Word of God, called into being before all ages, he has received august honor from the Father, and is worshiped as God.

20 But most wonderful of all is the fact that we who have consecrated ourselves to him, honor him not only with our voices and with the sound of words, but also with complete elevation of soul, so that we choose to give testimony unto him rather than to preserve our own lives.

21 I have of necessity prefaced my history with these matters in order that no one, judging from the date of his incarnation, may think that our Saviour and Lord Jesus, the Christ, has but recently come into being.

CHAFFER IV.

The Religion proclaimed by him to All Nations was neither New nor Strange.

1 But that no one may suppose that his doctrine is new and strange, as if it were framed by a man of recent origin, differing in no respect from other men, let us now briefly consider this point also.

2 It is admitted that when in recent times the appearance of our Saviour Jesus Christ had become known to all men there immediately made its appearance a new nation; a nation confessedly not small, and not dwelling in some corner of the earth, but the most numerous and pious of all nations, indestructible and unconquerable, because it always receives assistance from God. This nation, thus suddenly appearing at the time appointed by the inscrutable counsel of God, is the one which has been honored by all with the name of Christ.

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3 One of the prophets, when he saw beforehand with the eye of the Divine Spirit that which was to be, was so astonished at it that he cried out, "Who hath heard of such things, and who hath spoken thus? Hath the earth brought forth in one day, and hath a nation been born at once?" And the same prophet gives a hint also of the name by which the nation was to be called, when he says, "Those that serve me shall be called by a new name, which shall be blessed upon the earth."

4 But although it is clear that we are new and that this new name of Christians has really but recently been known among all nations, nevertheless our life and our conduct, with our doctrines of religion, have not been lately invented by us, but from the first creation of man, so to speak, have been established by the natural understanding of divinely favored men of old. That this is so we shall show in the following way.

5 That the Hebrew nation is not new, but is universally honored on account of its antiquity, is known to all. The books and writings of this people contain accounts of ancient men, rare indeed and few in number, but nevertheless distinguished for piety and righteousness and every other virtue. Of these, some excellent men lived before the flood, others of the sons and descendants of Noah lived after it, among them Abraham, whom the Hebrews celebrate as their own founder and forefather.

6 If any one should assert that all those who have enjoyed the testimony of righteousness, from Abraham himself back to the first man, were Christians in fact if not in name, he would not go beyond the truth.

7 For that which the name indicates, that the Christian man, through the knowledge and the teaching of Christ, is distinguished for temperance and righteousness, for patience in life and manly virtue, and for a profession of piety toward the one and only God over all--all that was zealously practiced by

them not less than by us.

8 They did not care about circumcision of the body, neither do we. They did not care about observing Sabbaths, nor do we. They did not avoid certain kinds of food, neither did they regard the other distinctions which Moses first delivered to their posterity to be observed as symbols; nor do Christians of the present day do such things. But they also clearly knew the very Christ of God; for it has already been shown that he appeared unto Abraham, that he imparted revelations to Isaac, that he talked with Jacob, that he held converse with Moses and with the prophets that came after.

9 Hence you will find those divinely favored men honored with the name of Christ, according to the passage which says of them, "Touch not my Christs, and do my prophets no harm."

10 So that it is clearly necessary to consider that religion, which has lately been preached to all nations through the teaching of Christ, the first and most ancient of all religions, and the one discovered by those divinely favored men in the age of Abraham.

11 If it is said that Abraham, a long time afterward, was given the command of circumcision, we reply that nevertheless before this it was declared that he had received the testimony of righteousness through faith; as the divine word says, "Abraham believed in God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

12 And indeed unto Abraham, who was thus before his circumcision a justified man, there was given by God, who revealed himself unto him (but this was Christ himself, the word of God), a prophecy in regard to those who in coming ages should be justified in the same way as he. The prophecy was in the following words: "And in thee shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed." And again, "He shall become a nation great and numerous; and in him shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

13 It is permissible to understand this as fulfilled in us. For he, having renounced the superstition of his fathers, and the former error of his life, and having confessed the one God over all, and having worshiped him with deeds of virtue, and not with the service of the law which was afterward given by Moses, was justified by faith in Christ, the Word of God, who appeared unto him. To him, then, who was a man of this character, it was said that all the tribes and all the nations of the earth should be blessed in him.

14 But that very religion of Abraham has reappeared at the present time, practiced in deeds, more efficacious than words, by Christians alone throughout the world.

15 What then should prevent the confession that we who are of Christ practice one and the same mode of life and have one and the same religion as those divinely favored men of old? Whence it is evident that the perfect religion committed to us by the teaching of Christ is not new and strange, but, if the truth must be spoken, it is the first and the true religion. This may suffice for this subject.

CHAPTER V.

The Time of his Appearance among Men.

1 AND now, after this necessary introduction to our proposed history of the Church, we can enter, so to speak, upon our journey, beginning with the appearance of our Saviour in the flesh. And we invoke God, the Father of the Word, and him, of whom we have been speaking, Jesus Christ himself our Saviour and Lord, the heavenly Word of God, as our aid and fellow-laborer in the narration of the truth.

2 It was in the forty-second year of the reign of Augustus and the twenty-eighth after the subjugation of Egypt and the death of Antony and Cleopatra, with whom the dynasty of the Ptolemies

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in Egypt came to an end, that our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea, according to the prophecies which had been uttered concerning him. His birth took place during the first census, while Cyrenius was governor of Syria.

3 Flavius Josephus, the most celebrated of Hebrew historians, also mentions this census, which was taken during Cyrenius' term of office. In the same connection he gives an account of the uprising of the Galileans, which took place at that time, of which also Luke, among our writers, has made mention in the Acts, in the following words: "After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away a multitude after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed."

4 The above-mentioned author, in the eighteenth book of his Antiquities, in agreement with these words, adds the following, which we quote exactly: "Cyrenius, a member of the senate, one who had held other offices and had passed through them all to the consulship, a man also of great dignity in other respects, came to Syria with a small retinue, being sent by C'sar to be a judge of the nation and to make an assessment of their property."

5 And after a little he says: "But Judas, a Gaulonite, from a city called Gamala, taking with him Sadduchus, a Pharisee, urged the people to revolt, both of them saying that the taxation meant nothing else than downright slavery, and exhorting the nation to defend their liberty."

6 And in the second book of his History of the Jewish War, he writes as follows concerning the same man: "At this time a certain Galilean, whose name was Judas, persuaded his countrymen to revolt, declaring that they were cowards if they submitted to pay tribute to the Romans, and if they endured, besides God, masters who were mortal." These things are recorded by Josephus.

CHAPTER VI.

About the Time of Christ, in accordance with Prophecy, the Rulers who had governed the Jewish Nation in Regular Succession from the Days of Antiquity came to an End, and Herod, the First Foreigner, became King.

1 When Herod, the first ruler of foreign blood, became King, the prophecy of Moses received its fulfillment, according to which there should "not be wanting a prince of Judah, nor a ruler from his loins, until he come for whom it is reserved." The latter, he also shows, was to be the expectation of the nations.

2 This prediction remained unfulfilled so long as it was permitted them to live under rulers from their own nation, that is, from the time of Moses to the reign of Augustus. Under the latter, Herod, the first foreigner, was given the Kingdom of the Jews by the Romans. As Josephus relates, he was an Idumean on his father's side and an Arabian on his mother's. But Africanus, who was also no common writer, says that they who were more accurately informed about him report that he was a son of Antipater, and that the latter was the son of a certain Herod of Ascalon, one of the so-called servants of the temple of Apollo.

3 This Antipater, having been taken a prisoner while a boy by Idumean robbers, lived with them, because his father, being a poor man, was unable to pay a ransom for him. Growing up in their practices he was afterward befriended by Hyrcanus, the high priest of the Jews. A son of his was that Herod who lived in the, times of our Saviour.

4 When the Kingdom of the Jews had devolved upon such a man the expectation of the nations was, according to prophecy, already at the door. For with him their princes and governors, who had ruled in regular succession from the time of Moses came to an end.

5 Before their captivity and their transportation to Babylon they were ruled by

Saul first and then by David, and before the kings leaders governed them who were called Judges, and who came after Moses and his successor Jesus.

6 After their return from Babylon they continued to have without interruption an aristocratic form of government, with an oligarchy. For the priests had the direction of affairs until Pompey, the Roman general, took Jerusalem by force, and defiled the holy places by entering the very innermost sanctuary of the temple. Aristobulus, who, by the right of ancient succession, had been up to that time both king and high priest, he sent with his children in chains to Rome; and gave to Hyrcanus, brother of Aristobulus, the high priesthood, while the whole nation of the Jews was made tributary to the Romans from that time.

7 But Hyrcanus, who was the last of the regular line of high priests, was, very soon afterward taken prisoner by the Parthians, and Herod, the first foreigner, as I have already said, was made King of the Jewish nation by the Roman senate and by Augustus.

8 Under him Christ appeared in bodily shape, and the expected Salvation of the nations and their calling followed in accordance with prophecy. From this time the princes and rulers of Judah, I mean of the Jewish nation, came to an end, and as a natural consequence the order of the high priesthood, which from ancient times had proceeded regularly in closest succession from generation to generation, was immediately thrown into confusion,

9 Of these things Josephus is also a witness, who shows that when Herod was made King by the Romans he no longer appointed the high priests from the ancient line, but gave the honor to certain obscure persons. A course similar to that of Herod in the appointment of the priests was pursued by his son Archelaus, and after him by the Romans, who took the government into their own hands.

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10 The same writer shows that Herod was the first that locked up the sacred garment of the high priest. under his own seal and refused to permit the high priests to keep it for themselves. The same course was followed by Archelaus after him, and after Archelaus by the Romans.

11 These things have been recorded by us in order to show that another prophecy has been fulfilled in the appearance of our Saviour Jesus Christ. For the Scripture, in the book of Daniel, having expressly mentioned a certain number of weeks until the coming of Christ, of which we have treated in other books, most clearly prophecies, that after the completion of those weeks the unction among the Jews should totally perish. And this, it has been clearly shown, was fulfilled at the time of the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ. This has been necessarily premised by us as a proof of the correctness of the time.

CHAPTER VII.

The Alleged Discrepancy in the Gospels in regard to the Genealogy of Christ.

1 Matthew and Luke in their gospels have given us the genealogy of Christ differently, and many suppose that they are at variance with one another. Since as a consequence every believer, in ignorance of the truth, has been zealous to invent some explanation which shall harmonize the two passages, permit us to subjoin the account of the matter which has come down to us, and which is given by Africanus, who was mentioned by us just above, in his epistle to Aristides, where he discusses the harmony of the gospel genealogies. After refuting the opinions of others as forced and deceptive, he give the account which he had received from tradition in these words:

2 "For whereas the names of the generations were reckoned in Israel either according to nature or according to law;-- according to nature by the succession of

legitimate offspring, and according to law whenever another raised up a child to the name of a brother dying childless; for because a clear hope of resurrection was not yet given they had a representation of the future promise by a kind of mortal resurrection, in order that the name of the one deceased might be perpetuated;--

3 whereas then some of those who are inserted in this genealogical table succeeded by natural descent, the son to the father, while others, though born of one father, were ascribed by name to another, mention was made of both of those who were progenitors in fact and of those who were so only in name.

4 Thus neither of the gospels is in error, for one reckons by nature, the other by law. For the line of descent from Solomon and that from Nathan were so involved, the one with the other, by the raising up of children to the childless and by second marriages, that the same persons are justly considered to belong at one time to one, at another time to another; that is, at one time to the reputed fathers, at another to the actual fathers. So that both these accounts are strictly true and come down to Joseph with considerable intricacy indeed, yet quite accurately.

5 But in order that what I have said may be made clear I shall explain the interchange of the generations. If we reckon the generations from David through Solomon, the third from the end is found to be Matthan, who begat Jacob the father of Joseph. But if, with Luke, we reckon them from Nathan the son of David, in like manner the third from the end is Melchi, whose son Eli was the father of Joseph. For Joseph was the son of Eli, the son of Melchi.

6 Joseph therefore being the object proposed to us, it must be shown how it is that each is recorded to be his father, both Jacob, who derived his descent from Solomon, and Eli, who derived his from Nathan; first how it is that these two, Jacob and Eli, were brothers, and then how it is that their fathers,

Matthan and Melchi, although of different families, are declared to be grandfathers of Joseph.

7 Matthan and Melchi having married in succession the same woman, begat children who were uterine brothers, for the law did not prohibit a widow, whether such by divorce or by the death of her husband, from marrying another.

8 By Estha then (for this was the woman's name according to tradition) Matthan, a descendant of Solomon, first begat Jacob. And when Matthan was dead, Melchi, who traced his descent back to Nathan, being of the same tribe but of another family, married her as before said, and begat a son Eli.

9 Thus we shall find the two, Jacob and Eli, although belonging to different families, yet brethren by the same mother. Of these the one, Jacob, when his brother Eli had died childless, took the latter's wife and begat by her a son to Joseph, his own son by nature and in accordance with reason. Wherefore also it is written: 'Jacob begat Joseph.' But according to law he was the son of Eli, for Jacob, being the brother of the latter, raised up seed to him.

10 Hence the genealogy traced through him will not be rendered void, which the evangelist Matthew in his enumeration gives thus: 'Jacob begat Joseph.' But Luke, on the other hand, says: 'Who was the son, as was supposed' (for this he also adds), 'of Joseph, the son of Eli, the son of Melchi'; for he could not more clearly express the generation according to law. And the expression 'he begat' he has omitted in his genealogical table up to the end, tracing the genealogy back to Adam the son of God. This interpretation is neither incapable of proof nor is it an idle conjecture.

11 For the relatives of our Lord according to the flesh, whether with the desire of boasting or simply wishing to state the fact, in either case truly, have banded down the following account: Some Idumean robbers, having attacked

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Ascalon, a city of Palestine, carried away from a temple of Apollo which stood near the walls, in addition to other booty, Antipater, son of a certain temple slave named Herod. And since the priest was not able to pay the ransom for his son, Antipater was brought up in the customs of the Idumeans, and afterward was befriended by Hyrcanus, the high priest of the Jews.

12 And having, been sent by Hyrcanus on an embassy to Pompey, and having restored to him the kingdom which had been invaded by his brother Aristobulus, he had the good fortune to be named procurator of Palestine. But Antipater having been slain by those who were envious of his great good fortune was succeeded by his son Herod, who was afterward, by a decree of the senate, made King of the Jews under Antony and Augustus. His sons were Herod and the other tetrarchs. These accounts agree also with those of the Greeks.

13 But as there had been kept in the archives up to that time the genealogies of the Hebrews as well as of those who traced their lineage back to proselytes, such as Achior the Ammonite and Ruth the Moabitess, and to those who were mingled with the Israelites and came out of Egypt with them, Herod, inasmuch as the lineage of the Israelites contributed nothing to his advantage, and since he was goaded with the consciousness of his own ignoble extraction, burned all the genealogical records, thinking that he might appear of noble origin if no one else were able, from the public registers, to trace back his lineage to the patriarchs or proselytes and to those mingled with them, who were called Georae.

14 A few of the careful, however, having obtained private records of their own, either by remembering the names or by getting them in some other way from the registers, pride themselves on preserving the memory of their noble extraction. Among these are those already mentioned, called Desposyni, on account of their connection with the

family of the Saviour. Coming from Nazara and Cochaba, villages of Judea, into other parts of the world, they drew the aforesaid genealogy from memory and from the book of daily records as faithfully as possible.

15 Whether then the case stand thus or not no one could find a clearer explanation, according to my own opinion and that of every candid person. And let this suffice us, for, although we can urge no testimony in its support, we have nothing better or truer to offer. In any case the Gospel states the truth." And at the end of the same epistle he adds these words: "Matthan, who was descended from Solomon, begat Jacob. And when Matthan was dead, Melchi, who was descended from Nathan begat Eli by the same woman. Eli and Jacob were thus uterine brothers. Eli having died childless, Jacob raised up seed to him, begetting Joseph, his own son by nature, but by law the son of Eli. Thus Joseph was the son of both."

17 Thus far Africanus. And the lineage of Joseph being thus traced, Mary also is virtually shown to be of the same tribe with him, since, according to the law of Moses, inter-marriages between different tribes were not permitted. For the command is to marry one of the same family and lineage, so that the inheritance may not pass from tribe to tribe. This may suffice here.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Cruelty of Herod toward the Infants, and the Manner of his Death.

1 When Christ was born, according to the prophecies, in Bethlehem of Judea, at the time indicated, Herod was not a little disturbed by the enquiry of the magi who came from the east, asking where he who was born King of the Jews was to be found,--for they had seen his star, and this was their reason for taking so long a journey; for they earnestly desired to worship the infant as God,-- for he imagined that his kingdom might be endangered; and he enquired therefore of the doctors of the

law, who belonged to the Jewish nation, where they expected Christ to be born. When he learned that the prophecy of Micah announced that Bethlehem was to be his birthplace he commanded, in a single edict, all the male infants in Bethlehem, and all its borders, that were two years of age or less, according to the time which he had accurately ascertained from the magi, to be slain, supposing that Jesus, as was indeed likely, would share the same fate as the others of his own age.

2 But the child anticipated the snare, being carried into Egypt by his parents, who had learned from an angel that appeared unto them what was about to happen, These things are recorded by the Holy Scriptures in the Gospel.

3 It is worth while, in addition to this, to observe the reward which Herod received for his daring crime against Christ and those of the same age. For immediately, without the least delay, the divine vengeance overtook him while he was still alive, and gave him a foretaste of what he was to receive after death.

4 It is not possible to relate here how he tarnished the supposed felicity of his reign by successive calamities in his family, by the murder of wife and children, and others of his nearest relatives and dearest friends. The account, which casts every other tragic drama into the shade, is detailed at length in the histories of Josephus.

5 How, immediately after his crime against our Saviour and the other infants, the punishment sent by God drove him on to his death, we can best learn from the words of that historian who, in the seventeenth book of his Antiquities of the Jews, writes as follows concerning his end:"

6 But the disease of Herod grew more severe, God inflicting punishment for his crimes. For a slow fire burned in him which was not so apparent to those who touched him, but augmented his

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internal distress; for he had a terrible desire for food which it was not possible to resist. He was affected also with ulceration of the intestines, and with especially severe pains in the colon, while a watery and transparent humor settled about his feet.

7 He suffered also from a similar trouble in his abdomen. Nay more, his privy member was putrefied and produced worms. He found also excessive difficulty in breathing, and it was particularly disagreeable because of the offensiveness of the odor and the rapidity of respiration.

8 He had convulsions also in every limb, which gave him uncontrollable strength. It was said, indeed, by those who possessed the power of divination and wisdom to explain such events, that God had inflicted this punishment upon the King on account of his great impiety."

9 The writer mentioned above recounts these things in the work referred to. And in the second book of his History he gives a similar account of the same Herod, which runs as follows: "The disease then seized upon his whole body and distracted it by various torments. For he had a slow fever, and the itching of the skin of his whole body was insupportable. He suffered also from continuous pains in his colon, and there were swellings on his feet like those of a person suffering from dropsy, while his abdomen was inflamed and his privy member so putrefied as to produce worms. Besides this he could breathe only in an upright posture, and then only with difficulty, and he had convulsions in all his limbs, so that the diviners said that his diseases were a punishment.

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**ENCHIRIDION
ON FAITH, HOPE, AND
LOVE
by
Saint Augustine**

CHAPTER XXIX

"The Last Things"

109. Now, for the time that intervenes between man's death and the final resurrection, there is a secret shelter for his soul, as each is worthy of rest or affliction according to what it has merited while it lived in the body.

110. There is no denying that the souls of the dead are benefited by the piety of their living friends, when the sacrifice of the Mediator is offered for the dead, or alms are given in the church. But these means benefit only those who, when they were living, have merited that such services could be of help to them. For there is a mode of life that is neither so good as not to need such helps after death nor so bad as not to gain benefit from them after death. There is, however, a good mode of life that does not need such helps, and, again, one so thoroughly bad that, when such a man departs this life, such helps avail him nothing. It is here, then, in this life, that all merit or demerit is acquired whereby a man's condition in the life hereafter is improved or worsened. Therefore, let no one hope to obtain any merit with God after he is dead that he has neglected to obtain here in this life.

But these means benefit only those who, when they were living, have merited that such services could be of help to them. For there is a mode of life that is neither so good as not to need such helps after death nor so bad as not to gain benefit from them after death. There is, however, a good mode of life that does not need such helps, and, again, one so thoroughly bad that, when such a man departs this life, such helps avail him nothing. It is here, then, in this life, that all merit or demerit is acquired whereby a man's condition in the life hereafter is improved or worsened. Therefore, let no one hope to obtain any merit with God after he is dead that he has neglected to obtain here in this life.

So, then, those means which the Church constantly uses in interceding for the dead are not opposed to that statement of the apostle when he said, "For all of us shall stand before the tribunal of Christ, so that each may receive according to what he has done in the body, whether good or evil." [236] For each man has for himself while living

in the body earned the merit whereby these means can benefit him [after death]. For they do not benefit all. And yet why should they not benefit all, unless it be because of the different kinds of lives men lead in the body? Accordingly, when sacrifices, whether of the altar or of alms, are offered for the baptized dead, they are thank offerings for the very good, propitiations for the not-so-very-bad [non valde malis], and, as for the very bad -- even if they are of

no help to the dead -- they are at least a sort of consolation to the living. Where they are of value, their benefit consists either in obtaining a full forgiveness or, at least, in making damnation more tolerable.

111. After the resurrection, however, when the general judgment has been held and finished, the boundary lines will be set for the two cities: the one of Christ, the other of the devil; one for the good, the other for the bad -- both including angels and men. In the one group, there will be no will to sin, in the other, no power to sin, nor any

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further possibility of dying. The citizens of the first commonwealth will go on living truly and happily in life eternal. The second will go on, miserable in death eternal, with no power to die to it. The condition of both societies will then be fixed and endless. But in the first city, some will outrank others in bliss, and in the second, some will have a more tolerable burden of misery than others.

112. It is quite in vain, then, that some -- indeed very many -- yield to merely human feelings and deplore the notion of the eternal punishment of the damned and their interminable and perpetual misery. They do not believe that such things will be. Not that they would go counter to divine Scripture -- but, yielding to their own human feelings, they soften what seems harsh and give a milder emphasis to statements they believe are meant more to terrify than to express the literal truth. "God will not forget," they say, "to show mercy, nor in his anger will he shut up his mercy." This is, in fact, the text of a holy psalm.[237] But there is no doubt that it is to be interpreted to refer to those who are called "vessels of mercy,"[238] those who are freed from misery not by their own merits but through God's mercy. Even so, if they suppose that the text applies to all men, there is no ground for them further to suppose that there can be an end for those of whom it is said, "Thus these shall go into everlasting punishment." [239] Otherwise, it can as well be thought that there will also be an end to the happiness of those of whom the antithesis was said: "But the righteous into life eternal."

But let them suppose, if it pleases them, that, for certain intervals of time, the punishments of the damned are somewhat mitigated. Even so, the wrath of God must be understood as still resting on them. And this is damnation -- for this anger, which is not a violent passion in the divine mind, is called "wrath" in God. Yet even in his wrath -- his wrath resting on them -- he does not "shut up his mercy." This is not to

put an end to their eternal afflictions, but rather to apply or interpose some little respite in their torments. For the psalm does not say, "To put an end to his wrath," or, "After his wrath," but, "In his wrath." Now, if this wrath were all there is [in man's damnation], and even if it were present only in the slightest degree conceivable -- still, to be lost out of the Kingdom of God, to be an exile from the City of God, to be estranged from the life of God, to suffer loss of the great abundance of God's blessings which he has hidden for those who fear him and prepared for those who hope in him[240] -- this would be a punishment so great that, if it be eternal, no torments that we know could be compared to it, no matter how many ages they continued.

113. The eternal death of the damned -- that is, their estrangement from the life of God -- will therefore abide without end, and it will be common to them all, no matter what some people, moved by their human feelings, may wish to think about gradations of punishment, or the relief or intermission of their misery. In the same way, the eternal life of the saints will abide forever, and also be common to all of them no matter how different the grades of rank and honor in which they shine forth in their effulgent harmony.

[236] Rom. 14:10; II Cor. 5:10.

[237] Cf. Ps. 77:9.

[238] Rom. 9:23.

[239] Matt. 25:46.

[240] Cf. Ps. 31:19.

CHAPTER XXX

The Principles of Christian Living: Faith and Hope

114. Thus, from our confession of faith, briefly summarized in the Creed (which is milk for babes when pondered at the carnal level but food for strong men when it is considered and studied spiritually), there is born the good hope of the faithful, accompanied by a holy love. [241] But of these

affirmations, all of which ought faithfully to be believed, only those which have to do with hope are contained in the Lord's Prayer. For "cursed is everyone," as the divine eloquence testified, "who rests his hope in man." [242] Thus, he who rests his hope in himself is bound by the bond of this curse. Therefore, we should seek from none other than the Lord God whatever it is that we hope to do well, or hope to obtain as reward for our good works.

115. Accordingly, in the Evangelist Matthew, the Lord's Prayer may be seen to contain seven petitions: three of them ask for eternal goods, the other four for temporal goods, which are, however, necessary for obtaining the eternal goods.

For when we say: "Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven" [243] -- this last being wrongly interpreted by some as meaning "in body and spirit" -- these blessings will be retained forever. They begin in this life, of course; they are increased in us as we make progress, but in their perfection -- which is to be hoped for in the other life -- they will be possessed forever! But when we say: "Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," [244] who does not see that all these pertain to our needs in the present life? In that life eternal -- where we all hope to be -- the hallowing of God's name, his Kingdom, and his will, in our spirit and body will abide perfectly and immortally. But in this life we ask for "daily bread" because it is necessary, in the measure required by soul and body, whether we take the term in a spiritual or bodily sense, or both. And here too it is that we petition for forgiveness, where the sins are committed; here too are the temptations that allure and drive us to sinning; here, finally, the evil from which we wish to be freed. But in that other world none of these things will be found.

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116. However, the Evangelist Luke, in his version of the Lord's Prayer, has brought together, not seven, but five petitions. Yet, obviously, there is no discrepancy here, but rather, in his brief way, the Evangelist has shown us how the seven petitions should be understood. Actually, God's name is even now hallowed in the spirit, but the Kingdom of God is yet to come in the resurrection of the body. Therefore, Luke was seeking to show that the third petition ["Thy will be done"] is a repetition of the first two, and makes this better understood by omitting it. He then adds three other petitions, concerning daily bread, forgiveness of sins, and avoidance of temptation.[245] However, what Matthew puts in the last place, "But deliver us from evil," Luke leaves out, in order that we might understand that it was included in what was previously said about temptation. This is, indeed, why Matthew said, "_But_ deliver us," instead of, "_And_ deliver us," as if to indicate that there is only one petition -- "Will not this, but that" -- so that anyone would realize that he is being delivered from evil in that he is not being led into temptation.

[241] Note the artificial return to the triadic scheme of the treatise: faith, hope, and love.

[242] Jer. 17:5.

[243] Matt. 6:9, 10.

[244] Matt. 6:11-13.

[245] Luke 11:2-4.

CHAPTER XXXI

Love

117. And now regarding love, which the apostle says is greater than the other two -- that is, faith and hope -- for the more richly it dwells in a man, the better the man in whom it dwells. For when we ask whether someone is a good man, we are not asking what he believes, or hopes, but what he loves. Now, beyond all doubt, he who loves

aright believes and hopes rightly. Likewise, he who does not love believes in vain, even if what he believes is true; he hopes in vain, even if what he hopes for is generally agreed to pertain to true happiness, unless he believes and hopes for this: that he may through prayer obtain the gift of love. For, although it is true that he cannot hope without love, it may be that there is something without which, if he does not love it, he cannot realize the object of his hopes. An example of this would be if a man hopes for life eternal -- and who is there who does not love that? -- and yet does not love righteousness, without which no one comes to it.

Now this is the true faith of Christ which the apostle commends: faith that works through love. And what it yet lacks in love it asks that it may receive, it seeks that it may find, and knocks that it may be opened unto it.[246] For faith achieves what the law commands [fides namque impetrat quod lex imperat]. And, without the gift of God -- that is, without the Holy Spirit, through whom love is shed abroad in our hearts -- the law may bid but it cannot aid [jubere lex poterit, non juvare]. Moreover, it can make of man a transgressor, who cannot then excuse himself by pleading ignorance. For appetite reigns where the love of God does not.[247]

118. When, in the deepest shadows of ignorance, he lives according to the flesh with no restraint of reason -- this is the primal state of man.[248] Afterward, when "through the law the knowledge of sin"[249] has come to man, and the Holy Spirit has not yet come to his aid -- so that even if he wishes to live according to the law, he is vanquished -- man sins knowingly and is brought under the spell and made the slave of sin, "for by whatever a man is vanquished, of this master he is the slave"[250]. The effect of the knowledge of the law is that sin works in man the whole round of concupiscence, which adds to the guilt of the first transgression. And thus it is that what was written is fulfilled: "The law entered in, that the offense might abound."[251]

This is the second state of man.[252]

But if God regards a man with solicitude so that he then believes in God's help in fulfilling His commands, and if a man begins to be led by the Spirit of God, then the mightier power of love struggles against the power of the flesh.[253] And although there is still in man a power that fights against him -- his infirmity being not yet fully healed -- yet he [the righteous man] lives by faith and lives righteously in so far as he does not yield to evil desires, conquering them by his love of righteousness. This is the third stage of the man of good hope.

A final peace is in store for him who continues to go forward in this course toward perfection through steadfast piety. This will be perfected beyond this life in the repose of the spirit, and, at the last, in the resurrection of the body.

Of these four different stages of man, the first is before the law, the second is under the law, the third is under grace, and the fourth is in full and perfect peace. Thus, also, the history of God's people has been ordered by successive temporal epochs, as it pleased God, who "ordered all things in measure and number and weight." [254] The first period was before the law; the second under the law, which was given through Moses; the next, under grace which was revealed through the first Advent of the Mediator." [255] This grace was not previously absent from those to whom it was to be imparted, although, in conformity to the temporal dispensations, it was veiled and hidden. For none of the righteous men of antiquity could find salvation apart from the faith of Christ. And, unless Christ had also been known to them, he could not have been prophesied to us -- sometimes openly and sometimes obscurely -- through their ministry.

119. Now, in whichever of these four "ages" -- if one can call them that -- the grace of regeneration finds a man,

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then and there all his past sins are forgiven him and the guilt he contracted in being born is removed by his being re-born. And so true is it that "the Spirit breatheth where he willeth"[256] that some men have never known the second "age" of slavery under the law, but begin to have divine aid directly under the new commandment.

120. Yet, before a man can receive the commandment, he must, of course, live according to the flesh. But, once he has been imbued with the sacrament of rebirth, no harm will come to him even if he then immediately depart this life -- "Wherefore on this account Christ died and rose again, that he might be the Lord of both the living and the dead." [257] Nor will the kingdom of death have dominion over him for whom He, who was "free among the dead," [258] died.

[246] Matt. 7:7.

[247] Another wordplay on cupiditas and caritas.

[248] An interesting resemblance here to Freud's description of the Id, the primal core of our unconscious life.

[249] Rom. 3:20.

[250] 2 Peter 2:19.

[251] Rom. 5:20.

[252] Compare the psychological notion of the effect of external moral pressures and their power to arouse guilt feelings, as in Freud's notion of "superego."

[253] Gal. 5:17.

[254] Wis. 11:21 (Vulgate).

[255] Cf. John 1:17.

[256] John 3:8.

[257] Rom. 14:9.

[258] Cf. Ps. 88:5.

CHAPTER XXXII

The End of All the Law

121. All the divine precepts are, therefore, referred back to *_love_*, of which the apostle says, "Now the end of the commandment is love, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience and a faith

unfeigned." [259] Thus every commandment harks back to love. For whatever one does either in fear of punishment or from some carnal impulse, so that it does not measure up to the standard of love which the Holy Spirit sheds abroad in our hearts -- whatever it is, it is not yet done as it should be, although it may seem to be. Love, in this context, of course includes both the love of God and the love of our neighbor and, indeed, "on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" [260] -- and, we may add, the gospel and the apostles, for from nowhere else comes the voice, "The end of the commandment is love," [261] and, "God is love." [262]

Therefore, whatsoever things God commands (and one of these is, "Thou shalt not commit adultery" [263]) and whatsoever things are not positively ordered but are strongly advised as good spiritual counsel (and one of these is, "It is a good thing for a man not to touch a woman" [264]) -- all of these imperatives are rightly obeyed only when they are measured by the standard of our love of God and our love of our neighbor in God [*propter Deum*]. This applies both in the present age and in the world to come. Now we love God in faith; then, at sight. For, though mortal men ourselves, we do not know the hearts of mortal men. But then "the Lord will illuminate the hidden things in the darkness and will make manifest the cogitations of the heart; and then shall each one have his praise from God" [265] -- for what will be praised and loved in a neighbor by his neighbor is just that which, lest it remain hidden, God himself will bring to light. Moreover, passion decreases as love increases [266] until love comes at last to that fullness which cannot be surpassed, "for greater love than this no one has, that a man lay down his life for his friends." [267] Who, then, can explain how great the power of love will be, when there will be no passion [*cupiditas*] for it to restrain or overcome? For, then, the supreme state of true health [*summa sanitas*] will have been reached, when the struggle with

death shall be no more.

[259] 1 Tim. 1:5.

[260] Matt. 22:40.

[261] 1 Tim. 1:5.

[262] 1 John 4:16.

[263] Ex. 20:14; Matt. 5:27; etc.

[264] 1 Cor. 7:1.

[265] 1 Cor. 4:5.

[266] *Minuitur autem cupiditas caritate crescente.*

[267] John 15:23.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Conclusion

122. But somewhere this book must have an end. You can see for yourself whether you should call it an *Enchiridion*, or use it as one. But since I have judged that your zeal in Christ ought not to be spurned and since I believe and hope for good things for you through the help of our Redeemer, and since I love you greatly as one of the members of his body, I have written this book for you -- may its usefulness match its prolixity! -- on Faith, Hope, and Love.

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ANOTHER GENIUS IN THE OFFICE

(Humor??, thank you Paul)

Then there was the intern who was none too swift. One day she was typing and turned to a secretary and said, "I'm almost out of typing paper. What do I do?"

"Just use paper from the photocopier," the secretary told her.

With that, the intern took her last remaining blank piece of paper, put it on the photocopier and proceeded to make five 'blank' copies.

Brunette, by the way!!

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CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION
 We have experienced an increase in Roman Catholics seeking Sacramental Confession and Absolution from us. page 4

SERMONS It would serve every person who gives a sermon without having prepared it with diligence, *OR* extensive thought and contemplation - which means much more than five minutes, *OR* who teaches (delivers) a sermon without it being written out, *OR* without at least extensive notes, *to tape record or even better videotape each such sermon and then listen to it or watch it without interruption.* page 4

THE GENIUS AUTOMOBILE DRIVER (*Humor??, thank you Paul*) page 5

CHILDREN'S PAGE *The Orthodox - Basilian Catechism* Q. 1239. What is forbidden by the second Commandment? - Q. 1273. What are we commanded by the fifth Commandment? pages 10-11

THE DIVINE PERSON - THE HUMAN PERSON Obviously those who believe in one god have no real religious commonality with those who believe in more than one or many gods. But while those who believe in many gods are able to readily acknowledge the "reality" of the many gods of another religion, and even argue as to whose gods are more powerful, it is not true that those who believe in one god, monotheist, are able to readily acknowledge the reality of the one god in which other monotheist believe. page 12

UNFAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP IS BETRAYAL AND DISHONORABLE What is your reaction to and attitude towards a government employee who, for money, provides important information to a foreign government? page 13

THE GENIUS AT McDONALD'S (*Humor??, thank you Paul*) page 14

THE BLACK LETTER IS A GUIDE TO THE SPIRIT AND TO ASSIMILATION AND ACQUISITION OF THE SPIRIT The explicit instructions which God has given to us, sometimes referred to as 'black letter law' or 'the letter of the law', are guides which assist us to ascertain the spirit, not just of the law, but the spirit which God wishes to be instilled in us. By knowing, following, and appreciating the foundation of the letter of God's law we have tools through which we are able to assimilate the law's spirit as well as not merely goodness, but Holiness and Godliness. Use of these tools, combined with assimilation of the spirit, are means by which one may acquire the Holy Spirit. page 14

WELL, HOW DO WE DO THAT? . . . If you seek the kingdom of God and His justice you will do your best to live in accordance with the will of God and His instructions which are very explicit. page 15

THE GENIUS MOTHER (*Humor??, thank you Paul*) page 16

WHAT IS THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY, THE MOST AMAZING? What are your candidates for the most extraordinary, the most amazing? When we contemplate extraordinary things, amazing things, the enumeration of them by any one individual will likely overlap those enumerations made by other people . . . But when it comes to the most extraordinary, the most amazing, individuals may well disagree. page 16

DIVINE AND HUMAN AUTHORITY **Some of the obstacles to easy recognition and acknowledgment of Divine authority** Why is it so difficult for people to reflectively acknowledge the ultimate authority of God and the reality that God not only innately possesses ultimate power and authority, but also exercises that authority and that power? page 17

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CONTEMPLATING FORGIVENESS IN A MANNER WHICH MAY LESSEN THE POTENTIAL FOR NEEDING IT AGAIN page 18

WHEN YOUR "LEAVEN" IS MEDIOCRITY . . . Some of us, perhaps most of us, are shining examples of mediocrity. page 18

A "THOUGHT" ON CONTEMPLATING GOD IN AN UNOBTUSIVE MANNER Part of the reason we are tempted to sin, whether it be temptation from our own inclinations, our own concupiscences, or from exterior sources such as the devil, is to continually test our love of and for God and our focus on God. There are a multitude of sins which we commit which we would not commit if we had a better focus on God. page 20

THE GENIUS IN THE OFFICE (*Humor??, thank you Paul*) page 21

A PRAYER - PRAYER SUBJECTS A good prayer which is proper for each of us to pray at any time (and which we should pray now), is: God, thank You for creating me. There are so many others whom you could have created instead of me, but you chose to create me instead of all of those others. Thank You. page 21

WILL BEING THE TARGET OF AN ATTEMPTED MURDER CHANGE THE POSITION OF ONE WHO SUPPORTED ABORTION ON DEMAND? page 21

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~ WHAT KIND OF "GUY" IS JESUS? ~ *From Metropolitan Archbishop Lee S. Mc Colloster, S.S.B. To the flock entrusted into my care:* The Law established by God for mankind can not in and of itself give eternal life, although in and of itself, if followed, it will establish the most just, fair, merciful, stable, and perfect society it is possible to establish under the Natural Law. It also facilitates making the Two Great Commandments an intrinsic aspect of a person's essence, and a person's inclination and ability to and actual performance of operating divinely and attaining eternal salvation. But all of these matters are best considered in the light of example given to us by Christ Himself - in that seemingly impossible to attain phrase, "Imitation of Christ". page 1

PRIDE - THE INTELLECT'S ACCOMPLICE TO TEMPTATION The basis or foundation of the initial or orig-

inal temptation of Adam was the temptation of pride, and that temptation is an aspect of every temptation every human experiences. Adam could not know, and the word "know" is very important, Adam could not know temptation of the flesh before his fall because all his powers remained in the order in which they had been created by God, with the flesh subject to the intellect. page 1

DO NOT ACCEPT A FIGMENT AS THE REAL GOD The followers of the devil are persistent, roaming wherever they are able, seeking to capture and to lead astray every person possible, especially the elect - especially those of the True Church. page 1

FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND OUR MOST IMPORTANT TASK Empirically - that is, simply by casual observance - it is obvious that, generally, most of those who populate this world at this time have little concern about the commission of sins. page 1

THE INITIAL AND CONTINUING FOCUS OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY

IS TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF ANY OTHER "THING" CALLED A RELIGION When the various religions are contemplated, including the various false religions which term themselves Christian, all but one share a multitude of aspects including their basic foundations. That one, the true Christian religion founded by Jesus Christ, that true Church, is so markedly and extremely different in its foundation that its very difference is often overlooked, missed, and not comprehended by the other religions. page 1

SAY, "GOOD NIGHT LORD" Something most people rarely do, or fail to do with sufficient frequency, is to be thankful - thankful to God, of course. page 1

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Those who insist or advocate that, "We all try to get along together," are advocating and insisting that those who are or who are attempting to follow the path of honor in the service of God abandon God and embrace eternal damnation. 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, and eternal damnation has been embraced.

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