

# MANCIPIA

April/May 2009

THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER



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- How does one remain vigilant without crying wolf? Page 10 has one take on this.

# TO FRIENDS OF THE CRUSADE:

## MARIAN CONSECRATION AND THE CONVERSION OF AMERICA



Br. André Marie, M.I.C.M., Prior

The United States of America are badly in need of conversion. My readers, I think, will take this as axiomatic, so I shall not attempt to prove it. Instead, I would like to propose, in very simple terms and briefly, that Marian consecration is a most excellent way to

bring about the conversion of America (i.e., the great majority of *Americans*) to the one, true Faith.

Why? The answer is quite simple. Saint Maximilian Kolbe reveals it in these tender and grave words addressed to the Holy Virgin: “For whenever you enter you obtain the grace of conversion and growth in holiness, since it is through your hands that all graces come to us from the most Sacred Heart of Jesus” (from his Act of Consecration). The saint goes on to explain that “God is hers [Mary’s] with all the treasures of grace for the conversion and sanctification of souls. ... In this act of consecration we beg her to use us to destroy the whole serpent coiled about the earth; the serpent representing the various heresies.”

I would like to propose, in very simple terms and briefly, that Marian consecration is a most excellent way to bring about the conversion of America to the one, true Faith.

Mary is the Mediatrix of all graces: that is why the grace of conversion will come through her. Our dear founder, Father Leonard Feeney, explained it this way:

From Mary, all grace overflows into us. She is the Mediatrix of All Graces. Nothing comes from God to us except through Mary. Nothing goes from us to God except through her. Saint Bernardine of Siena says, “All the gifts and graces that we receive from God are given by Mary, to whom, when, and as she pleases.” Saint Louis Marie de Montfort says that no one gets into Heaven without venerating the Blessed Virgin Mary (from *The Mother of God*).

*Lex orandi lex credendi*: The law of praying is the law of believing. All prayer and devotion have a doctrinal foundation, and the practice of Marian consecration is founded upon the doctrine of Mary’s universal mediation. If Mary were not

*On the cover: Sisters Marie Gabrielle and Maria Rosaria shortly after receiving Holy Communion on their profession day, March 25, 2009.*

the mediatrix of grace, this form of devotion would make no sense, as Saint Maximilian Maria Kolbe himself observed.

When I speak of “Marian consecration,” I mean personal consecration, whereby an individual consecrates himself according to the formula of Saint Louis de Montfort, that of Saint Maximilian Kolbe, or some other act of Marian consecration. But I do not restrict my meaning to personal devotion. There is a great tradition of consecrating entire nations to Our Lady. (So, at Fatima, the Blessed Virgin promised that Russia would convert to Catholicism when the pope, together with all the bishops of the world, consecrates that great nation to her Immaculate Heart.) Portugal, Spain, France, Poland, and other Catholic nations have been consecrated to Our Lady at various times and have reaped heavenly blessings from these acts.

The United States was dedicated to the Immaculate Conception by Bishop John Carroll, its first bishop, in 1792. In 1846, all the bishops of the nation officially named the

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Our National Basilica in Washington, DC.

## CONVENT CORNER



Sr. Marie Thérèse, M.I.C.M.,  
Prioress

### HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

I write this latest edition of Convent Corner from a new location. If I look out of the window of the quaint little library I am in, I can gaze out on a lovely convent garden, complete with fruit-bearing trees, bird bath and wooden bench (I might write the next Convent Corner from the bench). Rock walls grace and fortify this cruciform building, forming lovely

pathways through the gardens and around the convent. These are surmounted by statues of various heavenly patrons and crowned by an outdoor set of Stations tucked into its own special rock wall with a rugged yet graceful set of stairs leading up the hill behind them. A perfect set-up for outdoor meditation when the weather is agreeable! The silence is penetrating and peace-giving.

The name of this little heaven on earth? St. Philomena's Convent. For nineteen years as of this fall, we have been living on the main campus of the Center, in the very midst of all the

hustle and bustle of our school, office, main chapel, bookstore, visitors, etc. Yes, living in our public work area. And hoping all the while that we would be able to build a convent of our own for our little family of sisters some day.

We were also praying for vocations to St. Philomena. She heard our prayers over the last few years, filling our available convent space with sisters. Watching our space shrink, we presented our need for a convent to our dear little saint, promising to name our new convent in her honor. Two of the novices she sent just made vows on March 25. Even as they made their three-day retreat preceding that blessed day, it was being decided that this would be the new convent.

Having pine floors, hand-made pine doors with black metal hardware, lattices on the windows, two beautiful stained glass windows in the chapel (Our Lady of Knock and St. Francis Solano with his violin) and small shelves lining the long hallway with statues of saints, we feel entirely spoiled in our new convent! Thank you, St. Philomena! It could not be more perfect.

You are probably wondering about the location and history of this abandoned monastery. A group of Franciscan friars built it over a decade ago in a nestled recess at the foot of the

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## Richmond Blueberry Fiddle Festival 2009

### Looking forward to the warmth and green of summer?

Make plans to step back into the past with a one-of-a-kind, old-fashioned family festival: the **Seventh Annual Blueberry Fiddle Festival**, organized by Richmond's Immaculate Heart of Mary School.

Music includes performances by New Hampshire's Spirit Fiddle ([www.spiritfiddle.com](http://www.spiritfiddle.com)) and the Fiddling Thomsons ([www.captainfiddle.com](http://www.captainfiddle.com)) as well as other talent from all over New England. Enjoy the music while you savor a slice of homemade blueberry pie and cool off with ice cream from a local dairy.

Games, crafts, a car show, and other activities provide fun for all ages.

The festival is held at **Cheshire Fairgrounds (Route 12, Swanzey, NH) on August 7 & 8: Friday 2-9 pm, Saturday 9 am-7 pm. Admission is free; parking is a one-time \$5.**

How can you help? Come to the festival, be a sponsor, or volunteer your time. Call Sister Maria Philomena at the number below for details.

**Visit [www.blueberryfiddlefestival.com](http://www.blueberryfiddlefestival.com) or call 603-239-6495 for more information.**



# PREFECT'S COLUMN



Tertiary\* Brother John Marie Vianney

## ARE YOU READY FOR THE CHAINS?

Are you ready for the chains? It is easy to see that personal freedoms, even of conscience, are being undermined by the government and even taken away in our country, and across the world, today. It is easy to see the increasing occurrences of calamities across the globe: earthquakes, floods, famine, pestilence, random violence, etc.

The ongoing erosion of our constitutional liberties presages despotism, tyranny. Disasters might lead one to thoughts of the "end times."

So I repeat, are you ready for the chains? By that I mean the chains of holy slavery. The chains one accepts willingly when one makes his Marian consecration, "An Act of Perfect Consecration to Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Wisdom, through Holy Slavery to the Immaculate Heart of Mary according to the method of Saint Louis Marie de Montfort." It is the chains willingly accepted in that oblation of the will that I write to you about.

So I repeat, are you ready for the chains? By that I mean the chains of holy slavery. The chains one accepts willingly when one makes his Marian consecration.

I know there are many of you who have made your consecration in this manner. But there are many who have been delaying it, or perhaps

have never heard of it. Are you one of them? Is your spouse, relative, or friend one of them? Wouldn't May, the month of Our Lady, be a good time to make, or to renew (often done annually), your consecration?

You will need thirty-three days to prepare, so pick a date and count backwards to see when you should begin. There are some special feasts often chosen for the consecration, e.g., Our Lady of Perpetual Help on June 27 (begin May 25), Our Lady of Mount Carmel on July 16 (begin June 13), the Assumption of Our Lady into Heaven on August 15 (begin July 13), the Immaculate Heart of Mary on August 22 (begin July 20), the Birth of Mary on September 8 (begin August 6), etc. There are at least eighteen universally celebrated feasts of Our

Lady. Choose one, and then begin.

In such troubled times as these, you will find you have your Blessed Mother as your guide. She is the best "coach" you could ever have. After all, it is she who encouraged, taught, nourished, and watched over the Child Jesus as He grew up. We know that we are in a great struggle against the world, the flesh and the devil, which all combine to prevent us from following in Our Lord's footsteps and saving our souls. Who is better equipped to guard and protect us, to show us the way, than the Immaculate Heart of Mary?

Let me warn you. Be prepared for the devil to get in your way. Many have begun their consecration preparations and found that the easy path was impeded. Don't let that challenge stop you. Don't be discouraged. Pick yourself up if you fall off the track and continue on. Our Lady will help you. After all, is she not the Mediatrix of all Graces? Remember, you only need a little time each day devoted to reading and meditating, and at the end you will have the joy of signing your consecration form!

I should also point out that making your consecration is one of the prerequisites to joining the Third Order of the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Be, then, *truly* devoted to Mary, be one of her spiritual children by making your consecration to her. Offer yourself totally to her. She hears you and will answer. She will never desert you. How could she? She is your mother, now and forever. Now, will you accept the chains?

Every sports team has a fight song. Every country has an anthem. Many cities have a special song dedicated to them. The Italian, the Irish, the French, the Polish, all have songs that speak to their ethnicity, their culture. And, of course, Our Lady has many hymns dedicated to Her. Well, the Slaves of

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The Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary on March 25, 2009.

\* Third Orders, whose members are called "tertiaries," are associations of the faithful established by religious orders. Most M.I.C.M. tertiaries are lay folk.

## FOUNDERS' COLUMN



Catherine Goddard Clarke\*

### REBUKE HIM, O GOD

EXTRACTED FROM A LONGER 1948 *FROM THE HOUSETOPS* ARTICLE

There was great glee in hell. Beelzebub was having a meeting of committees, and things were going well.

"I congratulate you, 'Screwtape,' he said. "When you first advanced the idea of getting Mr. C. S. Lewis to paint a picture of us, I never believed

the Catholics would fall for it. I thought more of them would remember their theology, but you were right, they are farther from it than I had dared hope." [The devil went on boasting and then told this story:]

"There was, in an old New England town, a man who had fought against coming into the Catholic Church for seven years. He suffered a great deal during that time, and he had to make some real personal sacrifices when he finally gave in and was baptized. One of the first things he did after his baptism was to go and see his mother, in order to teach her the Faith. He had a very difficult time with her, but he never gave up hope. I have known him to put in a long distance telephone call to her from whatever city he might be in on his business just to see how she was getting along with the books that he had mailed her to read. He and his wife made every effort to get back to his mother on Thanksgiving and Christmas, always to assure her of their love and their great desire that she might come into the Church and be with them both on earth and in heaven. It was all to no avail.

"Then one day he dropped in to see a priest, and he explained his mother's situation to him, and told him that he had spoken strongly to her on the subject of conversion. The priest said to him, "How dare you talk that way to your mother! She has been a good Protestant according to her lights, and a good mother to you!" The man said, "But, Father, she no longer has those same lights. I have very carefully explained the Faith to her, and given her Christ's challenge. She is in no sense ignorant of the Truth. She is a very intelligent woman."

"And then he was told: 'You should not disturb your mother in her religion. Faith is a gift. She may get to heaven a good deal faster than you will — indeed you may find her there before you. You don't think that only Catholics are saved, do you?'

"My man walked out, thoroughly upset, muttering to himself, 'In the name of God, why should I have gone through all I did to become a Catholic!' He tried not to let it [go], but the edge was off the whole thing for him, and I assure you I have

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

made every effort to keep it so. He hasn't tried to convert anyone since then, and certainly not his mother."

"Please go on, my lord!" It was the curious little devil again.

"You know the rest of it," the powerful angel answered. "One makes the most of every opportunity. I noticed that the policy of Catholics used to be to convert, first, by preaching, and second, by living according to that preaching. They called this latter 'good example.' Gradually I got them to forget the first principle and to emphasize the second. They are doing a fairly good job of selling themselves, as a result of my foresight, and a very poor job of selling their Christ."

"Bravo! Bravo!" the cry went up.

"Then, too," the great one went on, "the following little story will illustrate how far we have come. The Catholics were asked the other day if they held that there was salvation outside the Church.

This was their answer: 'Let us put it this way: heaven is on the distant shore. There are two ways of getting there, by rowboat or by motor-boat. Each will make the shore, but the rowboat takes a longer time. Let us call the motor-boat the Catholic Church.' Now the non-Catholic merely wants to be assured that he will reach the shore, heaven. And so, much preferring the comfortable and familiar way, he settles back in his rowboat and goes to sleep again."

"Just as I planned, just as I planned!" Beelzebub was very solemn. "For the first time in the history of the world," he told his fallen angels, "I have not only been directing you, but I have undertaken a mission of my own, the nature of which is so important that I have not dared to trust it to anyone but myself. You see, she has been appearing in the world. She came down to Fatima, in Portugal, and to Heede, in Germany. Those appearances gave me much to do. I had to work as I never worked before to make men forget and belittle what she prophesied and what she requested them to do in order to forestall my work. But I am pleased to report to you, my sons, that all is well. It is now as if she had never spoken. It is true that her appearances are still mentioned here and there, but men, thanks to my effort, speak of it as they might relate one of their legends."

"She may get to heaven a good deal faster than you will — indeed you may find her there before you. You don't think that only Catholics are saved, do you?"

# KELLY FORUM



Mr. Brian Kelly

## THE MAY MAGNIFICAT

**M**ay is here at last. Nature is blossoming with life. "May the sun shine warm upon your face," as the Irish blessing goes. Easter has come and gone and there is hope in the air. This is the month of Mary, under her title, Mother of God, and she will be crowned all over the world with flowers and song and pageantry.

The Church ends the month with the triumphant feast of the Queenship of Mary on the 31<sup>st</sup>. [This feast has been moved in the new calendar to August 22, which is also the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, while the feast of Our Lady's Visitation (July 2 in the traditional calendar) has been moved to May 31.]

There are three other months dedicated to Our Lady: August is dedicated to Mary's Immaculate Heart, September to her Seven Sorrows, and October to the Holy Rosary. But May has a long-standing tradition for being all hers in many Catholic countries. Portugal, for example, has been honoring May as the month of Mary since the thirteenth century.

### DOES YOUR EMPLOYER OFFER A MATCHING GIFT PROGRAM?

If so, please consider Saint Benedict Center when joining your company's program.

### FROM THE HOusetops MAGAZINE BACK ISSUES — ONLY \$1 EACH (PLUS SHIPPING)

All of Saint Benedict Center, Richmond, NH's, past twenty-five issues of the *Housetops*, issued from 1996-2006, are available at the lowest price ever. Those of you who know what a high quality Catholic magazine the *Housetops* is surely won't want to miss this opportunity. What a great gift any one, or even a full set of these inspiring and informative periodicals, would be!

**To order or for a list of the twenty-five back issues, go to [store.catholicism.org/back-issues](http://store.catholicism.org/back-issues) or call our bookstore at (603) 239-6485.**

By the 1700s, however, the May prayers, processions, and crownings became a popular celebration with the Jesuits, who practiced special public devotions at the Gesu, their church in Rome. From there it spread to the whole Church. Pius VII promoted it and Pius IX, in 1859, granted a plenary indulgence to the practice.

Pope Pius XII, in his encyclical on the Sacred Liturgy (*Mediator Dei*) characterized these devotions as included with "other exercises of piety which although not strictly belonging to the Sacred Liturgy, are nevertheless of special import and dignity, and may be considered in a certain way to be an addition to the liturgical cult: they have been approved and praised over and over again by the Apostolic See and by the Bishops."

In honor of the feast of the Visitation, May 31, I give you *The May Magnificat*, a beautiful poem by Father Gerard Manley Hopkins:

May is Mary's month, and I  
Muse at that and wonder why;  
Her feasts follow reason,  
Dated due to season

Candlemas, Lady Day;  
But the Lady Month, May  
Why fasten that upon her,  
With a feasting in her honour?

Ask of her, that mighty mother:  
Her reply puts this other  
Question: What is Spring?  
Growth in every thing

All things rising, all things sizing  
Mary sees, sympathizing  
With that world of good,  
Nature's motherhood.

Their magnifying of each its kind  
With delight calls to mind  
How she did in her stored  
Magnify the Lord.

Well, but there was more than this:  
Spring's universal bliss  
Much, had much to say  
To offering Mary May.

This ecstasy all through mothering earth  
Tells Mary her mirth till Christ's birth  
To remember and exultation  
In God who was her salvation.

John S. Stokes, Jr., writing for *Mary's Garden*, gives a good explanation why May is dedicated to Mary:

"The month of May, with its profusion of blooms, was adopted by the Church in the eighteenth century as a celebration of the flowering of Mary's maidenly spirituality. . . . With its origins in Isaiah's prophecy of the Virgin birth of the Messiah under the figure of the Blossoming Rod or Root of Jesse, the flower symbolism of Mary was extended by the Church Fathers, and in the liturgy, by applying to her the flower figures of the Sapiential Books: Canticles, Wisdom, Proverbs, and Sirach. . . .

In the Middle Ages of Christendom, almost every flower had a Marian legend attached to it. The lily, for example, was called "the Madonna Lily."

"In the medieval period, the rose was adopted as the flower symbol of the Virgin Birth, as expressed in Dante's phrase, 'The Rose wherein the Divine Word was made flesh,' and depicted

in the central rose windows of the great Gothic cathedrals — from which came the Christmas carol, 'Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming.' Also, in the medieval period, when monasteries were the centers of horticultural and agricultural knowledge, and with the spread of the Franciscan love of nature, the actual flowers themselves, of the fields, waysides and gardens, came to be seen as symbols of Mary. . . ."

We sing of Our Lady in the beautiful hymn, *O Mary We Crown Thee*, that she is "the loveliest rose of the vale." In the Canticle of Canticles, Solomon sings of the "flower of the field, the lily of the valleys, . . . the lily among thorns" (2:1,2). In the King James Bible, "flower of the field" is translated as the "rose of Sharon." Either way, Our Lady is the "lily among thorns" and the "rose of Sharon," indeed the "Mystical Rose," as the Church praises her in the Litany of Loreto.

In the Middle Ages of Christendom, almost every flower had a Marian legend attached to it. The lily, for example, was called "the Madonna Lily." In Fra Angelico's fresco of the Annunciation, the Angel Gabriel approaches Mary with a lily in his hand. Of the lily, Venerable Bede says that its "white petals [signify] her bodily purity, the golden anthers the glowing light of her soul."

Another Marian flower is the marigold (Mary's gold). The faithful in Europe would make garlands out of this flower, which bloomed most brilliantly in early spring, and use them to adorn Our Lady's altars on Lady's Day, March 25. There is a tradition that the spice rosemary, taken from the needles of the rosemary bush, received its evergreen-like aroma after Our Lady hung the clothes of the Baby Jesus on its branches during the flight into Egypt. The scientific name for the milk thistle

plant is actually *carduus marianus*, or Mary's thistle. The cuckoo flower is also called Our Lady's Smock. *Cardamine pratensis*, as the plant is called by botanists, is believed to be the fabric used by Our Lady to sew Our Lord's seamless garment. This garment has been preserved in the Cathedral of Trier in Germany, but it has never been examined by science. In his life of Theresa Neumann, Albert Schimberg notes that the stigmatist affirmed that the relic was indeed the seamless garment of Christ. Finally, there are rosary vines, so called because of their resemblance to the sacramental beads. In fact, the Latin word for a bouquet of roses is *rosarius*. The word "bead," incidentally, originally referred to a prayer, and the use we make of this word today came from the perforated prayer balls strung along the rosary line, rather than vice versa.

Other Marian feasts to remember in May are: Our Lady of Fatima, the 13<sup>th</sup>; Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady Queen of Martyrs, also on the 13<sup>th</sup>; Our Lady Help of Christians and Our Lady of the Way, the 24<sup>th</sup>; Mediatrix of All Graces, the 31<sup>st</sup>; and don't forget to honor Mary on the second Sunday of the month, Mother's Day. Surely, she will be pleased.

Email Brian Kelly at [bdk@catholicism.org](mailto:bdk@catholicism.org).

There is a tradition that the spice rosemary, taken from the needles of the rosemary bush, received its evergreen-like aroma after Our Lady hung the clothes of the Baby Jesus on its branches during the flight into Egypt.



We had four First Holy Communions on the day of our May Crowning.

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## TO FRIENDS OF THE CRUSADE:

### MARIAN CONSECRATION AND THE CONVERSION OF AMERICA

*continued from page 2*

Immaculate Conception as the Patroness of the United States. An act of Consecration to the Immaculate Conception was

All advocates of total consecration to the Blessed Virgin tell us that the consecration is not a passing act. For it to be fruitful, it must be lived.

made by the bishops of the U.S. on the occasion of the dedication of the National Basilica in 1959 (the formula used was the same as, or very close to, the one employed by Bishop Carroll). Finally, in 2006 the bishops renewed this act, this time consecrating the nation to the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary.

If the acts of our hierarchy are to have any lasting effect, we Catholics of every

state in life must *make, renew, and live* our own personal Marian consecrations. All advocates of total consecration to the Blessed Virgin tell us that the consecration is not a passing act. For it to be fruitful, it must be lived. We Catholic Americans have great examples of living the Marian consecration in the persons of Saint Katharine Drexel and the Servant of God, Father Thomas Fredrick Price.

I should like to emphasize that Marian consecration is not a phenomenon on the edges of Christianity. It is not merely a form of devotion that grew out of this or that school of piety. Although different schools have given it shape — especially the “French School,” out of which comes Saint Louis de Montfort — Marian consecration is a thing central to the

Gospel. This is because Christians are by grace what Christ is by nature, children of God. Christ is constantly renewing the mystery of His Incarnation in the Mystical Body, and Mary is an active participant, being Mother of the Body as well as of the Head. Beyond that, the Christian life is a conformity to Christ, and by drawing close to the sinless Mother of God, we are made more conformable to Jesus, for she is the “great mold of God,” as Saint Louis de Montfort said. Further, in giving Our Lady and Saint John to one another at the Foot of the Cross, Our Lord entrusted — *consecrated*, even — all the members of his Mystical Body to His Immaculate Mother. What He did on the Cross, we must second by our own volitional acts, and the act of perfect consecration to the Immaculate Virgin is an excellent way to do this. For, in so doing, we invite into our souls her who obtains for us “the grace of conversion and growth in holiness.”

The Christian life is a conformity to Christ, and by drawing close to the sinless Mother of God, we are made more conformable to Him.

We can apply to the conversion of America the words of the Servant of God, Cardinal August Hlond, Salesian priest, founder of the Society of Christ, and primate of Poland:

*Victory, if it comes, will certainly be a victory through Mary!*

*Email Brother André Marie at [bam@catholicism.org](mailto:bam@catholicism.org).*

## PREFECT'S COLUMN

### ARE YOU READY FOR THE CHAINS?

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the Immaculate Heart of Mary have a rousing song written by Father Feeney himself. It is entitled, *'Tis for the Love of Mary*. If you never heard it before, here it is. We sing it here at the Center during special times, e.g., the recent profession of the two sisters, on First Saturday when we have our regular Third Order monthly business meeting, when we end our school plays, programs, etc. We hope you will love it as we do. May God bless you and the Immaculate Heart of Mary always watch over and protect you!

'Tis for the love of Mary  
Each heart becomes a slave  
A heart that once was wary  
Is through her love emboldened to be brave  
Her banner is the only one to wave.

Remember, Virgin Mother,  
That never was it known  
One needing thy protection  
And seeking it was ever left alone  
You always come and take him for your own.

Despise not our petitions,  
O gracious advocate,  
And after this our exile,  
And after all the years we still must wait  
Take us unto your Heart Immaculate.

*Email Brother John Marie Vianney at [toprefect@catholicism.org](mailto:toprefect@catholicism.org).*

## CONVENT CORNER

### HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

*continued from page 3*

densely wooded hill that is crowned by the Center. The land was generously donated by a Catholic lady. The friars built the monastery (called a “friary” by Franciscans) with their own labor and the help of a few lay persons. When completed, it not only was a practical monastery, but a very beautiful one.

After so much generosity, we have felt inspired to offer the first five decades of our fifteen-decade Rosary for all of the benefactors of our beautiful convent. Our powerful saint has left room for your generosity. . .

Tragically, the Franciscan superior’s health was so poor that, soon after, the friars were forced to abandon their friary and relocate down South to a gentler climate than New England’s. A zealous retired professor purchased it from the Franciscans with his inheritance, intending to move here and use it as a study center for himself and other scholars. Sadly, he was prevented by many circumstances from doing so. From that time, this hidden treasure

was left unoccupied. Finally, this winter, after many years, our scholar gave up hope of being able to use it and, instead of selling it, donated it to the Center for whatever need there was, be it a library, office space, or a convent. Brother André Marie encouraged the sisters to use it as a convent, for which we are very grateful!

After so much generosity, we have felt inspired to offer the first five decades of our fifteen-decade Rosary for all of the benefactors of our beautiful convent. Our powerful saint has left room for your generosity, in case you would be interested in helping us to establish our new house. For you, this may be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. There are repairs needed to the roof, siding, plumbing, and driveway. Someone was generous enough to donate a green-enameled wood stove with the scene of Saint Hubert engraved on its sides. However, we still have to build a stone hearth and need materials to do so.

Don’t think your donations have to be very sizeable! Our Lord was quite pleased with the Widow’s Mite because, though a small amount, it was all she could give and she gave it from the heart. Whatever you send, we would like to put your name under our little chapel altar, right near His Sacred Heart. Just let us know your interest by writing “For Convent” on the memo line of your check. From His throne of mercy, Our Lord will surely see your generosity, and will not allow Himself to be outdone! Blessings will come to you from St. Philomena’s Convent.

*Email Sister Marie Thérèse at [convent@catholicism.org](mailto:convent@catholicism.org).*



The newly donated Saint Philomena’s Convent.



Sisters Marie Gabrielle and Maria Rosaria helping with the move-in.



A view of the convent chapel during a Sursum Corda Society event.

## SPECIAL FEATURE

### WHEN PARENTS CRY WOLF BY RUSSELL LAPLUME

The sky is falling, the sky is falling,” spoke Chicken Little as she ran to warn the king. Most of us are familiar with this tale, and to most, the moral of the story is, simply, don’t cry wolf to alarm people unnecessarily. But this old fable has received several different endings depending on who related the story. The original ending had Chicken Little picking up her barnyard friends (for she had them convinced that the sky was truly falling) and taking them all to warn the king. One of these friends, a fox that pretended to believe the alarm, and, when the time was right, he proceeded to eat them one by one. Another version had a friend, in his dying breath, warn Chicken Little about the fox, giving her enough time to

It seems that most Catholics (and many evangelical sects) are intrigued with the “end times” and the signs that mark the end of this life and the beginning of eternity.

make good her escape. And still another had the sky truly falling and killing the fox before he could exercise his mischief. And the moral of all this? We do not know the day nor the hour when the sky will fall upon us as individuals and a rendering of all of our life’s actions will have to be made to our Redeemer.

In my lifetime it seems that the pace of social, economic, technological, and educational change has accelerated to warp speeds.

One can hardly buy any communications device that won’t be outdated in a matter of months. One cannot dream of financial security without the government, or some social entity, changing the rules and severely altering the plans. One dare not express an opinion contrary to that of the liberal masses on such issues as the environment, the government, morals, or education without eliciting their condemnation. But for all this acceleration one fact remains endlessly true: in terms of eternity we are all rushing to that one defining moment when the Face of the Judge will force us to cease and desist and give an account. And it is this one inescapable truth that all parents should impress upon their children. How to do that? Well, that is what this story is about.

It seems that most Catholics (and many evangelical sects) are intrigued with the “end times” and the signs that mark the end of this life and the beginning of eternity. I was certainly engrossed with this theme for many years, having read all I could on the subject. Whether it was the Apocalypse, or writers such as Yves Dupont, Fr. Miceli, Nostradamus, or Hal Lindsey, no author escaped my perusal. It got so bad that I would eat Chinese just to see what the fortune cookie had to offer by way of prophecy. I became so obsessed with the subject that

it became my main topic of conversation, and, as I started to raise a family, this preoccupation was dosed out quite heavily to my children along with Catholic truths. I would tell them about the “three days of darkness” (and being from New England where the electric power goes out quite frequently in the winter, I would have to endure the inevitable comment from my children that I was right all along). I would tell them of the indisputable signs of the end times in the “wars and rumors of wars” and the famines and earthquakes forecast almost every day in the global events as we read them in the press. I would highlight the crisis of faith the Church was enduring as well as the telltale decline of Catholic influence in the world, quoting Our Lord’s words concerning His second coming: “But yet the Son of man, when he cometh, shall he find, think you, faith on earth?” (Luke 18:8) And, of course, there was the “Comet,” the great ball of chastisement that would one day come to cleanse the world of demonic activity. I would advise them to keep

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their eyes up towards heaven but with their feet planted firmly on the ground of truth, not on the clouds of passing fancies. I would comment wittily that “it was better to look up and trip over a curb than to look down and get hit by a comet” — of course, I would add that even though you were looking up you still could get run over by the proverbial beer truck.

How much of this stuck I do not know. Was I crying wolf and thereby filling their heads with unnecessary trepidation? After all, are not current events supporting the latter day expectancy of our time? A few short years ago did we not whisper among ourselves that a one-world government was looming over the horizon with headquarters already established in Geneva? And today, is not this very subject advocated by the majority of our world leaders? Most people called us alarmists and conspiracy theorists amongst sundry other epithets. I never considered myself a pessimist, but a realist. Although never abandoning my conviction that we were on a fast track to apocalyptic events, I finally had second thoughts on my approach in dealing with the subject when one day I heard someone jestingly call me “Doom and Gloom LaPlume.” That is when I took a different tack.

I finally had second thoughts on my approach in dealing with the subject when one day I heard someone jestingly call me “Doom and Gloom LaPlume.”

I stopped reading these books and started reading history, specifically history that dealt with Catholic events and how they influenced the world. History does repeat itself and, there being nothing new under the sun, I found more sane knowledge to govern my future than any book I read trying to predict it. By way of prophecy I focused more on the Marian messages of Quito, LaSalette, and Fa-

tima, which not only warned of the dire consequences of not following heaven’s plan, but also gave a positive recipe of how to avoid these predicted calamities, or at least to mitigate them. With this newfound knowledge I was able to guide my children in a more positive way, all the while keeping the negative aspects fully cognizant in their minds. They now know that the “end times” will come to pass. They also know that the hour and the moment is of no consequence to them if they remain in the state of grace, keeping always in mind that eternity could be a heartbeat away.

So, is it more important to focus on the “latter day” dire warnings? Or is it better to focus on the “here and now” positive aspects when we instruct, not only our children, but even ourselves? Every person, parent or not, has a different approach, and I am not one to guide him in the application. Personally, I think a healthy mingling of the two (that is the interaction of Catholic history measured against contempo-

rary events and the Marian warnings from heaven), will do most in impressing upon us and our children the fragility of our earthly existence and the need to keep our eyes heavenward. Then, if we do trip over the curb, we’ll be quick to pick ourselves up and avail ourselves of the sacramental means of gazing upwards again. But, remember, somewhere out there a beer truck is rolling and your name might be on it.

They also know that the hour and the moment is of no consequence to them if they remain in the state of grace, keeping always in mind that eternity could be a heartbeat away.

*Email Russell LaPlume at [rlp@catholicism.org](mailto:rlp@catholicism.org).*



The Catholic America Tour at Catholic Treasures in southern CA.

## LOCAL NEWS:



Mr. Jeremy Patria

### SPEEDING TICKET TO SALVATION

**W**e all know that God works in mysterious ways, but little did I realize that my penchant for speeding while driving would be the vehicle that God would choose to slow me down onto the sure path of salvation. I was born into a family of practicing Baptists in a small, southwestern New Hampshire village. It

is one of those picturesque towns that can be seen on typical New England postcards — and Yankee to the core. Fitzwilliam by name, it is a popular tourist attraction and even hosted a *Good Morning, America* show several years ago. Our family regularly attended church services and my father, being a Baptist deacon, would frequently deliver the sermon. I attended Sunday school until thirteen years old when, abruptly, we stopped going to church altogether. It seems my parents had a falling out with the pastor, which led to their refusing to attend that or any other church thereafter. Although confused, I just accepted the fact.

My siblings and I, five in number, attended public schools and immersed ourselves in all the activities being offered. I was very active in sports and I was a member of the choir for all four years of high school. Religion of any sort was not on my mind, but I do remember one time when I attended the funeral of the father of a choir member who was Catholic. I was struck by the smoking incense, the reverence and pageantry of the service but, although curious, I did not investigate. I also found it interesting later, after becoming a Catholic, to discover that many of the songs performed by our choir were of Catholic origin.

My everyday life was in no way soft. I had many chores to perform, such as cutting, hauling, and then splitting the ten cords of wood we needed every winter. My parents were not averse to employing corporal punishment whenever I went astray but I knew it was out of love, not meanness. At the same time, we were given much freedom in our social activities and not really monitored as to our comings and goings. After getting my driver's license, I purchased a car, for I needed wheels to get to a job I had landed in a restaurant twenty miles from my home. And I always drove fast. My heavy foot led to three speeding tickets and the loss of

both my license and my job. As Divine Providence would have it, however, I found another job within walking distance from my home and there my conversion began.

I worked in the kitchen as a chef along with a young man my age named Joe Hazelrigg. He told me he came from a family of eight and had recently moved to the area to be next to Saint Benedict Center. He was not shy about his Catholic Faith and this led to many conversations about religion and my own lack of belief. Some of Joe's friends also became employed at the same restaurant and, after being introduced, I was amazed by the large families they all came from. There was Joe Filipi, one of eight siblings, Heather Fliss, one of thirteen, and Luke LaPlume, one of eleven, and

they all confronted me, in their own particular styles, with the Catholic Faith. Because my parents had continued Bible readings at home, I had enough ammunition to hold my own against their arguments. This friendly, and sometimes intense, undeclared war went on for months, until one day I needed a lift some distance away and Joe Filipi volunteered to drive. It was during this ride that grace began its work, or I should say, I finally began cooperating with grace. Joe simply told me that I

Joe simply told me that I had a duty before God to at least investigate the Catholic Faith before rejecting it. It was as simple as that.



Left to right: Regina, Bridget, José, Jeremy, and Gemma Patria.

had a duty before God to at least investigate the Catholic Faith before rejecting it. It was as simple as that. Where before I had been defiant during our conversations, I found myself now more passive, more docile in my outlook. I started attending Mass at Saint Benedict Center, and believe me, with all those large families I never wanted for a ride. I attended lectures on the Faith, socialized with the community, and gradually was convinced that I needed to join. After lengthy instruction, I was baptized and received the Eucharist on March 25, the great Feast of the Annunciation.

Ironically, my parents did not object to my conversion, except in one particular, that of Baptism. My mother stated that it was not necessary for salvation and, after my reciting the verse that says “unless a man be born of water and the Holy Ghost he will not be saved,” she said that although it mentioned water, it did not mean we had to be baptized!! At that point I knew there was no point in furthering the argument. Interestingly enough, my father took me aside shortly afterwards and said, “Jeremy, I don’t know why, but I could never have taught you the things which you have learned from these folks.”

I settled into my new Catholic life, interacting with the families that associated with the Center, while still being very inquisitive about the philosophy and methods of living a truly Catholic life. I was on the lookout for a marriage partner as well, and that is when I was introduced to a truly strange

custom called courting. Although in theory I agreed, it was difficult to understand how you could ascertain your feelings for a young woman while parked in the living room of her parents’ house with their numerous children gawking at your every move. Only after attending a traditional Ignatian retreat did I realize not only the absolute necessity of courtship in maintaining purity, but the increase in virtue that the discipline brought to the future spouses.

I did marry a beautiful Catholic girl, Bridget, and together we have started our own Catholic community, being the proud parents of three wonderful children, Regina, Gemma, and José.

I want to thank you, Lord, for your ministers, the policemen who gave me those speeding tickets, and for your Church militant, all of whom in one way or another accelerated me in the pursuit of the Catholic Faith.

My father took me aside and said, “Jeremy, I don’t know why, but I could never have taught you the things which you have learned from these folks.”



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## SPECIAL FEATURE:



Br. André Marie, M.I.C.M., Prior

### LEX ORANDI, LEX CREDENDI

This ancient Latin axiom is quoted so often, I thought a little explanation of it would be helpful. A paraphrase of a longer patristic expression, the phrase means, “the law of praying is the law of believing.”

The Father of the Church who gave us the axiom is St. Prosper of Aquitaine (390-455). He coined it in his controversy with the semi-Pelagians, who held that God’s grace was necessary neither for one’s first movement towards conversion nor for final perseverance.

According to St. Prosper of Aquitaine, *legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*, which is to say, ‘the law of prayer determines the law of belief’ (Prosper used the equivalent term *lex supplicandi* in place of *lex orandi*). St. Prosper treats the Church’s prayer as an authoritative source for theology in arguing that salvation must come entirely at God’s initiative since in the liturgy the Church prayed for the conversion of infidels, Jews, heretics, schismatics, and the lapsed who would not seek the true Faith on their own (Charles R. Hohenstein, “Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi”: Cautionary Notes.” Cf. Prosper of Aquitaine, *De vocatione omnium gentium*, 1, 12: PL 51, 664C).

The same phrase turns up in an official document of the Holy See, *Indiculus*, which was a compilation of all the authoritative statements of the popes on the subject of grace. It is believed that this document was edited by St. Prosper himself, as he was Pope St. Celestine’s secretary at the time. Here is the relevant passage, as contained in Denzinger:

Let us be mindful also of the sacraments of priestly public prayer, which handed down by the Apostles are uniformly celebrated in the whole world and in every Catholic Church, *in order that the law of supplication may support the law of believing*.

For when the leaders of the holy nations perform the office of ambassador entrusted to them, they plead the cause of the human race before the

divine clemency, and while the whole Church laments with them, they ask and pray that the Faith may be granted to infidels; that idolaters may be delivered from the errors of their impiety; that the veil of their hearts may be removed and the light of truth be visible to the Jews; that heretics may come to their senses through a comprehension of the Catholic Faith; *that schismatics may receive the spirit of renewed charity*; that the remedy of repentance may be bestowed upon the lapsed; that finally after the catechumens have been led to the sacraments of regeneration, the royal court of heavenly mercy may be opened to them (*Indiculus*, chapter 8; Denz., n. 246 [old edition, n. 139], emphasis ours).

The editors of Denzinger inserted a footnote stating that the entirety of chapter eight of this decree agrees with St. Prosper’s *De vocatione omnium gentium*, where the argument first appeared. They also refer the reader to the ancient Solemn Prayers for Good Friday, which were excised from the new Missal. Doubtless, St. Prosper had heard these prayers on Good Friday, as liturgical historians date them back to the earliest persecutions. He probably had them in mind when he wrote this passage.

This highlights the grave importance of tradition in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and all the Church’s liturgy. It also shows us that the liturgy itself is a powerful *source* of Christian truth.

When we Latin Catholics of the West return to our liturgical traditions and show that we take this axiom seriously, the Eastern Orthodox — for whom tradition, liturgy, and the rule of Faith are virtually synonymous — will take Catholic unity under the pope more seriously.

*Email Brother André Marie at bam@catholicism.org.*

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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.

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## PRAYERS FOR THE HOLY FATHER

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)

## CALENDAR NOTES:

- Join us for the Blueberry Fiddle Festival. It will be held at the Cheshire Fairgrounds in Swanzey, NH, on August 7 and 8, 2009. See the ad on page 3 or visit [www.blueberryfiddlefestival.com](http://www.blueberryfiddlefestival.com) for details.
- Come with the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary on pilgrimage! The St. Joseph's Brigade (boys and men) and Immaculate Heart of Mary Brigade (girls and single ladies) invite you to accompany us in New York State, on an arduous and prayerful journey. The dates are September 23 to 26, 2009. For more details, go to [www.national-coalition.org/pilgrim](http://www.national-coalition.org/pilgrim); or call (603) 239-6485 (St. Joseph's Brigade); or (603) 239-6495 (IHM Brigade).
- The 13th annual SBC Conference will be October 30 and 31, 2009, at Saint Benedict Center in Richmond, NH. Visit [cat.catholicism.org](http://cat.catholicism.org) for information.

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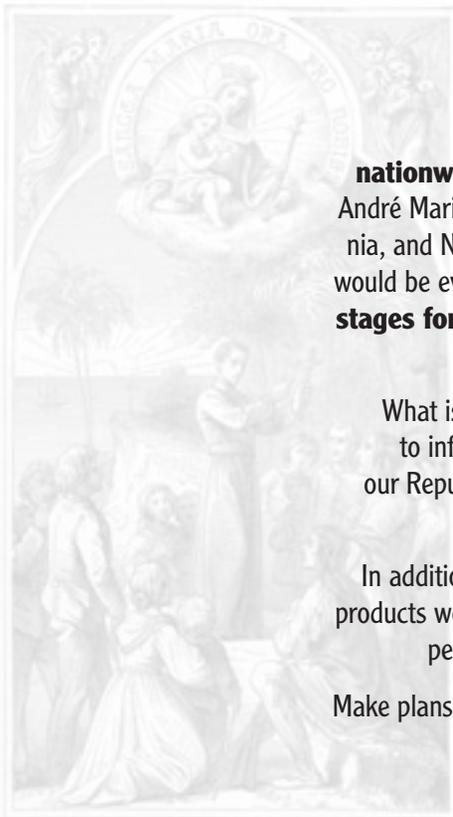
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What is the CAT? It is a series of speeches given throughout the country, a program meant to inform, motivate, and equip Catholics to be better laborers in the project of converting our Republic to the one true Faith. The core of each CAT event is Brother André Marie's talk: "Toward a Catholic America: History, Goals, and Methods."

In addition to hearing the presentation, those in attendance can browse the books and audio products we will bring along. As part of the event, Brother André Marie will also field questions pertinent to Saint Benedict Center's apostolate, or various topics of a Catholic interest.

Make plans now to be a part of it. **To learn more about this trip and about the Catholic America Tour, see our websites: [www.cat.catholicism.org](http://www.cat.catholicism.org) and [www.catholicism.org](http://www.catholicism.org), or call Russell LaPlume at (603) 239-6485.**