

Hawaiian Reform – SBC Conference 2016

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When Brother Andre first revealed this year's conference theme, I was very interested. And, when I was assigned to give a talk, I figured it wouldn't be too hard to pick a topic. For many years the sixteenth century was my favorite century, and I've read a lot about it. Some of my favorite authors head the list: William Thomas Walsh (with *Isabella of Spain*, *Philip the II*, and *St. Teresa of Avila*), William Cabbot's *History of the Reformation in England*, Hilaire Belloc's *Characters of the Reformation*, and Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson – with *The King's Achievement*, *By What Authority*, and *Come Rack! Come Rope!* I hope those are familiar names to you, too.

The saints of this time given to us by the Church for our example and edification are familiar and numerous. The Jesuits stand out: St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, St. Edmund Campion and the many martyred English and French Jesuits (including the 8 North American Martyrs), St. Francis Borgia, St. Peter Canisius, St. Robert Bellarmine . . . followed by St. Vincent de Paul, St. Louis de Merillac, St. Francis de Sales, St. Jane Francis de Chantal, St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, St. John of Avila, St. Peter of Alcantara, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Pius V, the English martyrs (including St. Thomas More, St. John Fisher, St. Margaret Clitherow and St. Oliver Mary Plunkett), St. Philip Neri, St. Laurence of Brindisi, St. John of God, St. Peter Claver . . . If you feel like that is a lot of names, well, it is! And, the list goes on and on. There is so much to learn about the time period Brother chose. And as I thought of this partial list, I was reminded of something Gary Potter said to me when I asked, years ago at another conference, “How do you decide what you are going to say?” His reply was “It is not so much a matter of choosing what to say, but of deciding what to cut out.”

An hour in those chairs may feel like a long time, but it is very little time when we are given such a big topic.

As I saw the other talk titles come in, I realized that my penchant for doing research and giving definitions and background information could come in handy. I'd like to give you the big picture and provide some terms, images, and examples to provide a platform from which to view all the other talks, those you've already heard and those that come after me. Also, the speakers here don't just talk for the sake of hearing themselves on the recordings. I think I am safe in speaking for all of us when I say that we want this Conference to make a difference for you in your life.

These conferences are always intellectually stimulating; but, if all you take away is a memory of the nice mental glow, then we're just providing intellectual recreation (which is a good – but we'd like to do more).

I'd like to see hands now.

How many of you heard my talk from last year's conference?¹ How many of you remember what it was about? Now, during that talk, I asked you to make a resolution. How many of you found that a help and actually implemented some change in your life (no matter how small)?

Well, I hope I can do better this year. Let's ask Our Lady to help us be inspired to make *and keep* a resolution today.

Hail Mary

1 The Consolation of Dying as a Slave. <<http://store.catholicism.org/browse-by-speaker/sister-maria-philomena-m-i-c-m/>>

“Keeping the Catholic Counter-Reformation Going”

That is the theme of this Conference. What is the Catholic Counter-Reformation? Reformation . . . Reformation . . . What is re-formation?

I use the old Catholic Encyclopedia a lot for my classes, but – and while this may sound conceited -- I am often very irritated by it! However, the article on the Catholic Counter-Reformation² is really good and very helpful. There are a number of points that the article makes which I would like to share with you.

First of all, the author of the article (a Jesuit³ and the son⁴ of a convert from Anglicanism) points out that the term “Catholic Counter-Reformation” was used by Protestant historians – and was only adopted into Catholic terminology at the turn of the twentieth century (late 1800's/early 1900's). And, since the term comes from the Protestants, it can give the false impression that the Protestants started the Reformation and then the Catholics responded. If you just look at the dates of the Catholic Counter-Reformation (1560-1638), you might think that the Protestants are right, but it is not an accurate picture.

The Church is constantly reforming herself – and, in the sixteenth century (1500's), she needed it . . . You have all heard about the scandalous “Renaissance Popes” of the late 1400's/early 1500's (Alexander VI was the most notorious). There were reforms in the 1400's – think St. Joan of Arc, St. Vincent Ferrer, St. Francis of Paola, St. Bernadine of Siena, . . . John Hus' heresy⁵ was being dealt with . . . Savonerola⁶ tried to address the rising problems of the time with a theocracy . . . Think of the Councils of Florence and Lateran V . . . The Catholic reform of the Church pre-dated the work of the Protestants – and, in fact, the Protestants started off as Catholic reformers! It is a Catholic reform. Martin Luther was himself a Catholic friar – an Augustinian Canon.

So, the reform starts here (board – line curve -), progress is hindered here by the Protestants (who have pointed out abuses until they think that the abuse of a thing makes the thing itself an abuse – and then set themselves up as the standard of orthodoxy – they created their own religions, not the best idea in the world) but the Catholic reform grows as more and more Catholics and even nations become zealous.

The Catholic Encyclopedia points out that 'When there is intense zeal on the part of many for making reforms, then [you have a] "period" of reform. [T]his "period" ceases when such zeal becomes rare, or only mediocre in intensity, even though it does really continue here and there in some individuals or classes.' So, a period of reform in history is labeled by the intense zeal on the part of many. Here, on the board is the “intense zeal on the part of many” – popular enthusiasm for the reform – which, for some was fueled in a reaction to the Protestants – but it had started way over here – it starts, it is building . . . For many, the reform had nothing to do with Protestantism and was simply a manifestation of the Church's enduring,

2 Pollen, John Hungerford. "The Counter-Reformation." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 4. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1908. 29 Sept. 2016 <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04437a.htm>>.

3 "John Hungerford Pollen (Jesuit)." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 14 Apr. 2016. Web. 29 Sept. 2016. <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Hungerford_Pollen_\(Jesuit\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Hungerford_Pollen_(Jesuit))>

4 "John Hungerford Pollen (senior)." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 20 July 2016. Web. 29 Sept. 2016. <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Hungerford_Pollen_\(senior\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Hungerford_Pollen_(senior))>

5 Wilhelm, Joseph. "Hussites." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 7. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910. 29 Sept. 2016 <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07585a.htm>>.

6 Kirsch, Johann Peter. "Ghirolamo Savonarola." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 13. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912. 29 Sept. 2016 <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13490a.htm>>.

inherent vitality. And, then, as the intense zeal on the part of many grows and crests, and then dwindles, here (between two straight lines) we mark the end of the reform. So you have narrow period of reform, even though it started over here and continues afterward. (Continuing reforms may then merge with other movements or other historical periods.)

The great zeal for souls preceding and during this era found outlet in the missions. There is tremendous missionary activity at this time that has absolutely nothing to do with the Protestants. [Although, in God's Providence, the loss of the Protestants in Europe was balanced by all the newly baptized souls. Just in the New World alone, thanks to Our Lady of Guadalupe and the work of the Jesuits and Franciscans and Carmelites and Dominicans, you have 9 million souls brought into the Church to compensate for what will be the loss of the 9 million souls in Europe thanks to the Protestant Revolt. Then you have all the millions of souls converted in the east (St. Francis Xavier and others.)]

So, the Catholic Reformation is not just a reaction to Protestantism. It had its own life and its own continuation -- independent of whatever the Protestants were doing.

The Protestant Reformation was a deformation (it de-formed things instead of re-forming them). You cannot have the continuation of an abuse and its correction in the same movement (married clergy, subservience of Church to State, to say nothing of doctrinal error). Things that they had protested became part of their movement – so it wasn't a re-formation, it was a deformation.

Another valuable point to borrow from that Catholic Encyclopedia article is that: Historical time periods are never sharply cut off from what come before and after. In the sense that the Church continued to fight the Protestant heresies, you could say that the era never ended. So, continuing the Catholic Counter-Reformation – there are some things about this era that can't stop, even though that particular time of zeal has ended. So we have to figure out what to use for our time, and you will hear each of the speakers address this in his own way.

So, the Church's reform is constantly going on and was not dependent in this era upon the Protestants for its impetus (its beginning) or its method.

The years the article gives for the Catholic Counter-Reformation are basically from the end of the reign of Pius IV (and he thought his pontificate was the worst ever because, as he was dying, he saw only problems – things always look darkest before the dawn) up until the end of the Thirty-Years War. But, in Germany the movement ended earlier – in other countries it lasted longer – this is just an average. The article goes into more detail, country by country, but this is sufficient for our use.

Now, when we talk about ages of reform, and we look at how they start, and we see this curve, another point from the article is that people don't often start by looking at the big picture and saying, “We need a reform. I'm going to start a great big reform movement.”

The guiding lights of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, the big stars of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, tend to be the Jesuits. But, the Jesuits didn't start off . . . – St. Ignatius didn't look around and say, “I'm going to start a reform.” He wasn't even reacting to the Protestants. He is injured in the battle of Pamplona, he has his personal conversion, he wishes to follow Christ as his Captain and imitate Him as perfectly as possible. So, in order to that, he needs to educate himself so that he can become a priest. He wants to gather a few companions . . . and his plan is to go to the Holy Land and imitate Our Lord's life as

perfectly as possible. It is a humble, sincere desire for holiness and personal formation. That's all! That was his intent. And he spent twelve years educating himself (he actually went back to school with the little boys) and gathering a few disciples, and they started for the Holy Land. They got as far as Venice – and because of the war with the Turks, they were stuck in Venice for three months and then had to return to Rome.

That was God's Providence – because now this band of highly trained men placed themselves at the service of the Pope. As his personal emissaries, they are sent all over the world, as legates and ambassadors, as missionaries and teachers – in all different capacities. They end up, from that tiny seed – of just personal holiness and the imitation of Our Lord for the salvation of souls – to being used very differently as part of a much larger movement.

If we go back a few hundred years, we could take another reform movement and see how that also started very small and without much hope of success.

In the 900's, there had been a reform movement among the Benedictines with the establishment of the Abbey of Cluny⁷ and her daughter houses. That Cluniac reform was a means of reform, especially of the Papacy, in some very dark days. Cluny, as it draws near the height of its influence, producing all kinds of wonderful effects, becomes prosperous, and, not surprisingly, religious life suffers. . . . becomes rather scandalously lax. In 1098, one of the abbots of a Cluniac monastery, St. Robert of Molesme⁸, after trying without effect to reform his monastery, gathers six of his religious who share his concerns, and they go and get permission (from the Archbishop/Papal Legate) to start a new monastery that would follow the Rule of St. Benedict literally. With a total of 21 monks, the new foundation became the Abbey of Cîteaux⁹. Well, after only one year, St. Robert got called back (by the Pope) to his original abbey Molesme. He's now out of the picture – and Cîteaux had to elect another Abbot – St. Alberic. He got permission for their special white habit, for the Cistercians to be directly under the Pope (no more losing abbots to other monasteries!), the reform takes a few steps forward . . . but they haven't gotten vocations, and some monks have died, so their numbers are dwindling, and then St. Alberic dies in 1109. So then the monks elect another of the founding members, St. Stephen Harding¹⁰ (originally from England). He's now the abbot – and he's very definite that “we're going to follow the Benedictine Rule very strictly” – and he alienates their benefactor . . . and the monks are reduced to begging. They have no sustenance; they're dying out;– it looks like this whole reform movement is going nowhere. These men are canonized saints – they were obviously becoming holy in the process; but, as far as a movement, it doesn't look very hopeful. Dead on the vine in less than fifteen years.

Then, in God's Providence, we get: St. Bernard of Clairvaux.¹¹ St. Bernard enters Cîteaux – and in his train he brings thirty noblemen, including his own brothers and cousins, eventually his own father – and within another decade, the Cistercians are founding houses all over the place and suddenly the reform of Cîteaux takes off. It will have a golden age of a couple hundred years, its own decline, and then it will be revived by

7 Alston, George Cyprian. "Congregation of Cluny." The Catholic Encyclopedia. Vol. 4. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1908. 29 Sept. 2016 <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04073a.htm>>.

8 Gildas, Marie. "St. Robert of Molesme." The Catholic Encyclopedia. Vol. 13. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912. 29 Sept. 2016 <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13097d.htm>>.

9 Gildas, Marie. "Abbey of Cîteaux." The Catholic Encyclopedia. Vol. 3. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1908. 29 Sept. 2016 <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03792a.htm>>.

10 Huddleston, Gilbert. "St. Stephen Harding." The Catholic Encyclopedia. Vol. 14. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912. 29 Sept. 2016 <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14290d.htm>>.

11 Gildas, Marie. "St. Bernard of Clairvaux." The Catholic Encyclopedia. Vol. 2. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907. 29 Sept. 2016 <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02498d.htm>>.

the Trappists in the 1800's.

But, they started small, they were not looking to provide a whole big solution for the world, but they said “What do we need to do to live our vocation and become holy?” They do it, it doesn't look like it is working very well, and it ends up that God is going to use it. It is easy, historically, to look at the golden age of Cistercian reform and ignore the very difficult beginning – except for the drama of St. Bernard and his thirty companions. Once the movement is large – then it gets a label.

Why is it that the Church needs reform, anyway? We can see that she does – but why? Isn't she a divine institution? God doesn't change or need reform. Isn't she the Mystical Body of Christ¹² – His Pure Bride?

To answer that, we need to ask another question.

What is reform, actually? We've taking it for granted that we all know what it is, but let's look at it more closely.

The dictionary tells us that the word means to “make changes in something in order to improve it.” But, when we go to the etymology, we see that in Middle English it meant to “restore” and “to bring back to the original condition”, based on the Latin reformare (back + to shape).

In Cosmology we learn about hylomorphism, a big fancy term meaning that everything material is made up of matter and form. Form is what makes a thing what it is – gives it its nature –, while matter gives it substance. In human beings, our form is the immortal soul. (Brother Francis covers this in much more detail – and much more eloquently! – in many of the Cosmology lectures – you might want to go back and re-read the book¹³ and listen to the talks!)

The human body is made up of many cells, which must be constantly nourished, replenished. Renewing – You know that the cells of the bones in your body are replaced entirely every seven years (the various tissues have different rates of replenishment¹⁴), but it is not a different you every seven years because you have a “new” skeletal system. What is it that provides the continuity? It is your soul. It is the soul that make you you and keeps you being you no matter what physical changes occur. So, the human body is made up of lots of matter – from different sources – and it becomes you in all these little cells, and every cell is stamped with your own personal DNA, it is informed by your soul --- and stays you, no matter how many times that is revitalized. Does that make sense?

In the Church, we also have a body, a Mystical Body, made up of multiple parts made into one whole by its Soul. What is the soul of the Church? The Holy Ghost.¹⁵

12 Joyce, George. "Mystical Body of the Church." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 10. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911. 29 Sept. 2016 <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10663a.htm>>.

13 Maluf, Brother Francis, M.I.C.M. *Cosmology*. Vol. III. Richmond: Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, n.d. Print. *Philosophia Perennis*.

14 Pelletier, Tom. "Do We Replace Our Cells Every 7 or 10 Years?" *Ask a Naturalist.com*. N.p., 2013. Web. 29 Sept. 2016. <<http://askanaturalist.com/do-we-replace-our-cells-every-7-or-10-years/>>

15 Pius XII. *Mystici Corporis Christi*. 1943. Libreria Editrice Vaticana. Web. <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_29061943_mystici-corporis-christi.html>

The Holy Ghost provides life for this Mystical Body and – by means of the sacraments – incorporates these individual members into Christ and makes them one whole. Baptism stamps us with a spiritual DNA – and then, spiritually, by means of grace – and especially through Holy Communion, each cell – each member – of the Mystical Body has to be constantly fed – nourished – revitalized – replenished.

Unlike in a physical body, a cell of the Mystical Body doesn't actually get replaced on a specific schedule. As long as you are in a state of grace you are a member of the Mystical Body – even in Purgatory and Heaven.

However, the Holy Ghost is forming the Mystical Body – whose Head is Our Lord – with fallen human natures. And this answers our earlier question: *Why does the Church need to be reformed?*

Anytime you are dealing with living, changing, fallen human beings, the process of formation will continue until we die (well, actually, through Purgatory, technically). We are born anew in Baptism, but we must be formed and reformed during our whole lives in order to conform ourselves to Christ. We are all subject to change, and the Holy Ghost is very patient in working with our changeable natures so that we are drawn to the Blessed Trinity by our own free will corresponding with grace. The Mystical Body was born out of the pierced side of Our Lord on Calvary¹⁶ and made visible to the world on Pentecost¹⁷.

The institution is divine, but we must be formed and reformed to match the original pattern.

So – you have the Mystical Body formed by the Holy Ghost, and you have a physical body formed by your soul. I'm going to continue this analogy.

Now, a healthy cell contributes to the health of the whole body. So, a healthy member of the Mystical Body contributes to the health of the whole Mystical Body. What would be a healthy cell in the Mystical Body? A saint! Right? Someone who is holy – someone fulfilling his potential – being what he should be . . . is being vivified by grace . . . and therefore is a healthy cell. Sanctity among the members of the Mystical Body contributes to the health – the sanctity – of the whole. The more saints there are in the Church, the healthier the Mystical Body is.

To become a saint requires a constant process of reformation. As in the body the cells have to be constantly revitalized, therefore the individual must constantly be being reformed. So, every saint is a reformer – at least of themselves.

Now, the saints start with themselves; but, as they grow in sanctity and therefore in love of God and desire for His glory and His honor and an appreciation for all that He does for us in creating and sustaining and redeeming and sanctifying us – so that no matter what we do for Him, it is the smallest, little return . . . We're giving back to Him what He's given to us – it is minuscule – we're all unprofitable servants.¹⁸ And the more the saints realize this, the more they're drawn to get other souls – for God's glory and their

16 St. Augustine; Exposition on Psalm 127; Translated by J.E. Tweed. From Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, Vol. 8. Edited by Philip Schaff. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1888.) Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight. <<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1801127.htm>>

17 Jarvis, Matthew, O.P. Pentecost - Visible and Invisible. Sunday, May 27, 2012 <<http://english.op.org/godzdogz/pentecost-visible-and-invisible>>

18 Faber, Fredrick William, D.D. The Creator and the Creature or The Wonders of Divine Love. 1857. <https://books.google.com/books?id=NJ0sW3aEWNOC&dq=creator+and+creature&source=gb_s_navlinks_s>

salvation – to form the Mystical Body by adding more and more members.

For example:

Only a couple hundred years ago – so we're not in the official Catholic Counter-Reformation period – we're after it – in Belgium (Flanders), there is a tall (for his people), very strong, handsome young man who is inspired to become a religious in a fairly new order¹⁹ by his older brother. This young man becomes a lay brother, and he is growing in holiness and zeal – and his priestly brother, who was supposed to go off to the missions, became very ill. So, our young, strong, Brother is inspired to offer himself as in his brother's place. In God's Providence, all the plans are changed. The offer is accepted by the superiors. The younger Brother is sent half a world away, he is ordained a priest²⁰, beginning his missionary work²¹, and ends up offering himself – for the formation of the Mystical Body – as the permanent priest on the island of Molokai²². This is St. Damien de Veuster – St. Damien of Molokai²³.

He goes, has to win the trust of the natives in order to get them away from their idolatry and their superstitions and be able to form them as living members of the Mystical Body – to baptize them and give them the other Sacraments – and to help them carry their crosses in their formation as living cells – to carry the especially heavy burden of the special disease that has made forced these Hawaiians onto Molokai. And, like so many saints, in St. Damien's concern for the Mystical Body, the care of his physical body becomes secondary or non-existent. And so, he sacrifices his physical health and contracts leprosy himself, and dies of it at the age of 49. He became a martyr of charity.²⁴

So, every saint is a reformer – of himself and then of others in the Mystical Body.

(The extent to which this is true will only be known in eternity. How many souls are dependent upon us²⁵ . . . We can have no idea in this life.)

Now, I said that healthy cells²⁶ contribute to the health of the whole body. But, healthy cells also prevent disease. It's not just that healthy cells make the body healthier – but healthy cells can actually stop the body from getting sick. We are constantly exposed to deadly bacteria and viruses – but most of the time we are just fine – immune. It is only when there is an imbalance, at the cellular level, that infection occurs or disease takes hold²⁷. (Yes, I know I'm in danger over-simplifying a complicated process²⁸; but, a metaphor

19 Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, see <http://www.sccc.org/wp/main/?page_id=22179> and <<http://www.sacred-hearts.net/about-us>> (terribly modern, now)

20 1864

21 8 years of missionary labors

22 1873, at the age of 33

23 Jourdan, Vital, SS.CC. (translated by Rev. Francis Larkin, SS.CC., and Charles Davenport). The Heart of Father Damien – 1840-1889. New York: 1957/1960.

24 St. Marianne Cope promised that none of her sisters would contract the disease (and none of them ever did – and they worked with the lepers until just a few decades ago). For a brief summary of her work: <<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-marianne-cope/>> or <<http://www.stjoestpat.org/st-marianne-cope.html>> See also <<http://www.hawaiihighways.com/photos-Kalawao.htm>> for a picture of the inscription on St. Damien's tombstone on Molokai.

25 Cruchaga, Alberto Hurtado, S.J. A meditation for priests involved in Catholic Action. 1941. <http://www.padrehurtado.com/traduccion/02%20textos_ingles/texto35.htm>

26 The Biology Project – Cell Biology <http://www.biology.arizona.edu/cell_bio/cell_bio.html>

27 How does the skin prevent disease? <<http://www.livestrong.com/article/128329-skin-prevent-disease/>>

28 Human Defense Against Infection <<http://academic.pgcc.edu/~kroberts/web/recit/rec11.htm>>

can only be pushed so far before it limps. I don't want to make this too complicated. So, please just take it at face value. Basically, if the cell is healthy, it is its own defense.)

Let's use the example of the disease that Father Damien was working with – that he died of himself: leprosy, also called Hansen's Disease²⁹. This disease is caused by a bacteria, a very long-living bacteria, related to the one that causes TB. However, this bacteria attacks the nerve endings, creating patches of skin with no feeling. When this occurs on the extremities, the lack of feeling leads to secondary infections and injuries. 95% of individuals are naturally immune (they have healthy cells!). The bacteria, if they are exposed to it, has no effect. In recent decades, there has been a big push to eradicate leprosy, but there are still several hundred thousand new cases every year (especially in India and Brazil). There are medications that can kill the bacteria within a matter of days – and then the secondary effects of the disease can be dealt with. In third world countries, with the added factors of poor nutrition and bad sanitation, the effects can be very dramatic.

Closer to home: Leprosy was in the headlines³⁰ over the last couple of weeks because of a situation in California where a child (or more than one) was diagnosed with Hansen's disease, but having been on medication, was not contagious and of no danger to the other children, but parents panicked and started keeping their children home from school. This made the news for a couple weeks. In the United States, there are fewer than 200 new cases a year, but something like 5000 people are getting treatment for the effects.

But, the interesting thing, at least to me, is how this disease works. This bacteria works its way into the bloodstream. You end up getting cuts, banged, broken, you get open ulceration, badly healed bone, weakened muscles . . . and it is these secondary effects that in rare cases leads to the massive deformation that most people associate with leprosy. Hansen's disease, as it becomes rarer and rarer, when doctors do see it, it is getting mistaken for various other skin ailments and diseases. Leprosy just isn't on their radar.

Heresy, in the Mystical Body, is a disease. Unlike exterior attacks, heresy gets inside the Body. And some heresies deaden our sensibilities (kill nerves) and then create other problems so that you're looking at symptoms – and, like the doctors today with leprosy, not everyone recognizes what disease is underlying it – what the true cause is. (We'll come back to this point.)

With the physical body, when it gets deformed, you can do some re-constructive surgery, you can break up scar tissue, maintain flexibility, you can build prosthetics or various tools to help overcome the handicap – but you can't make a new body. That has to wait for the final Resurrection.

The nice thing about the Mystical Body is that it is spiritual – there is no permanent deformation. If members spiritually die and sever themselves from the Church, the Church Herself is still whole. You aren't dealing with a permanent disfiguration because of heresy and schism. That's an encouraging thing!

But, the thing is, remember what I said about healthy cells. Speaking simply, disease cannot penetrate a truly healthy cell. If a cell is working properly, it has all the nutrients it needs, all its systems are working properly – and in harmony with the rest of the body, disease will have no effect. We are exposed to hundreds upon hundreds of germs – viral and bacterial microbes – every single day without, generally, any ill effect. Our body is equipped to deal with them and render them ineffective – if we're in a good state of

29 Scollard, David, M. and Thoms P. Gillis, Editors. International Textbook of Leprosy.
<<http://www.internationaltextbookofleprosy.org/>>

30 <http://abcnews.go.com/Health/officials-investigate-leprosy-case-california/story?id=42306390>

health. It is when something is weakened, when we get run down, that we “catch” the bug. This happens on a cellular level . . .

A healthy cell, wherever it may be in the body, can become the first line of defense depending on where the virus or the bacteria or whatever makes contact. Does the virus bounce off the cell wall or does it penetrate and infect? One cell at a time . . . So, if cells are healthy, a disease cannot spread. If the members of the Mystical Body are healthy and holy, heresy cannot spread.

And, like leprosy, the heresy of our time, deadens nerves and creates other problems that can mask themselves as different issues, leading people to address the symptoms without recognizing the cause.

How many of you have read *The Loyolas and the Cabots*³¹? Or *After the Boston Heresy Case*³²? Either one?

St. Benedict Center was – as most of you know – founded as a simple student center on Harvard Square . . . intended to be a little outpost of the Catholic Faith in the deserts of Ivy League secularism. It started very small – just two lay men and one lady – with a library where Catholic students could find support in their Faith and anyone could find answers to what the Church taught. They had the blessing of the Cardinal, who gave them the injunction to teach the Faith without compromise.

By simple presence, just being there, eventually, Saint Benedict Center started to grow, little by little. With the presence of Father Feeney, the Center began to be popular. And, as the students and teachers at the Center continued to form themselves according to the mind of the Church – as they were growing in holiness (what every Catholic should be doing) – they became instruments for the formation and reformation of others . They were getting converts.

By holding, living, and teaching the Faith without compromise, the Center became an instrument of reform.

. . . And then battle lines began to be drawn.

Just as healthy cells reject disease – and make it visible – so the sickness of our time became manifest.

If you look at a slide of a biopsy under a microscope, diseased cells are easily recognized when compared with healthy cells. If all the cells are malformed, it is hard to pinpoint the problem, but if you have healthy cells and then one or more diseased cells, it is easy to spot the problem. This is what happened at the Center. You had very healthy members of the Mystical Body (forming themselves by prayer, work, and study), and all of the sudden, there started to be clashes. Disease was bouncing off strong cells! Here's the healthy cell – this thing doesn't belong!

Just like the early Cistercians or the early Jesuits, the Center started as a small little work with the goal of personal sanctity and strengthening the faith of those around them.

Just as healthy cells reject disease – and make it visible – the sickness of our time became manifest.

31 Clarke, Catherine Goddard. *The Loyolas and the Cabots, the Story of the Boston Heresy Case*. Boston: Ravengate, 1950. Print. <<http://catholicism.org/book-loyolas-and-the-cabots.html>>

32 Potter, Gary. *After the Boston Heresy Case*. Richmond: Loreto Publications, 1995/2011. Print.

What was the sickness of our time? What was the heresy? When they finally put their finger on it, it was the denial of the dogma, *Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus*. The denial of the necessity of the Church for salvation was (and is) the underlying denial of the problems of our time.

Now, in the late 40's, it didn't look like there were a lot of problems. But, the healthier the members got, the more clearly the lines were drawn for them. And, so, while there was no popular reform movement at the time (remember? "intense zeal on the part of many"), having identified the disease, Father Feeney could see where we were going. Then we had Vatican II, *where Modernist terminology is planted like time bombs*, the Novus Ordo . . . and movements start rising to save the Mass . . . and then to defend life – the pro-life movement . . . and you have all these different movements – so that now there are quite a lot of different works of reform in whatever area you look. And that popularity for reform is growing. (draw curve on the board)

(I don't know if we've got to the "intense zeal on the part of many" yet, but we're heading in that direction.³³)

You've may have seen some of the many Open Letters to Pope Francis. A particularly good one was the Plea to the Pope (a video) where leading pro-life advocates are asking Pope Francis to clarify doctrinal issues (with regard to life and the family)³⁴ because it needs clarifying.

BUT, all these issues in the Church and society, are just symptoms – like in leprosy: the ulcers, the broken and badly healed limbs, the deformation, are all symptoms of a bacteria in the blood attacking the nerves. The denial of the dogma *Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus* was identified by the Center way back here, and its denial is underlying all the problems that different organizations are trying to address – and all the work that is going on now.

So, in order to have a true age of reform in our time, this dogma has to be taught and defended. The medicine must be applied to the disease – not just the symptoms. In leprosy, the bacteria has to be killed; then symptoms can be alleviated. In the Church, this dogma must be taught, and then the other issues can be addressed. And, it has to be taught from the top down (by the Pope and the hierarchy).

Brother Francis used to say that when our Crusade is won, it is unlikely that the Center will be remembered by many as having anything to do with it. We're the little people over here.³⁵

Someday, Father Feeney's name will be vindicated (it is so tied to the Dogma that it has to be), but whether everyone connects it with the whole big picture or not is entirely beside the point.

The point is that the Faith has to be taught. It has to be taught whole and entire and without compromise – or the disease is just going to continue to spread.

33 Groeschel, Fr. Benedict, C.F.R. "Reform in the Church and in Society." Catholic Education Resource Center. N.p., 1990. Web. 29 Sept. 2016. <<http://www.catholiceducation.org/en/religion-and-philosophy/apologetics/reform-in-the-church-and-in-society.html>>

34 Life Site News. Plea to the Pope. YouTube. 13 July 2016. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQpJqmbYPXg>>

35 "But the power of Mary over all the devils will especially break out in the latter times, when Satan will lay his snares against her heel; that is to say, her humble slaves and her poor children, whom she will raise up to make war against him. They shall be little and poor in the world's esteem, and abased before all, like the heel, trodden underfoot and persecuted as the heel is by the other members of the body. But in return for this, they shall be rich in the grace of God, which Mary shall distribute to them abundantly." St. Louis Marie de Montfort

Now, when we look around, we see problems everywhere: in the Church, in society, in the family, in the priesthood . . . We can see problems everywhere! And, we say, “Yes, there is a need for reform – but what can I do about it?”

And we go back to the question: What did the Catholic reformers do, what did the effective Catholic reformers do? What did they do first? They focused on . . . themselves. They focused on themselves.³⁶ And by focusing on themselves, they could then affect those around them, and they could have a growing influence because they themselves were becoming holy.³⁷

In the body, a healthy cell can help to fight the disease around it. We know that the solution for the problems of our time has to come from the Pope and the hierarchy. We know what the solution is; but, it isn't something that we can do ourselves. We have to become holy ourselves, hold one to the Truth, and keep teaching it, and keep being that thorn in the side of the hierarchy until they do what's right.

We need to be healthy members ourselves. Because, becoming lax, becoming dead—or at least nerve dead, is not going to help anything. So, we have to be doing our part, hold fast, in order for the whole Body to be reformed *by those who can do it*.

But what effect does one tiny cell have? It is very easy to get discouraged or uninspired.

Do I really matter that much? I? Do I really matter that much? What I do today – whether I do my daily duty or not -- Does it really affect the big picture? It does³⁸ . . .

All it takes for disease to get established is for one weakened cell to get infected. Infection spreads cell by cell. Two years ago, when, unbeknownst to me, the melanoma was spreading from my hand, if the cells in my arm hadn't been, for the most part, healthy so that the cancer was stopped, isolated, and made visible in a tumor – that melanoma could have spread through my whole body, and we wouldn't have seen it until it was too late, and I would be dead. But I had healthy cells that were getting properly fed and could do their job.

And each one of us needs to be one of those healthy cells – to work together under the influence of the Holy Ghost – to be holy ourselves, to affect those around us, to be instruments in the reformation that needs to be occurring now.

How do we do that? We can go back to the three parts of our life: prayer, work, and study. Our prayer is the most important part of our life because we're supposed to be growing in holiness – that's the reason we are here (it is easy to lose sight of that, but that is precisely why we need prayer, talking and listening to

36 Well, actually, they focused on God. Too much introspection can cause other problems!

37 Chautard, Dom Jean-Baptiste, O.C.S.O. *The Soul of the Apostolate*. Trappist, KY: Abbey of Gethsemani, 1946. Print.

38 For want of a nail the shoe was lost.

For want of a shoe the horse was lost.

For want of a horse the rider was lost.

For want of a rider the message was lost.

For want of a message the battle was lost.

For want of a battle the kingdom was lost.

And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.

Old Proverb (see references <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/For_Want_of_a_Nail>)

God: to remember our purpose, keep our focus, and grow in love). Study is to inform our prayer. If we don't know God, we don't love Him – and, if you don't keep growing in knowledge of Him and His economy and the way everything works, it is hard for your prayer to keep growing. So, study informs the prayer, prayer enlivens the work -- and, if all the parts are kept in balance, you have a healthy cell of the Mystical Body.

Prayer: Are we making our morning offering? Saying our night prayers? Saying the Angelus? Our Daily Rosary? ³⁹Making a little meditation?⁴⁰ Going to Mass as often as possible, but never missing Sundays and Holy Days?

Study: Do we have some course of studies that we are following? Some books that you are reading? You know that we have the Saint Augustine Institute⁴¹, with some of it on-line now . . . You don't have to do that, but it is there as a help if you need assistance. So, what are you doing for study? What are *you* doing to increase your knowledge so that your *prayer* is growing?

Work: We have duties that belong to our state in life (even if that state in life is only a transitional one), duties that we should be fulfilling. How are we doing them? How are we doing them? Are we making an effort to be joyful, generous, genuine, courageous, loyal, strong, and confident?⁴² Making an effort to have our work, our manner, our appearance . . . reflect God's life in our soul?

If we are honest with ourselves, every one of us has something that we know is holding us back from making the next step, something that we should change to make some growth.

We like big parts and dramatic results. Which reminds me of Naaman the Syrian. (4 Kings, Chapter 5) Naaman was a general of the king of Syria. Holy Scripture says that he was a ver honorable man. But, he was a leper. His wife had a little servant girl, who was an Israelite, and she told her mistress (who relayed it to Naaman) that she wished he had been in Israel because there was a prophet there who would have cleansed him of his leprosy. So, Naaman makes the journey south into Israel. He has a special letter from the king of Syria to the king of Israel, and eventually, he gets directed to Eliseus (the disciple of Elias). Eliseus sends word to Naaman by a messenger that he should go wash seven times in the river Jordan and his leprosy would be cleansed. And, the general gets indignant. He thought the prophet would come in person, dramatically invoke the name of the Lord his God, put his hand on the place of the leprosy and heal him. And, what is so great about the Jordan anyway? Aren't the rivers of Damascus better? And he turned to leave. But his servants said to him, "Father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, surely thou shouldst have done it: how much rather what he now hath said to thee: Wash, and thou shalt be clean?" So he went down, washed, and "his flesh was restored, like the flesh of a little child, and he was made clean." (There is an interesting sequel to the story, but you'll have to read it yourself.)

The Little Way of St. Therese helps us to combat the idea that bigger is better. Little actions done with love have much more value.⁴³ We're like Naaman the Syrian: Tell us what big important thing you want us to

39 St. Louis Marie de Montfort. The Secret of the Rosary. <<http://www.catholictradition.org/Classics/secret-rosary.htm>>

40 See my 2015 Conference Talk, and also The Practice of the Presence of God
<http://www.catholictreasury.info/books/presence_of_God/index.php>

41 <<http://saintaugustineinstitute.org/>>

42 These are the seven virtues of a Slave (from Brother Hugh, second Superior of the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, d. July 11, 1979).

43 <http://www.fatimacrusader.com/cr74/cr74pg06.asp> (Of course, there are St. Therese's autobiography, letters, and various biography, too.)

do that will have a huge result. We're told to do something small and simple, and our response is: "That doesn't seem very worthwhile." But that's what we're told to do!

So, what is the thing, what is that simple thing, that Our Lady would like us to do to be healed of our own spiritual leprosy – to be a healthy cell? What is that thing? Do you know now? At least make a big mental note to take some time and make a good resolution at the next opportunity for a little quiet time. And then we need to ask for the grace to make the necessary change(s) and to be faithful to that effort – for the good of the whole Mystical Body.

Each of us has to be a healthy cell; we each have to be growing in holiness.

You know what the devil said about St. Jean Marie Vianney? St. Jean Marie Vianney was trying to become holy and help the people in the one little town of Ars to become holy⁴⁴ – and he ended up having a lot of influence on a lot of people (one healthy cell helps another cell, which helps another . . .). The devil was heard to say that if there were three more priests like St. Jean Marie Vianney, his kingdom would be ruined.⁴⁵

Holiness has a big effect. It stops heresy, it prevents infection, it makes the whole Mystical Body stronger.

We are Slaves of Our Lady. Mr Carbone spoke about the importance of the Total Consecration to Jesus Through Mary as Slaves of Love.⁴⁶ If *we* give ourselves to Our Lady, *She* can make us holy (if we cooperate) – if we live that consecration. And we have the opportunity to be part of the reform for our time. We know that Our Lady triumphs. "In the end, My Immaculate will triumph."⁴⁷ So, we know where the winning side is. We can be part of the solution by being healthy members.⁴⁸

Those of you associated with the Center – by vow, promise, or at least as a friend – have an additional strength because *you* have the opportunity and ability to recognize the problem, the disease: to recognize and see it, and pin-point it . . . and contain it, prevent its spread . . . prevent it from infecting your own life and the lives of those around you.

As we're keeping the Catholic Counter-Reformation going, and we're dealing with the effects of the Protestant Revolt on society, on the Church, on our neighbors, on our own thinking, how do we keep the re-formation going? By reforming ourselves. And by reforming ourselves, we help to reform the Church. By cooperating with the grace of the Holy Ghost, by placing ourselves in Our Lady's hands as her Slaves, by imitating the saints who have gone before us, we work towards that total glorification of the Mystical Body.

And – because *we* have to deal with an internal infection, like leprosy – St. Damien of Molokai, in *his* utter forgetfulness of self and his love for his neighbor, can be an example to us of how to go about our own Hawaiian Reform.

44 Check, Christopher. The Devil's Most Effective Foe. Crisis Magazine. 2 Aug. 2012. Web.
<<http://www.crisismagazine.com/2012/the-devils-most-effective-foe>>

45 <<http://www.catholictradition.org/Priests/priests2.htm>>

46 St. Louis Marie de Montfort. Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.
<http://www.catholictreasury.info/books/true_devotion/index.php>

47 <<http://fatima.org/essentials/whatucando/sac&immhrt/fatima.asp>>

48 The three aspects of MICM spirituality is True Devotion, the Little Way, and the Immaculate Heart (as revealed at Fatima).