

# MANCIPIA

February 2007

THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER



## TO FRIENDS OF THE CRUSADE:

### THE HOLY FACE OF JESUS



Br. André Marie, M.I.C.M., Prior

In the Old Testament, the “face” of God symbolizes Yahweh’s kind and loving glance upon His people, a glance that brings them blessings, protection, and grace. Of the many references to God’s face in the Hebrew scriptures, we find such passages as these in the Psalms: “Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; save me in thy mercy” (Ps. 30:17); and “Thou turnedst away thy face from me, and I became troubled” (Ps. 29:8). In these verses, “face” is merely symbolic — just as “arm” or “hand” would be as a divine member. God is, after all, a pure spirit and has no parts. But when Moses was given the formula for Aaron and his priestly descendants to bless the Israelites, the blessing contained a hint of another reality: “The

Lord bless thee, and keep thee. *The Lord shew his face to thee, and have mercy on thee.* The Lord turn his countenance to thee, and give thee peace” (Numbers 6:24-26). Christian commentators have seen here a reference to the Blessed Trinity. In Hebrew, each of the three verses is of twelve words (plus the word *Yahweh*) and each refers to attributes we appropriate to one or another of the Trinitarian Persons, and not to all Three together (the Father is the Origin of all blessings and providence, the Holy Ghost is the “Spirit of Peace”).

In the Incarnation, the Blessed Trinity would literally “*show his face*” to us. When St. Joseph looked at Mary’s Child, he saw God clothed in her flesh.

He saw a human face that looked like Mary’s, but it belonged to God.

St. Paul wrote that Jesus is “the image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15) and “the figure of his substance” (Heb. 1:3). St. John of Damascus defended the use of icons by deftly pointing out who originated the art. According to the Damascene, it was God who painted the first icon in the Incarnation, when One of the Trinity became imageable. This great Syrian Father had scriptural foundation for his claim: St. Paul’s Greek word, translated above as “image,” is *eikon* (icon).

In Christ, the incarnate God, we can truly behold God’s face in a way King David could not. This Holy Face, which had always been lovingly adored in sacred art, became an object of special devotion

when our Lord revealed certain messages to Sister Marie of St. Peter, a Carmelite nun, in Tours, France. The purpose of the devotion was to make reparation for the blasphemies of revolutionaries, free-thinkers, and atheists, as well as to repair for the violation of Sundays by Christians. Having been encouraged by the popes (Bl. Pius IX, Leo XIII, St.

Pius X, and Pius XI), the devotion spread further when our Lord revealed Himself to another nun, Sister Pierina (d. 1945), whom He commanded to have a medal struck with the image of His face from the Holy Shroud. In 1936, on the First Friday of Lent, our Lord spoke these words to her: “I firmly wish that My Face, reflecting the intimate pains of My Soul, the suffering and love of My Heart, be more honored! Whoever gazes upon Me, already consoles Me.”



“Let them that hate him flee from before his face.” (Ps. 67:2)

#### Important Notice:

**We are going to purge the *Mancipia* mailing list this month.** If, in the past three years, you have sent a donation to the Center, purchased a book from us, or attended our annual conference, you will continue receiving our monthly. If you have not been in touch with us at all through any of these venues, and you wish to continue receiving the newsletter, please contact us. Thank you.

## FOUNDER'S COLUMN



Catherine Goddard Clarke\*

### *THE GATES OF HELL WILL NOT PREVAIL*

TAKEN FROM *OUR GLORIOUS POPES*

**O**ur Lord's promise to His first Pope that the gates of Hell would never prevail against His Church tells us clearly that the gates of Hell, presided over by the mighty intelligence of the fallen Lucifer, would make every effort to pre-

vail against her.

Pope Leo XIII, who died in our own century, in 1903, had a vision during his pontificate of Lucifer and his devils. He saw their fearful triumphs in all the countries of the world in the days soon to come. He beheld their evil glee and unholy mockery as they ravished the Mystical Body of Christ, stilled heavenly espousals in the hearts of maidens, muted the voices of priests and bishops, imprisoned the Popes, and silenced the song of monks and nuns in monasteries and convents grown empty of vocations.

The vision, given the Holy Father one morning after his Mass, was so beyond bearing, so overpowering in its sheer unrelieved, inexpressible evil, that it stopped the heart of Christ's



Pope Leo XIII

Vicar. The Pope lost consciousness. His frail body sank to the floor. The physicians who rushed to him could not, for long moments, hear the beat of his heart or feel the throb of his pulse. When they were about to pronounce him dead, he awoke, in great labor and groaning, in overwhelming pain of spirit.

He told, as much as such things lend themselves to words, what it was that he had seen. He told that when he was filled with so much terror for the world that he thought he would die of it there appeared to him, beside the maliciously triumphant Satan, the gloriously shining Saint Michael, the Archangel. And when he recovered, Pope Leo XIII wrote letters of warning to the bishops all over the world. He fearlessly named the enemy behind whose deceiving mask Satan looked out upon the twentieth century world and plotted its destruction. In the encyclical letter *Humanum Genus*, he instructed his bishops as to what they must teach and do before it would be too late, in order to overcome Lucifer and his devils.

It was then that Pope Leo XIII drafted, to be added to the prayers at the end of Low Mass and said by the priests and the faithful over the whole world, the intercession to Saint Michael, which is now so familiar to us all.

In the story of the Church, there is clearly to be seen Saint Peter dramatically living again in the Popes who follow after him, and who rule in his name: Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, the first Holy Roman Pontiff; Peter, of the deeply loving heart, the burning zeal, the impetuous honesty, the dogged loyalty; Peter, whose tears wore furrows in his cheeks for the memory of three denials, the vivid sorrow for which thirty-three years of unwearying confession of Jesus Christ never dimmed; Peter, crucified upside down, avowing his unworthiness to hang as Jesus hung; Peter, protesting with his last breath, "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee!"

[This is] Peter, whom Jesus made the foundation of His Holy Church: "I have already called thee the Rock," the great Doctor, Saint Ephrem, exclaimed with regard to Jesus' words to Peter, "because thou shalt sustain My whole building! Thou art

\* Later known as Sister Catherine, Mrs. Clarke was the foundress of Saint Benedict Center, which began as a lay apostolate in Cambridge, Mass.

The vision, given the Holy Father one morning after his Mass, was so beyond bearing, so overpowering in its sheer unrelieved, inexpressible evil, that it stopped the heart of Christ's Vicar.

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# SAINT BENEDICT CENTER NEWS

## A FINNISH CONVERT DISCOVERS THE CRUSADE



Vili Lehtoranta

He has a book in progress on the subject of “Catholic Traditionalism,” and he hopes to write a history of the Catholic Church in his native language as an aid in the conversion of his fellow countrymen. His name is Vili Olavi Lehtoranta, a convert from Lutheranism. Vili is a twenty-eight-year-old theology student at the state-run University of Helsinki. He came from Finland to spend Christmas with the community here at the Center in New Hampshire. Why? Primarily because he wanted to get a taste of genuine traditional Catholicism and to meet Brother Francis and the disciples of Father Leonard Feeney.

During his theological studies, Vili had come across some cursory references to Father Feeney and his defense of the doctrine: *No salvation outside the Church*. But that, by itself, did

not faze him too much, assuming, as he did, that the crusade of Father Feeney had died long ago. What did rivet his attention was an article he *happened* to read on a website that he *happened* to come upon two months ago while perusing the internet. The website, as you may have guessed, was [www.catholicism.org](http://www.catholicism.org). The article was “Sentimental Theology,” written by Brother Francis in a 1947 issue of *From the Houseltops*. Vili was so impressed as a new convert with what he read (“a real eye-opener,” as

he put it) that he translated it into Finnish for his Catholic friends. Having further acquainted himself with our website and exchanging emails with Brother André, the young theologian was astonished to learn that the crusade of Father Feeney was alive and still growing strong in the United States of America.

On December 22, our guest gave the community a presentation on the history of the Catholic Faith in Finland. It was very informative, especially since so little attention has been given in Catholic history books to that Nordic nation. Norway, Sweden, and Denmark had been much more prominently highlighted, at least before they apostatized to Lutheranism. Vili in-

formed us that the infamous “protestor” is not only revered in Finland by his own denomination but by all Protestant sects, even by the Jehovah Witnesses. The old adage, *the enemy of my enemy is my friend*, doth surely apply with the heretics — the common enemy being the Catholic Church.

We learned from our guest that the patron saint of Finland is a twelfth-century bishop and martyr, St. Henry. He was actually an Englishman who was appointed Bishop of Uppsala, Sweden; however, he later spent many years evangelizing the pagans of Finland, where he was martyred by an impious convert in 1158. After the nation’s conversion, which began with the preaching of St. Henry, the true Faith flourished for three centuries in Finland, as it did in all Scandinavia; the seed of the Nordic Church being the blood of its many martyrs. There were many churches established in the newly converted country and many monasteries were built; the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Carmelites all flourished with vocations. In 1220, Finland was first established as an independent diocese under Bishop Thomas, and from that time on, until 1523, the Finns had their own native-born bishops whose Episcopal See was in the city of Abo. By the end of the sixteenth century, however, the Catholic Faith had all but disappeared there, as it had elsewhere throughout Scandinavia.

The fact that all of Scandinavia fell so easily from the Church in the sixteenth century would indicate that, even before Luther, the religious and clergy had grown lax in the Faith. Once Finland became Lutheran, the few thousand Catholics who stood fast in the Faith suffered much. Lutheranism was declared the state religion, and conversion to Catholicism was outlawed. Then, too, after schismatic Russia took over the country in 1809, they suffered even more injustices, with their



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Mr. Brian Kelly, Editor

## COMMENTARY AND OTHER RELEVANT MORSELS

### "...WITH PERSECUTIONS" (MARK 10:30)

There is no chore less cheerily engaged than taking down a Christmas tree. Most of us try to do that the day after Epiphany.

The manger scene, on the other hand, does not have to be taken down after Epiphany. In fact, it can remain on display

throughout the Epiphany season right up to February 2, the feast of the Purification. Nor, do I think, putting away the characters of the Nativity should be done with any sadness; rather, it should have a certain peaceful solemnity to it. In fact, I think it would be a good idea if there were some formal prayers to go along with the occasion — nothing liturgical, of course, but something that would create an atmosphere of piety for the event. After all, the Baby Jesus is going home with His mother and Saint Joseph to Nazareth, with a liturgical stop at the Temple along the way. This is the intended trip of the Holy Family; it will be interrupted, however, in Jerusalem by an angel who tells Joseph to take the Child and His mother and head south.



*Rest of the Holy Family* by Barocci.

"Flee into Egypt," he warns, "for Herod hath mind to kill the child."

No sooner are the royal wise men gone with their retinue of hundreds (having left all Jerusalem astir) than a superstitious tyrant of a king puts an end to peaceful, silent nights in Bethlehem and the bordering towns by sending his soldiers on a most unnatural and cruel mission. Every male child under two years of age was to be slain for, if he could prevent it, there would be no "King of the Jews" living during his lifetime, not even a Child-King. *A voice in Rama was heard, lamentation and great mourning; Rachel bewailing her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not* (Matt. 2:18). (Herod, remember, was only a half-Jew. He was an Idumean, a regicidal usurper, brought up in Rome, and a man of Caesar.)

The feast day of the little martyrs, the Holy Innocents, follows only three days after Christmas with the feast days of the protomartyr, Stephen, and the apostle John falling in between. There is anything but peace for the next five days of the calendar year of December saints — they are all martyrs, except for St. John, who was miraculously preserved from death but not the pains of being immersed in boiling oil. There was anything but peace in Judaea after Herod's cruel edict. There was anything but peace for the Holy Family who had to immediately fly into a strange country to escape an infanticide who rightly feared that a Baby Child will dethrone him.

Trying to analyze the mind of Herod or, for that matter, those of the scribes and Pharisees is a laborious venture. Theirs is such a hardness of heart, such a stifling oppression of mental contradiction. In a certain sense, both parties believed in the power of Christ: the tyrant's belief was superstitious, and it issued from his fear of true prophecies; the scribes and Pharisees' belief was not at all superstitious, but based on the undeniable fact of our Lord's miracles. Yet, contrary to what they know, they want to put Christ to death. They think they can kill Truth.

In the first case, fear of losing a temporal throne completely outweighed the acknowledgment that the Child whom he imagined he could kill was predestined to rule as King of the Jews. How, O miserable Herod, can you do away with what you yourself believe was prophesied to be? Blind insanity!

The same kind of rage propelled the decidal action of the Jews and their scribes and Pharisees, only, in their case, the self-inflicted blind passion was even more culpable. They were not

Sometimes it seems to me that our present abode as wayfarers is like that of the Holy Family exiled in Egypt.

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## KELLY'S FORUM

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dealing with prophecy, but with its fulfilled reality. They heard the testimonies of Christ's miracles; many saw the miracles with their own eyes; some even witnessed the raising of Lazarus from the dead. It was because of this last miracle that their leaders called together the whole Sanhedrin to plot the worst of all conspiracies, the prototype of all anti-Christian conspiracies to come: *The chief priests, therefore, and the Pharisees gathered a council and said: What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let him alone so, all will believe in him...* (John 11: 47-48).

As we put away our manger scenes, let us consider not only the poverty of the Holy Family, but the trust in God of our Lady and Saint Joseph. The three kings have gone back home filled

with joy, wonder, and hope; the shepherds, likewise. The contented prophet Simeon brings joy to the Infant's mother and foster-father, but he ends his canticle with words for the mother that are mysteriously ominous: "Thy own soul a sword shall pierce" (Luke 2:35). This prophecy is the first of our Lady's seven sorrows. The second sorrow is quick to follow: the warning of the angel and the hurried flight into Egypt. Sometimes it seems to me that our present abode as wayfarers is like that of the Holy Family exiled in Egypt. We live with a few like-minded friends, as they did for two years in the Jewish community near Heliopolis, but we are estranged from our homeland — waiting to go home, waiting for the coast to clear so that we, or perhaps our children, can live one day in peace.

## FINNISH CONVERT

from page 3

Lutheran leaders being cowed by the might of the Russian empire's occupation of their land. A heavier cross fell upon all of Finland after the Bolshevik revolution and Stalin's invasion in 1940, Russia's dropping of bombs on their cities in 1944, and the Soviet military occupation and forced annexation of Karelia (eastern corner of Finland) after World War II. Despite their efforts, however, the Communists never were able to gain control of the remaining ninety percent of the country. Except for the more vulnerable Karelia, Finland maintained its independence and freedom from Red tyranny, even though today it is a completely secularist and state-controlled, socialist country.

Our visitor went on to paint a very dismal picture of the state of the Catholic Church in Finland. He was also respectfully critical of the fact that the Vatican has for almost a century declined to appoint a Finnish priest as bishop of its major city and capital, Helsinki. (Helsinki was not established as a diocese until 1955.) The fact that there have been only two native-born Finns ordained to the priesthood in the past one hundred years — although both were heroic converts, educated in

Roman seminaries, and more than capable shepherds — may be the reason why Rome has been reluctant to do this. Putting the Catholic Finns under a Dutch bishop (such has been the strategy since 1927) has not helped the Church at all in that country, especially since the Netherlands has produced some of the worst of all liberal bishops in these past fifty years.

In the spirit of false ecumenism, Vili was advised by the Dominican priest who received him into the Church not to attempt to make any converts. "We do our apostolic work by just being here," he was told. As of 2004, there were only sixteen priests in the diocese of Helsinki and only two convents for women. The population of the nation is five million, with only ten thousand Catholics making up its seven parishes. Undaunted, however, this aspiring theologian ended his presentation by professing his hope "for better times" ahead, prayerfully concluding with his intention that "my people return to the Faith of their fathers."

Let us pray that Vili Lehtoranta be a worthy instrument in bringing about that return to the Faith.



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## THE HOLY FACE OF JESUS

from page 1

Finally, on April 17, 1958, Pope Pius XII confirmed the feast of the Holy Face, issuing a Mass for it, and placing it on the liturgical calendar for Shrove Tuesday (or *Mardi Gras*: the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday). This year, the feast falls on February 20, the same day the Church sets aside for the Fatima children, Blessed Francisco and Jacinta Marto.

The devotion that comes from the cited revelations is at the same time a devotion of reparation and a devotion to the Passion. It was intended to stir in its practitioners a love for our Lord, who suffered so much for us and who is daily offended by sinners. We are not considering a pleasant picture of Jesus, but a harrowing image of our Lord's pain and humiliations. This brings up something almost unspeakable about the Holy Face. We shudder to say it, but during His Passion, Jesus' face was ugly. True it is that our Lord was "beautiful in form and figure, of majestic mien and sympathetic presence," as Fr. Pohle surmises. The Psalmist had said of the Messiah in prophecy: "Thou art beautiful above the sons of men... With thy comeliness and thy beauty set out, proceed prosperously, and reign" (Ps. 44:3,5). Yet, for all that, when He descended into the abyss of His Passion, He became what Isaias had seen in vision:

"There is no beauty in him, nor comeliness: and we have seen him, and there was no sightliness, that we should be desirous of him: Despised, and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity: and his look was as it were hidden and despised, whereupon we esteemed him not" (Is. 53:2-3).

That same face that "did shine as the sun" (Mt 17:2) in the Transfiguration was spit upon, blindfolded, and mercilessly beaten by the Jews in the house of Caiphias (Mt. 26:67). It is

## THE GATES OF HELL WILL NOT PREVAIL

from page 2

the bishop of those who build Me a church on earth. If they would build anything reprobate, do thou, the foundation, repress them. Thou art the source of the fountain whence My doctrine is derived. Thou art the head of My disciples. Through thee will I give all nations to drink. Thine is that life-giving sweetness which I bestow. Thee have I chosen to be in My institution as the first-born, and to become the heir of My treasures. I have given to thee the keys of My kingdom. I have appointed thee the chief over all My treasures."

"This, then, is the city to which, most blessed Apostle Peter," Pope Saint Leo the Great cried out, (speaking in 451 to the bishops of Italy,) "you did not fear to come, while the Apostle Paul, the fellow heir of your glory, was still occupied in the ordering of other churches. You entered that forest of howling beasts, that ocean whose abyss was swept by storms, with more assurance than when you walked upon the water. You who, in the house of Caiphias, trembled at the voice of a serving-maid, do not fear

this disfigured, bleeding, sweating, bruised, and swollen face that we contemplate on the Shroud.

When our Lord resurrected, this is what He left on the Shroud — not an image of His glory, but one of His sufferings. What a mercy it was for our times that the poignant details of His sorrows were buried in the obscurity of this cloth for almost two millennia! Now, thanks to modern technology, we can see refinements that were lost on previous generations. Perhaps our Lord is telling us something in this image? Perhaps He is showing a perfidious generation how much He suffered for our salvation in order to soften our stony hearts to penance and charity?

One of the most sublime fruits of the Holy Face devotion was the sanctity of another French Carmelite nun, one whose full name in religion was Sister Thérèse of the Infant Jesus *and the Holy Face*. The following prayer was the Little Flower's own composition.

"O Jesus, who in Thy bitter Passion didst become 'the most abject of men, a man of sorrows,' I venerate Thy Sacred Face whereon there once did shine the beauty and sweetness of the Godhead; but now it has become for me as if it were the face of a leper! Nevertheless, under those disfigured features, I recognize Thy infinite Love and I am consumed with the desire to love Thee and make Thee loved by all men. The tears, which well up abundantly in Thy sacred eyes, appear to me as so many precious pearls that I love to gather up in order to purchase the souls of poor sinners by means of their infinite value. O Jesus, whose adorable Face ravishes my heart, I implore Thee to fix deep within me Thy divine image and to set me on fire with Thy Love, that I may be found worthy to come to the contemplation of Thy glorious Face in Heaven."

Rome, the mistress of the world. Had Claudius less power than the judgment of Pilate, or Nero less cruelty than the rage of the Jews?

"The force of your affection overcame what there was reason to dread, nor would you endure to fear those whom you had promised to love.... But your confidence was increased by the signs of so many miracles, by the gifts of so many special favors, by the experience of so many virtues. You had already instructed populations of the circumcision, who had believed. You had already founded the Church of Antioch, where the dignity of the Christian name first arose. You had instructed in the gospel laws, Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia. You could neither be doubtful of the success of your work, nor ignorant as to the age which you would reach when you bore the standard of Christ's cross before Rome's citadel, where the divine preordination had assured you beforehand both the rank of your power and the glory of your passion."

## 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.)

### CALENDAR NOTES:

- Spring Ember Days, February 28, March 2 and 3. Traditionally, these are days of fast and abstinence.
- Saint Benedict Center Conference, August 17 to 19, 2007, Nashua, New Hampshire. Please mark your calendars and note the new location!
- Ash Wednesday, February 21.

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## MANCIPIA February 2007

## THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER

Of interest:

- Where do we keep our prayer card of the Holy Face of God? Brother André gives us much food for thought in this month dedicated to our Lord's Passion. See page 1.
- See the 2007 Calendar of Saints special on page 5.
- No “shepherds”; no “wise men”; “slaughtered Innocents”; at “home” with the Holy Family in our land of exile. Page 4, *Kelly's Forum*.
- Sister Catherine on the Papacy, the promise of indefectibility, and the fury of the gates of hell. Page 2.



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