

MANCIPIA

November, 2005



THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER

TO FRIENDS OF THE CRUSADE:



Br. André Marie, M.I.C.M. Prior

ST. AUGUSTINE: ANTIDOTE FOR OUR TIMES

(Edited from a recent talk given by Br. André Marie at Saint Benedict Center)

St. Augustine is of great importance to us in our Crusade, which seeks to rebuild Christendom. To a large degree, he provided the intellectual “tillage” necessary before the seed of Christendom

could fall on good soil and flourish. I think we can all agree that the “soil” of our times is in desperate shape. So, let’s reflect briefly upon St. Augustine, that pillar of our Faith whose thought and example can be effectively utilized today to support the reconquest, the conversion of our Nation to the one, true Church.

St. Augustine was born in 354 A.D., only 41 years after the Edict of Milan of 313. He was trained in rhetoric, given the very good liberal education of his day, and he eventually became a professor of rhetoric.

He was born of a Catholic mother, St. Monica, and a pagan father, Patricius (who was eventually baptized). Possibly as a result of this mixed marriage, or possibly because of the harsh ramifications of falling away, St. Augustine was not baptized in infancy.

In pursuit of a chair of rhetoric, he traveled to Europe, where he fell into serious vices of the flesh. His profound intellect was never satisfied even with the wisdom of all the great, pagan, Latin authors. He ended up moving into the religious sphere, avoiding his mother’s Catholic piety, however, and becoming deeply entangled in the heresy known as Manichaeism.

St. Monica never ceased praying and sacrificing for the conversion of her son. A bishop once consoled her with the words “A son of so many tears cannot be lost!”

For years, Augustine knew that he had to seek entrance into the Church, but he procrastinated. The spirit was willing but the flesh was weak. Openly admitting that the vice of impurity was keeping him away, he prayed, “Lord, make me chaste, but not now.”

In those days the penal codes, the penitentiaries, of the primitive Church, were quite strict. This was back at a time

when Catholics were tough! If you fell into certain sins, you could endure six months, a year, five years, or more of severe public penance. This penance included such things as remaining outside the Church in sackcloth, begging for the prayers of those entering the Church, without receiving absolution or Holy Communion until the end of the prescribed time.

Because of this, people had a tendency to put off Baptism which really meant “a change of life.” If you didn’t change your life, people knew about it quite clearly.

In the year 387, St. Augustine, at the age of 33, was baptized by Bishop St. Ambrose. On that occasion, the two doctors of the Church first sang “the Ambrosian hymn,” the Te Deum, that stirring anthem of gratitude we recite almost every day in the Divine Office at Matins.

In 391, four years after her son’s baptism, St. Monica died. Not long before her death she told St. Augustine, “I have nothing more to live for. All I wanted to do was to see you become a Catholic. Now you have become a servant of God and nothing could make me any happier.”

In 391 St. Augustine was in a Church in North Africa, in Hippo, when the aging Bishop, Valerian, announced that he needed another priest to assist him. Everyone in the Church turned around and looked at St. Augustine, who returned the glance in horror! In the end, he acceded to their acclamations and consented to ordination to the priesthood. In the year 396 he was consecrated a bishop.



Saint Augustine

FOUNDER'S COLUMN



Sr. Catherine, M.I.C.M.

SELECTIONS FROM *GATE OF HEAVEN*

The Catholic Church, with the simplicity and candor of Christ, explained in the Vatican Council of 1870, that the Pope gains his knowledge just as any other man does. The Pope's knowledge, we are told, even when he is speaking infallibly, is not infused into him by God. Infallibility does not by any means do away with

the necessity of study and learning. It simply, under certain conditions, guarantees that the conclusions drawn from study and learning are free from error. The Pope is guided by the Holy Spirit when he is defining *ex cathedra* so that he does not use his authority and his knowledge to mislead the Church.

The Pope, therefore, is infallible only when he is speaking *ex cathedra*. Bishops, Archbishops, and Cardinals are never individually infallible. They can, and often have, made mistakes in doctrine. The majority of the Bishops in England left the Catholic Church for Henry VIII's Church of England at the time of the Protestant Reformation. The people of England were, among other names, called Episcopalians, precisely because they followed their Bishops — the Latin name for bishop being *episcopus*. Most of Germany became Protestant when its Bishops and priests followed Luther into heresy. Sweden and Denmark, Norway and Holland were lost in the same way.

The Catholics who followed their bishops and priests into heresy, in these countries, were punished by God. The people, as well as their leaders, were condemned. The Church tells us this when she teaches that we can have no hope for the eternal salvation of those who died heretics as a result of following their bishops and priests into Protestantism. The Church holds that this was misguided and sinful obedience.

The people should have withstood the false doctrines. What is more, they should have admonished the heretical shepherds who were leading them astray...

But how could the people know...? How could the people, in a time of such confusion, know that they should not trust their shepherds? Surely doctrine is a territory in which their trust in their bishops is rightly established. Was it not beautiful and touching that they should obey? And is the Church not brutal to teach that we may not hope for the salvation, at least of the people who followed their leaders into heresy?

"... The answer is that even a child can tell when its parent is not telling the truth! God never leaves a soul without sufficient grace to recognize the truth, especially where its own everlasting salvation is concerned..."

The answer is that even a child can tell when its parent is not telling the truth! God never leaves a soul without sufficient grace to recognize the truth, especially where its own everlasting salvation is concerned, and especially with regard to Eternal Truth. There was, in the experience of each one of us, a time when we calmly examined the teachings of our parents and teachers, and decided what portion of it was wise in our estimation, and what portion of it was not wise; in what way we would do things differently, if only in such simple matters as running a house.

It is the richness and wisdom in a parent's or teacher's instruction that a child is willing to receive, not the bare substantial of it. Every child knows when a parent is doing wrong, or a teacher is telling a lie. Let me see any father try to induce his child to believe that his drunkenness or wife-beating is praiseworthy, because it is parental example. Let me see any teacher tell a child that two and two are six, or that there are more moons than one in the sky, and hear how far the child can be led astray.

A priest who tells his parishioners, or a bishop who tells his subjects, how precious Jesus, Mary, Joseph, or the Blessed Eucharist are, or how august is the dignity of the Pope, will be believed; and will have the love and support of his listeners who are of good faith. But just as soon as a priest or a bishop tries to dispense with Jesus, Mary, Joseph, the Blessed Eucharist, or the Pope, even the dullest member of his congregation or his diocese knows that he is teaching heresy. There is a point beyond which the people cannot be deceived, even by those they are disposed to love and honor, as they are their bishops and priests.

Everybody in the Archdiocese of Boston, for example, knows, in his heart, that there is no quicker way to rub out Jesus, Mary, Joseph, the Blessed Eucharist, and the Pope, than to say that there is salvation outside the Catholic Church...

Our Lord says, in the Sermon on the Mount:

Matt. 6:21: For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also.

If the Faith is our treasure, and our heart is really in it, we will see that thieves do not break through nor steal it. We will guard it as our pearl of great price, which it is. And if we are not on guard at all times — as men are over worldly treasure

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SAINT BENEDICT CENTER NEWS



COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS: PROFESSIONS AND CELEBRATION

On a typical autumn day in New England, in the typical, small town of Richmond, New Hampshire, a decidedly atypical event took place. Two Catholic young men professed their vows as religious of the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. A festive occasion indeed, especially in these times of scarce vocations and scant religious observance. Having completed their six-month postulancies and two-year novitiates, both brothers professed temporary vows on October 11th. The atmosphere at St. Benedict Center combined the sacred and the jubilant as family, friends, and the entire religious and lay community gathered to witness and celebrate. This happy event, together with the fact that there are other young men presently discerning their vocations, gives cause for great hope in the future of the Crusade. Please keep these young men in your prayers, and join us in offering thanks to Almighty God for His beneficence.

BROTHER LOUIS MARIE, M.I.C.M.

Born and raised in a small town in Maine, briefly following his dream to be an actor, then the “American Dream” of financial abundance, Joseph Sean Patrick McCann found his calling as “Br. Louis Marie”, a professed brother of the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In his words, “I simply decided to cooperate with God’s plan for me, and I’ve never been more content.”

Br. Louis Marie was blessed to be raised in a devout family that provided an atmosphere conducive to discerning God’s call. One of 10 children, he is the second McCann to enter religious life at St. Benedict Center. His sister is now Sr. Mary Joseph, a professed sister of the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Since he was 12 years old, Joseph’s parents, Brian and Julie, ensured their family would attend a traditional Mass by, at times, traveling two hours each way every Sunday. Prayer, the Sacred Liturgy, and laughter were very important matters in the McCann family. Dance was also an important aspect as, for several years, his mother owned and operated a popular country line dancing studio.

At various times their children were homeschooled, depending on family circumstances, but at all times the McCanns strove to provide a doctrinally correct upbringing, especially concerning the necessity of being a Catholic. At 11-years of age, Br. Louis Marie remembers explaining this with great concern to a Protestant playmate while on a trampoline in his backyard. Though he remembers it made quite an impression on her, as well as on her dismayed parents, having lost contact, he’s not sure if she eventually converted.

Upon graduation Joseph gave God the first option in his life, by entering the *donné* program at the Center. In this pro-

gram, young laymen live with the brothers and participate in their spiritual exercises in order to discern their calling. He was impressed by the no-pressure environment Br. André Marie provided there. It was during this time that Joseph developed a deep personal relationship with God, and, with some trepidation, he became aware of his calling.

But rambling feet got the better of him, for a time anyway, and he decided to leave. His sister, who was then a novice, tear-

fully implored her brother to stay, knowing in her heart that God was calling him, and knowing the world threatened to distract him from that call. But Joseph had another dream, a longing for the stage. With a St. Joseph’s cord he received from his sister, he set out to Rochester with a friend to crack into the stand-up comedy industry with a goal of eventually making it big in New York City. He enjoyed making people laugh. He admits today that his dream was heavy on idealism and light on reality.

Reality hit fairly quickly. He became disenchanted with the lifestyle he discovered there. Joseph was soon off in pursuit of a more common dream. He joined two of his brothers in Utah and became a salesman. “I went,” he said, with a broad smile, “with the idea of becoming a good little capitalist. All my energy and thoughts became focused on making money.”

Though he was going through what he calls his “worldly stage,” he never stopped attending Mass and praying the Rosary. He struck those who knew him as a “confident Catholic,” which was so unusual he frequently received encouragement to consider the priesthood, even from non-Catholics. Joseph realized he had a vocation, and yet he also knew he wasn’t strong enough to pull himself out of the world. He implored Our Lady for Her help.



Br. Louis Marie, M.I.C.M.

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PREFECT'S MESSAGE



Br. Anthony Mary, M.I.C.M., Tert.

THE SAINT AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE

(Edited from a recent talk given by Br. Anthony Mary, M.I.C.M., Tert. at Saint Benedict Center)

It has been 65 years since St. Benedict Center was originally founded as a school on the feast of St. Joseph, in the year 1940. At one time, as those familiar with the history of our Crusade know, St. Benedict Center operated a fully accredited college in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It began as part of the ideal of our Founders to convert America to the Catholic Faith. Fr. Leonard Feeney, Sr. Catherine, and Br. Francis knew that deep study of our Faith by men and women who would become the leaders of our nation would eventually convert that nation through their leadership. This continues to be an essential aspect of the Crusade.

As a legacy for a future Christendom, Fr. Feeney desired to establish a “school of thought” with a profoundly Catholic perspective. Fr. Feeney understood that the task of converting this nation is going to necessitate personal holiness, but that it is also going to require a certain degree of intellectual formation.

In one important respect, our assignment to convert America is more challenging today than conversion of pagan nations in times past. The “pious” paganism of ancient Greece and Rome tended to align reason with the natural order to arrive at certain truths, which were then used to form a civic and well-ordered society. The consequent development of natural virtues provided fertile soil for the eventual blossoming of Christendom. The paganism of our day is a “new paganism” in so far as it is a perversion of the natural order. Belief in the existence of moral absolutes and of transcendent authorities is no longer to be found within the fabric of our society. The challenge for our Crusade is indeed formidable.

Another striking difference between our challenges to convert America today and similar challenges of the past involves circumstances within the Catholic Church today. Our Crusade for the conversion of America must recognize the state of doctrinal confusion within the mystical Spouse of Christ. The human element of Holy Mother Church (members both lay and clerical) must be converted back to the infallible teaching of Her very own doctrines. This is especially true of the doctrine, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, the obscuring of which is the main obstacle to the conversion of our country. The urgency to convert the nation simply does not exist without

recognition that conversion is necessary for salvation. Clearly, intellectual formation concerning this important doctrine, along with the history of Christendom and our present day, is vitally important for our Crusade.

Over the years, Br. Francis’ strongest sense of mission, as Fr. Feeney’s disciple, has been the continued development of a “school of thought” to assist the Crusade. One method used in the early days of the Crusade at St. Benedict Center in Cambridge was regular lectures and discussion meetings given on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday nights. Br. Francis’ night was Tuesday; Sr. Catherine’s was Friday, with Fr. Feeney always speaking on Thursday, the day dedicated to the Blessed Eucharist. These talks were very well attended and had a profound impact. Here, at St. Benedict Center in Richmond, we have carried on this tradition of providing talks for members of our community.

Another method for the promulgation of a Crusade “school of thought” is the Immaculate Heart of Mary School operated by our Sisters here at the Center. The course work at the School is carefully designed to form holy and knowledgeable apostles who will assist with our Crusade to convert America. However, there are many Crusaders, active supporters of the Crusade, who live too far away to attend talks at the Center or to send their children to our School. For these individuals, the Saint Augustine Institute is of particular importance.

The Saint Augustine Institute (SAI) was established by Br. Francis as the primary method for creating and promoting the particular “school of thought” that will assist our Crusade. SAI is a program of study leading to a diploma. Its syllabus has nine prayers, 12 memory items, and 24 books to read. Each SAI student submits a brief book report on each of the 24 books before the diploma is awarded.

The course of instruction is basically the same as that which had been offered in the early days of the St. Benedict Center in Cambridge. The instructors are the popes, the councils, the saints, the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, and, most especially, Holy Scripture and Catholic Tradition. By learning from these unchangeable foundational sources, we continue to keep our eyes fixed on the narrow path to salvation, no matter how distorted and distracting the world around us becomes, and no matter what is taught by self-proclaimed “experts” — wolves in sheep’s clothing.

All Crusaders for Christendom are encouraged to begin and/or persevere with the SAI program of study. The conversion of America will depend upon holy and knowledgeable apostles for Christ.

“As a legacy for a future Christendom, Fr. Feeney desired to establish a “school of thought” with a profoundly Catholic perspective.”

PROFESSIONS AND CELEBRATIONS

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Help arrived. One of his brothers, Rick, decided to move back “home,” and Joseph decided to leave with him. This time, however, “home” wasn’t in Maine. Their parents had moved to Richmond to be close to St. Benedict Center, where their daughter had become a professed sister.

“It felt like God was pulling me in,” Br. Louis remembered. “By moving to Richmond I was clearly putting myself in a very near occasion of grace from which I would not be able to say ‘no’! I was going to have to confront my calling again, and I knew how things would likely end up.”

Br. Louis reflects on his life and sums up humbly, “God took the garbage of my life and used it as fertilizer to grow a garden. I’m eternally grateful for the grace to cooperate with His will, and I pray it will always be so.”

BR. MAXIMILIAN MARIA, M.I.C.M.

Fort Worth, Texas-born-and-raised, Patrick Edwin Dominic Sullivan was on a road to the religious life (eventually as “Br. Maximilian Maria”) from the time a vocation first crossed his mind at 12 years of age. Blessed with many encouraging influences in his life, Br. Maximilian is convinced the hand of God was at work guiding him along his way, even as he contemplated marriage. “My vocation was riveted in my mind for quite some time,” he says about his discernment process. “I’m glad God has patience!”

When Patrick was 12 years old and the oldest of four children, his parents, Edwin and Mary Anne Sullivan, started attending the traditional Latin Mass, at times driving great distances to fulfill their Sunday obligation. From “conservative” Novus Ordo parishioners, to no-compromise traditionalists, Br. Maximilian’s parents were always staunch defenders of the doctrine, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, despite the resultant challenges.

Of tremendous influence in Br. Maximilian’s religious life was his maternal grandmother, Ruth Wilkinson, who taught him religion during his school years. Mrs. Wilkinson, author of the books, *Letter to a Fallen Away Catholic* and *Letter to My Non-Catholic Friend*, encouraged Br. Maximilian to attend traditional retreats and St. Benedict Center conferences, where his vocational interests were bolstered.

Patrick first realized he might have a call to the religious life during a summer camp in Elmhurst, Pennsylvania, operated by the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter. This calling received further confirmation at two succeeding summer camps provided in a traditional Catholic atmosphere. In addition, when he

was 16, 18, and 19 years old he attended traditional Ignatian retreats. “I can’t underestimate the value of these experiences on my discernment,” reflects Br. Maximilian. “I encountered many strong and pious priests who provided excellent spiritual direction and encouragement.”

A particular dilemma, however, prevented Br. Maximilian from taking the plunge. He was rock solid on the doctrine, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, and consequently experienced discouragement from attending any seminaries that might have been of interest. “When I brought up my ‘no compromise’ position on the doctrine, doors seemed to close. If God was calling me to a vocation,” Br. Maximilian wondered, “then where would I receive my religious training? Somehow, God would have to point the way.”

He incessantly prayed to know God’s will and to perform it. He always had a special devotion to Our Lady, praying the three Hail Mary’s for purity and a holy death since he was eleven. But now he really stormed the Blessed Mother with prayers.

It was about this time that Patrick began attending the Saint Benedict Center conferences where he met Br. Francis and Br. André Marie. A light dawned to illuminate a particular path that he hadn’t considered, a vocation to the religious life as a brother. He decided to spend six months as a *donné* at St. Benedict Center. But his mind wouldn’t let go of an alternative to the religious life, an alternative that he wanted to explore before even becoming a *donné*.

Thinking that holy Matrimony could be God’s will for him, he returned home and initiated a traditional courtship with a young lady who attended the same chapel. For most of this time he felt a tug-of-war was going on in his mind between the married life and the religious life. Divine intervention was necessary and came about through a series of circumstances that convinced Patrick of what God wanted from him. Once the courtship ended, he was ready.

“Even if I hadn’t decided on the religious life,” he has often stated, “I would have moved to Richmond. I feel very much at home here, and being surrounded by a community with the same values and beliefs is a real blessing. I love the people here.”

When asked about the future, Br. Maximilian becomes emphatic. “Before I became a religious, my tendency was to look to the future with some degree of negativity. Now I have great hope: hope for the future of the local community, and hope for the growth and effectiveness of our Congregation. The Crusade is alive and well, and, with the grace of God, we’ll eventually succeed. I’m sure of that.”



Br. Maximilian Maria, M.I.C.M.

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— we will lose it. But we deserve to lose it, if we hold it so lightly, and we deserve to dwell, for that same reason, for all eternity in the depraved impoverishment of hell.

There have been thieves of all kinds in history; thieves of all kinds in Holy Scripture. There was the “thief who came in the night”; the Samaritan who “fell among thieves.” There was the bad thief, on the Cross beside Jesus. There was even the good thief, who stole heaven. But the worst thief of all time, for whom there is no honor even among thieves, was Judas. Judas was one of Christ’s chosen twelve. Jesus chose him, not only to be one of His Catholic priests, but to be one of His Bishops, as were all the Apostles.

And Judas turned out to be a thief. He sold that which was not his — the life of Jesus. It is shocking that this could happen to a bishop in the highest consistory of all, that of the twelve Apostles. But it bears a moral for us: Let us watch out that other false bishops do not, like thieves in the night, snatch from us the eternal life of our souls.

SAINT AUGUSTINE

From page 1

Three years later, in 399, St. Augustine wrote *The Confessions*, and, in 410, he wrote *The City of God*.

What happened in 410 that led him to write *The City of God*? The sacking of the City of Rome by Alaric. This tremendous humiliation for Rome was blamed on the Christians by the pagans, who claimed that their present lack of piety towards their pagan gods had caused the catastrophe. St. Augustine, as a great apologist for the Faith, defended the Catholics with stunning polemics which effectively destroyed the pagan charges. What’s more, he developed a “theology of history” which has enlightened Catholic minds ever since.

In the year 430, the great Doctor died, and in the year 476 the Roman Empire fell in the West. St. Augustine was sitting on the precipice of the

Have you considered coming to our Conference?



The 2006 Saint Benedict Center Conference will be Friday, August 18th through Sunday, August 20th 2006. It will be held at the Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. Please mark your calendars.

Speakers will include: Br. Francis, M.I.C.M., Ph. D; Br. André Marie, M.I.C.M.; Br. Anthony Mary, M.I.C.M., Tert.; and Gary Potter. More speakers to be announced.

For more information, visit our web site at:
www.catholicism.org/conference-update

ancient Roman world looking toward the future of the new Rome that would come into existence after the barbarian invasions had leveled its civilization. St. Benedict’s sons would come on the scene and build the foundations of Christendom from the ruins. Of tremendous value to St. Benedict personally, to future Benedictines, and to men like Clovis and Charlemagne, was the work of St. Augustine, a body of intensely spiritual and brilliant writings which molded the thinking of late antiquity and the Middle Ages for monks, bishops, popes, kings, and emperors. Included in this massive corpus was that textbook, that blueprint, for building Christendom: *The City of God*.

It has been said that St. Augustine is the father of the Christian West. His prolific and enduring writings dominate

the intellectual milieu that makes up Western Christian thought.

His writings about grace are a sharp refutation against those who denied its necessity (the Pelagians). St. Augustine said that we are powerless to raise ourselves up when we are dead in sin! At times, even we who know better act as if we can do things on our own in the spiritual life without God’s grace. We fall prey to the heresy of the day. God’s grace must be freely offered and freely accepted. And if it’s not there, all our good works amount to nothing. It is no wonder that St. Augustine was declared the Doctor of Grace. He painfully endured his own struggle against grace and then began to struggle with grace against sin. I recommend we read and reread the works of St. Augustine. He presents a powerful antidote to the errors of our day.

EXTRA ECCLESIAM NULLA SALUS

Ex Cathedra: "There is but one universal Church of the faithful, outside which no one at all is saved." (Pope Innocent III, Fourth Lateran Council, 1215.)

Ex Cathedra: "We declare, say, define, and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary for the salvation of every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff." (Pope Boniface VIII, the Bull Unam Sanctam, 1302.)

Ex Cathedra: "The most Holy Roman Church firmly believes, professes and preaches that none of those existing outside the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics, can have a share in life eternal; but that they will go into the eternal fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels, unless before death they are joined with Her; and that so important is the unity of this ecclesiastical body that only those remaining within this unity can profit by the sacraments of the Church unto salvation, and they alone can receive an eternal recompense for their fasts, their almsgivings, their other works of Christian piety and the duties of a Christian soldier. No one, let his almsgiving be as great as it may, no one, even if he pour out his blood for the Name of Christ, can be saved, unless he remain within the bosom and the unity of the Catholic Church." (Pope Eugene IV, the Bull Cantate Domino, 1441.)

Planning Ahead...

Concern for the souls of your children and grandchildren may already have you thinking about planned gifts. In this way, your generosity can support the Crusade for generations to come. Please consider including the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Richmond, New Hampshire in your will or trust. For more information, contact your financial advisor or estate planning attorney today. Or, call us to discuss options that may be available for you.

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MANCIPIA • The Report of the Crusade of Saint Benedict Center • November 2005

All Third Order members, friends, and benefactors are encouraged to add these prayers to their family or private Rosaries.

Prayers for the Holy Father
(to be said after the Rosary)

V. Let us pray for our Pontiff, Pope Benedict.

R. The Lord preserve him, and give him life, and make him to be blessed upon the earth, and deliver him not up to the will of his enemies (Roman Breviary).

Our Father. Hail Mary.

V. Let us pray.

R. Almighty and everlasting God, have mercy upon Thy servant, Benedict, our Supreme Pontiff, and direct him, according to Thy loving-kindness, in the way of eternal salvation; that, of thy gift, he may ever desire that which is pleasing unto thee and may accomplish it with all his might. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen (Roman Ritual).



Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

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