

MANCIPIA

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The Ascension by Benjamin West



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PRIOR'S COLUMN BONIFACE VIII VS THE BIG STATE

History is the laboratory of wisdom, says my mentor. But for all the truth of that statement, historians are not men untainted by their share of folly. How many history books, for instance, kowtow to Enlightenment prejudices and insist

on portraying the Middle Ages as an unfortunate thousand years of illiterate bigotry sandwiched between the two great civilizations of classical antiquity and the Renaissance? How many posit that the Church during those years was the epitome of reactionary backwardness, superstition, and anti-scientific censorship? How many show the Church as a traditional enemy of popular liberty and an upholder of ruthless monarchs whose power was limited only by a more ruthless Church hierarchy?

Legion are the volumes that so indict the Church, and few are the historians willing to expose these popular myths. Godfrey Kurth, author of *The Church at the Turning Points of History*, is one of these few. In a day when the mocking bluster of a Voltaire is still fashionable bigotry in academia, it is heartening to read Kurth taking up his task with verve, concentration, and an engaging narrative style — all the while respecting the rigid laws of that humblest of sciences which must submit itself to what the primary sources tell us.

The author, in his day a leading Belgian Catholic historian, a Knight of the Order of Pius IX, and the director of the Belgian Historical Institute in Rome, wrote in French. His translator was Father Victor Day, a priest of the Helena, Montana, Diocese, who is also known for his Englished version of Bossuet's *The Continuity of Religion*.

As the book's name suggests, *The Church at the Turning Points of History* studies the Barque of Peter at critical junctures of history, those pivotal times when one age gives way to another. The "turning points" are given in Kurth's chapter headings:

- The Mission of the Church
- The Church and the Jews
- The Church and the Barbarians
- The Church and Feudalism
- The Church and Neo-Caesarism
- The Church and the Renaissance
- The Church and the Revolution

One chapter of the book of especial interest to me is "The Church and Neo-Caesarism," treating as it does the story of one of my favorite popes, Pope Boniface VIII. The importance of Boniface's papacy as a turning point will be

made clear when we see that this Vicar of Christ had the sad distinction of fighting and losing the battle against the modern superstate.

In the commonly received history of the battle between France's King Philip the Fair and Pope Boniface VIII — the one that has Boniface being the villain — it is asserted that the Pope was pompously meddling in the affairs of state, intruding on Philip's lawful right to rule France. In tyrannizing the fair prince so, the pontiff unsheathed the sword of the spirit too readily, and issued an excommunication to cow the monarch into submission. This assessment, so untrue and unjust, is one of those deeply entrenched epics of historical mendacity which, like the Black Legend of Spain, pollutes libraries full of history texts. As a friend of mine said, in simpler prose, "it's not just a lie, it's a *damn lie*."

What gives us just cause to be indignant at the usual treatment of Pope Boniface is the enormity of the historical phenomenon the lie conceals. At a time when a number, at least, of the less somnolent of political conservatives are aware that statism is a serious problem in our day, it is worth considering whence comes this gigantic, accountable-to-none megastate. It is not a product of Christian polity, but a rebellion against that order and a manifestation of pagan "Neo-Caesarism."

The old order — the one respected and preserved by the unworthy Philip's royal Grandpère, Saint Louis IX — was *Christendom*, a Republic of sovereign Christian nations all of which looked to the pope as a leader with direct spiritual power over all the baptized and an indirect civil power in the affairs of state. This set him above nations, bound to none, independent, and therefore disinterested enough to help settle the grievances which would inevitably arise among them. As Kurth puts it:

"To the men of this epoch, the king was without doubt the head of society, and religion invested him with a sacred and inviolable character. But his authority was far from being unlimited; everywhere — in the stronghold of the nobleman, in the walled enclosure of the communes, under the vaults of the churches and monasteries, on the lofty throne of St. Peter — it met free forces which acted as a counterpoise and did not permit the king to exceed the limits established by religion and by custom."

But there was a rebellion brewing against this order. The crowned heads of Europe had new ideas put into them by the growing class of lay scholars at the medieval universities. As the study of classical Greek and Roman culture became a steady infatuation for many, a roseate image of pagan antiquity dominated the thought of the age.

Kurth relates that in Florence, a copy of Emperor Justinian's legal accomplishment, the *Corpus juris civilis*, was liter-

ally enshrined for public veneration as a relic, candles and all. Especially in Bologna, the professors of law were shaping legal theory and praxis along ancient Roman lines. Arguably, they had a point. After all, the laws of the barbarians were mostly penal, “reactive,” and not the well-considered, all-embracing codes for a high civilization that was the pride of the Romans. For all its merits, there was one serious problem in all this theory: to the Romans, Cæsar was not only a monarch, but a god. Laws which presume the divinity of the monarch are not exactly compatible with a Christian society, and while the sheer paganism implicit in these laws can be set aside, the absolutism that impregnated the entire system could not be.

Kurth shows the danger of this: “Here began the deplorable and tragical error. While from a scientific point of view, the Roman law was incontestably superior to the laws of the Middle Ages; while, with regard to civil relations, it displayed a perfection which the barbarian codes could not approach; on the other hand, from a political point of view, it enshrined a system from which, it seems, the minds of the free men of the Middle Ages should have turned away with horror. The most unbridled absolutism was proclaimed as a doctrine with unprecedented boldness and logic. According to the Roman law, the sovereign, that is, the emperor, was a veritable god... The will of the emperor took the place of justice and law. And though that will was ordinarily but a cruel and depraved caprice, as in the case of such tyrants as Caligula, Nero, Domitian, Commodus, Caracalla, Heliogabulus, etc., the people bowed before it without resistance and without murmur, and from the depths of their agony greeted the master with the salutation of the dying gladiator.”

Early efforts at reincarnating the ancient Cæsars in Christian garb were put down in hard fought battles. The House of Hohenstaufen had a nasty habit of attempting the New Caesarism, but without complete success, as we see from Frederick Barbarossa’s confrontation with Pope Adrian IV at Sutri. After a long stare-down, the Red-Bearded divinity ended up acting as the pope’s equerry, taking the bridle of the papal horse and presenting the stirrup to the pontifical foot of Nicholas Breakspear, the poor English beggar boy who became pope.



Statue of Pope Boniface VIII in Florence

But that was the mid-twelfth century. By the fourteenth, things had changed enough, in France at least, that a monarch could defy a pope and get away with it. And King Philip, whose looks, not manners, were “fair,” was just brash enough to do it.

Pope Boniface had serious concerns. At home, he wished there to be peace between Christian monarchs. This would allow Europe to return to an unfinished business abroad. It was in Boniface’s reign that St. John of Acre, the last Crusader fortress, fell. With it fell the century-old Latin Kingdom, undoing all the progress of the Crusades. Boniface would have the Crusades resumed, but that was impossible as long as England and France were bickering. Bartering a peace, arbitrating as only the pope could arbitrate between sovereigns, this was what the maligned pope set out to do. The minute details of Philip’s resistance I will leave the reader to discover in Kurth’s book. The short version is that Philip simply rejected the authority of

the pope in these matters. This was a novelty that the jurists had put into the mind of the fractious monarch.

To Kurth, the rejection of Pope Boniface’s authority had far-reaching ramifications:

“However disastrous from this point of view were the declarations of the King of France for the future of European civilization, they were still more baneful because of the principle which inspired them. For the first time since the beginning of Christianity, they proclaimed the separation of politics and morality.”

Note well what follows, for here Kurth demythologizes the febrile blather we are often handed as history:

“It is well to note the origin of royal absolutism in Europe. We are at the antipodes of the Christian theory of power. The principles formulated by Philip the Fair were those which the Popes opposed and defeated in their twofold struggle against the Hohenstaufen; they were those which henceforth would be invoked whenever there was question of humiliating and belittling the Holy See, or whenever, despite the resistance of the Holy See, there was question of encroaching in one point or another upon the patrimony of Christian public right bequeathed the nations by former ages. And it is worthy of remark that a great number of historians, followed by a veritable mob

of second-rate minds, persuade themselves with a naïveté almost ludicrous, that these theories of royal absolutism are Catholic theories.”

Philip did not limit himself to humiliating Boniface in the matter of England. He also chose to violate the Church’s immunity from taxation in his realms: “Philip was always in need of money, and his jurists had taught him that the possessions of his subjects belonged to him. Accordingly, he took whatever he could lay hands on.”

After a number of further insolent maneuvers, including imprisoning the bishop who was Boniface’s legate and forging a papal bull to force out of the Estates General a bill of indemnity for his own criminal obstinacy, Philip received the Pope’s reply in the form of *Unam Sanctam*, which Kurth calls “a solemn and moderate exposition of the pure Catholic doctrine on the relations between the two powers, in accordance with the tradition of the Church.” At the same time, Boniface prepared Philip’s excommunication.

Philip replied by dispatching the jurist William of Nogaret to hatch a plot against the Pope. The end of this was the famous “outrage at Agnani.” Kurth’s description commands our attention:

“Boniface was without defense. He donned his pontifical insignia, and, holding in his hand the keys of St. Peter, awaited his enemies. Neither this grandeur of soul, nor the majesty of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, nor the white hair of a man of eighty-six years, moved the criminals. The Pope remained in their power for three days; the third day the inhabitants of Anagni rose in opposition and drove them

out. Boniface did not wish that they should be pursued, but so many emotions had broken his strength and a few days afterwards he expired.”

In making the monarch supreme and accountable to nobody, Neo-Cesarism began a chain reaction which neither Philip nor his jurists could have predicted. Kurth: “From a national point of view the absolutism of kings has broken the equilibrium of the social body, concentrated all the life in the head, atrophied free institutions and made revolution the only possible corrective of tyranny. Nor is that all. The Christian nations wrenched from the guidance of the Church have not found their way; they seem condemned to travel the whole cycle of error before finding their way again... The Catholic Church, seated at the foot of the Cross, waits calmly for the day when revolution shall have finished the education of mankind.”

To the victor goes the spoils, and one of the spoils is writing history. Philip and his jurists did more to Boniface than strike his body at Agnani; they struck his reputation. To this day, Boniface’s history is most often told through the unsympathetic lens of the very men responsible for the outrage at Anagni. Kurth writes of the forgeries and lies concocted in an effort to ensure that Boniface would be remembered as a villain, and that is just what has happened. But thanks to many historians, including Godfrey Kurth, the memory of Boniface has undergone a rehabilitation. ■

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Sr. Marie Thérèse, M.I.C.M.,
Prioress

CONVENT CORNER MY JESUS, I TRUST IN THEE!

Dear Reader, there is a little word that we commonly use. That word is “trust.” Trust is the very warp and woof of human society. Without trust, human society crumbles. So, let’s think about it.

May I tell you a story? This is an Aesop’s Fable retold in my own words.

Once upon a time, a farmer took a hopeful walk out into his fields in the winter. As he stepped from one frozen furrow to another, his attention was drawn by an unusual clod of earth. As he strode over to it, he noticed a bit of a pattern on the dirt. That pattern turned out to be the scales on a snake! Curiosity taking the lead, the farmer wanted a closer look, and as he bent over, he could see that it was, in fact, a rattler! But, after the initial scare, and a few pokes with his boot, the farmer was not afraid. The intense cold had so affected the creature that it could not move. Yes, it was actually frozen in a strike position — quite the trophy! So, the farmer gathered it from the ground with the thought of showing it off to his friends. Since he had quite a walk back across the fields in the bitter cold, he stowed the reptilian prize in the front of his coat and buttoned it securely as he strode off.

Later, in the warmth of his cottage, the farmer took the snake “statue” from his coat and proudly arranged it on his table. It was absolutely perfect! He exulted at the thought of showing his friends. Then, the farmer saw a slight motion as the partially warmed snake breathed faintly... And, the farmer’s heart stopped!

But, after some seconds, the farmer took a deep breath, rolling his shoulders to relieve the shock. Well, the snake hadn’t moved except to take that faint breath. The farmer was kindhearted. As he continued to look at the half-dead snake, he actually began to pity the frozen creature. He even gently touched its back to see just how cold it was. And weakly, the snake lifted its head and laid it pitifully in the farmer’s large, warm hand. Then, full of resolve, the farmer’s heart minded him to tuck the poor snake back into his warm coat so that his own body heat would continue to revive it.

And, it did! And so, the snake did revive.

And then the snake did what vipers do, shortening this tale abruptly. Yes, it bit the kind farmer, injecting its deadly venom close to his heart. Minutes later, as the farmer was drawing his last, strained breaths, he whispered, “I got what I deserved! I knew he was a viper!”

Trust is based on experience. We intrinsically trust our employee of twenty years with intimate knowledge of our business. We trust that our watchdog of five years will protect us from criminals. We trust that the chair at our

dining room table will continue to support us when we again sit down.

To make the point even more firmly, let me say that the farmer in the fable should have trusted the rattlesnake. Yes, Dear Reader. To use the most basic definition of trust, the

“My Jesus, I trust in Thee!”

farmer should have trusted the viper to do what vipers have always done: bite him. Then his decisions would have been based on prudence rather than sentimentality. Trust is based on experience.

Dear Reader, I hope that you know the short prayer, “My Jesus, I trust in Thee!” and that you pray it fervently. This prayer is at the very heart of the spiritual life. And now, Dear Reader, I will run the risk of disturbing your convictions by asking you why you trust Jesus.

First of all, I assume that you mean what you say when you exclaim, “My Jesus, I trust in Thee!” What do you mean? Perhaps you merely intend to gain the attached indulgence? That is not a bad motive, but it is about as prudent as a poor person using a gold bar merely as a paperweight.

“My Jesus, I trust in Thee!” Perhaps you mean to boost your confidence in the Divine vending machine as you present your petitions? Well, confidence is an essential part of prayer... However, when the answer comes back and causes you to think, “That’s not what I asked for!” will you respond, “My Jesus, I trust in Thee!?”

Which brings us to the gold bar. At the heart of the devotional life is one Heart. Well, perhaps at the moment there are two — mine and Jesus’. But when I have grown in experience with Jesus, I know that everything He does and allows is in His loving Providence and is good for me. And so I can say, “My Jesus, I trust in Thee!” when everything is going contrary to my hopes and desires. And when this prayer is said wholeheartedly under those adverse circumstances (truly wholeheartedly), I have but one heart with Jesus.

Dear Reader, take some time to begin to enumerate the many reasons you have to trust Jesus. You could start at the very beginning by reading prayerfully the book of Genesis. This will help you to appreciate why God became man for you. And as you continue to pray your daily Rosary, your meditations should become deeper and more fruitful as a result.

Dear Reader, trust is based on experience. Unlike the farmer, we will not have to reproach ourselves if we say and mean, “My Jesus, I trust in Thee!” ■

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Mr. Brian Kelly

KELLY FORUM

THE THREE TEMPTATIONS OF CHRIST IN THE DESERT

After forty days of fasting and prayers Our Lord is tired and hungry. He has not yet begun His public life. Saint John the Baptist has given testimony that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Jesus is baptized by John and he retires to a desert place to prepare for His Messianic public ministry. The fast is about over. It has been forty days. The devil has been watching Him, waiting for the last day, thinking then this Jesus will be most vulnerable. The devil, as far as we know from scripture, did not assault John the Baptist who lived his life in the desert fasting on honey and locusts. The demon knew that John was not the Messiah. He was not of Juda, a son of David, he was from Levi. But Jesus of Nazareth was of Juda, the kingly tribe, a son of David. The time for the advent of the Messiah, prophesied by Daniel, had come. The seventy weeks of years were complete: “Seventy weeks are shortened upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, that transgression may be finished, and sin may have an end, and iniquity may be abolished; and everlasting justice may be brought; and vision and prophecy may be fulfilled; and the saint of saints may be anointed” (9:24). The anointing of the Saint of saints was by the Holy Ghost who effected the anointing in the fruition He made in the womb of Mary in the Incarnation. Messiah, is a Hebrew word, meaning “the anointed one.”

Forty days is a long time to fast. Imagine how weak Our Lord was in His body! How hungry! There is a stench in the air. Satan approaches Our Lord. Jesus allows it. How could Our Lord be tempted? Only from the outside, not from within. His will, though human, was immovable in its union with His divinity. That is why in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus could have never prayed to His Father, “Not thy will but mine be done.” Rather He prayed, “Not my will, but thine by done.” In His humanity, Jesus could feel the urge to abandon the passion. He could only feel it. He was a Man. There was a fear there along with the weight of the sins of the world. Every sin. Every circumstance, every nook and cranny, of the offenses of the fallen race of sinners offending God.

And the tempter coming said to him: “If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.” (Matthew 4:3) Notice the “If.” Satan, which means “adversary,” does not know if this Man is the Son of God. He suspects it. Christ is the adversary of Satan and vice versa. The devil attempts to engage the Holy Man in combat. He seeks to convince Jesus to perform a miracle. He knows Jesus can do it. The prophets have performed miracles, although John the Baptist, the greatest of the prophets, did not. Had

he done so, perhaps the devil would have tried to tempt him. Whatever the case, God protected the Precursor who was not to be distracted from his mission call to penance. Jesus quickly rebuked the devil. Know that in Greek, the word for “devil” is *diabolos*. It means, “one who hurls.” Like an evil adversary hurls accusations against the just, Satan hurls a challenge against Christ. By getting the Holy Man to perform a miracle in changing stones into bread, Satan wills to make bread into a stone, a stumbling block. He wills to conquer this Man. Get Him at His weakest point to abandon the fast and, instead, feast. Not so! The angels were also watching. They would do the feeding when Christ willed it. Jesus says: “It is written, that Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word of God” (Matthew 4:4). Jesus gives nothing for the devil to grasp unto. He does not even say “I live not by bread alone.” He just quotes the Old Law and leaves it at that. The devil knows the law. He is vanquished. Jesus does not do the devil’s beckoning, nor does He show any inability to perform the miracle. We must know our enemy. The prayer to Saint Michael, with the Holy Rosary, is powerful against the evil spirits. As long as we refuse to confess our sins, we give space for the evil one to accuse us, to “hurl” our sins at us. He has no power to do that come judgment day if we have hurled our sins at the priest, the alter Christus, in confession. Those stones have been cast away. Nevertheless, the devil is subtle. If he cannot accuse us, he can tempt us to accuse ourselves by a morbid recall of our past sins, doubting the merciful forgiveness of God. This is a terrible thing to question the mercy of God. It leads to despair. In such a situation we must run to Our Lady, the Refuge of Sinners, the Consoler of the Afflicted. How can we not trust in hope when we have such a mother?

End of Round One.

Satan could not budge Christ through His bodily senses. He now must try the spirit. Yes, he thought, vainglory may work! Satan takes Our Lord to the pinnacle to the temple. Not by force. Jesus allows it for now. He would allow the children of the devil later to take Him by force and crucify Him for our salvation. That would be His ultimate victory over the devil and sin. And [the devil] said to him: “If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down, for it is written: That he hath given his angels charge over thee, and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest perhaps thou dash thy foot against a stone.” (Matthew 4:6) “Cast thyself down.” Satan was cast down from heaven, Jesus said, “like lightning.” He wishes to try to get Jesus to cast Himself down. And thus, by tempting God, to be humiliated. The whole city will see it. “Look,” the devil seems to say, “this is a better way to reign. Their hearts are Yours, if You only do it my way, not God’s way.” In this way, he hopes to get Jesus to dash His

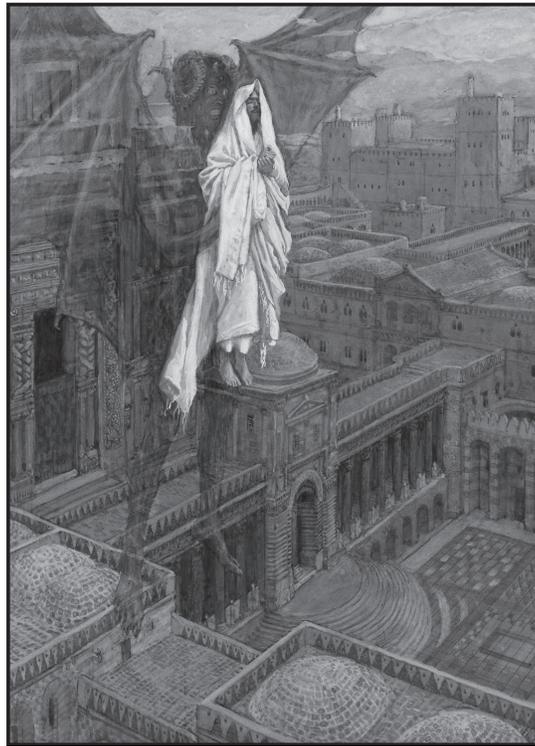
foot against a stone. Yet Jesus is the cornerstone, rejected by the builders, who will build His Church from the Cross of suffering and humility.

The devil, of course, knows scripture. He knows the Messiah has the protection of the angels, should He desire their assistance. If Jesus summons His angels to save Him and bear Him up, then the devil wins. His sole ambition is to get this Nazarene to do his will. Notice, too, that the devil cannot bear to quote the rest of the text from Psalm 90: “Thou shalt walk upon the asp and the basilisk: and thou shalt trample under foot the lion and the dragon” (vs. 13). These are metaphors for Satan and his minions. They are the asp and the basilisk, the lion and the dragon, upon whom the Christ shall tread in victory. Jesus’ reply is chaste and decisive, quoting Deuteronomy: “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (6:16).

Jesus does not say, “Thou shalt not tempt Me,” lest He give away His identity to the evil one. He simply asserts that no one can put God to the test by rash actions. All good deeds must arise out of prudence and trust in divine providence. No one is permitted to put their life in danger when there is a recourse that is born of the greater good. God will make it known when it is time to give one’s life for Him. Then, and only then, will grace be given unto a holy death, be it from another (martyrdom, hopefully) or from natural causes.

End of Round Two

This final temptation is difficult to understand. The first two were easily dismissed by Our Lord. This third was very subtle, even mysterious. We must remember that these temptations were thrown at the humanity of Christ. The devil could not tempt God, but the question remained, “Was this Man the Son of God or not?” He did not know for sure. So, he took Jesus to a very high mountain. And, again, Jesus allows it. To a very high mountain. Stupid strategy. If this Holy Man is the Son of God, He sees all things, all the kingdoms of the world. He does not need a better view from a mountain. Nevertheless, the devil opens up for Our Lord’s view all the worldly kingdoms and the glory of them. And said to him: “All these will I give thee, if falling down thou wilt adore me.” (Matthew 4:9) First of all these kingdoms were not the devil’s to give. He was “the prince of this world”



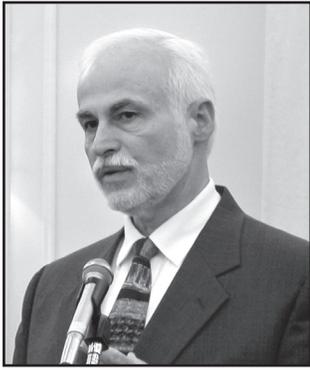
“Jesus Taken up to a Pinnacle of the Temple”
James J. Tissot

(soon to be cast out, John 12:31) but he does not own anything. He is a liar and the father thereof. Any kingdom that he has has been seized by theft, murder, or money, and only then if God allows it for a time. All the earth is the Lords,” For God is the king of all the earth: sing ye wisely” (Psalm 46:8). And, again, “But the saints of the most high God shall take the kingdom: and they shall possess the kingdom for ever and ever” (Daniel 7:18). “The meek shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:4). Could Christ be tempted to vainglory or riches? No! So, what was this temptation? It was the offer of a *Novus Ordo Saeculorum* (a New Order of Things). If this Faster from Nazareth would give the devil the worship of *latría*, not just *dulia* (reverence) but divine worship (*latría*) then, (Satan says to Him), “all these will I give thee.” Satan knows that Jesus is a Holy

Man. He offers a lie. “If you adore me, you can have all these nations. You can be their leader. At my bidding they will submit to your kingship.” Thus, the devil hopes to divert this Man, whom he thinks may be the Christ, from His Messianic mission, which is to establish a universal kingdom of justice on earth that would last forever. He vainly hopes to have Christ fall and adore at his cloven feet. This temptation manifests the contempt Satan had for the Christ. Here, on the mountain, he thinks he can seduce Christ, or Him whom he suspects may be the Christ. Three years later, Satan will throw all caution to the winds. He will be unable to contain his hatred. How great shall it be? Consider this: Even though by getting the Jews to have the Savior killed on the Cross and knowing that he would lose his power over men, the devil still chose to forfeit that power out of hatred for the Just One. His hatred overcame his knowledge. The beginning of the end for the devil was the Fiat of Mary. The end would be, the *consummatum est*, on Calvary.

“Then Jesus saith to him: Begone, Satan: for it is written, The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil left him; and behold angels came and ministered to him.” (Matthew 4:10-11) ■

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GUEST COLUMN SENTIMENTAL THEOLOGY REVISITED

This is an article published in issue #32 of *From the Houstops* (this issue is unfortunately out of print), discussing Brother Francis' 1947 original *Houstops*' article, "Sentimental Theology" and its significance to the Crusade of Saint Benedict Center.

the night, and to put in writing a sudden eruption of thoughts on the subject. The result was "Sentimental Theology."

"It was intended to be provocative," the author says. To provoke whom? Not non-Catholics so much, for it was not addressed to them. Not even liberal Catholic theologians of the day. No, it was aimed at those who then regarded themselves as theological conservatives, the mainstay of the Church. For, by ignoring the importance of the doctrine *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, it was these more traditional Catholics, far more than it was the irreverent liberals, who were opening a wide breach in the bulwark of the Faith, through which ruinous error and infidelity was increasingly penetrating the Church.

Admittedly meant to stir the Church's hierarchy, Dr. Maluf's article was submitted to Father Feeney with full expectation that the noted theologian would politely dismiss it as being a bit too strong. Instead, Father became so enthused after reading it that he insisted it be made the feature article in the next issue of the *Houstops*, and he stashed it away for safekeeping.

As a matter of fact, Father hid it so well that, come the time to publish the magazine, he had forgotten where he left the article! A long, thorough and frantic search was commenced, but to no avail. The article was lost. To Father's great disappointment, forever, it would have seemed. Unless Dr. Maluf somehow could recapture that initial flood of inspiration – the very suggestion of which must have left a sinking feeling in the author's heart. But fortunately, one day, the whole community at the Center was startled by Father's shouts of "Eureka! Eureka!" He had found the missing article.

An Introduction to a Challenge of Faith

When an article entitled "Sentimental Theology," by a Boston College professor of philosophy named Fakhri Maluf, appeared in the September 1947 issue of *From the Houstops*, unwittingly, yet instantaneously and irrevocably, Saint Benedict Center became the headquarters of a crusade. For this innocent little composition and its defense of the doctrine *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus* (Outside the Church no salvation) are what detonated the explosion of controversy not only heard 'round the world', but still reverberating globally to this very day.

No one was more surprised by this outcome than the author himself. As he readily confesses today (that is, 2008), at the time he wrote "Sentimental Theology" forty-three years ago, he hadn't yet fully come to understand this doctrine with quite the same preciseness that, as he would come to realize very soon, the fathers, doctors, popes, and saints of the Church uniformly proclaimed, taught and defended it for all the nineteen centuries since the time of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Discovering the Dogma

Not that Dr. Maluf would claim to have discovered the crucial importance of the doctrine. That credit, as is well known, belongs to the late Father Feeney, the first man to identify widespread denial of the doctrine as the root of most of the upheaval and dissolution in the Church in modern times.

With a sense of achievement comparable to finding in one instance both the cause and the antidote for some deadly plague, Father on a day in 1947 announced to Dr. Maluf that he had at last "put his finger" on what he believed was the principal force behind the erosion of faith within the Catholic Church. Having then recently completed his course in Theology under Father Feeney, it was natural that Dr. Maluf's own analytical mind became thoroughly preoccupied by this shared insight. As a matter of fact, the philosopher's every thought now ran to the Dogma of Faith and its newly realized fundamental importance.

All this mental energy would come to a climax a short time later, compelling Dr. Maluf to get out of bed in the middle of

Put into Perspective

The essential point to this background sketch is that "Sentimental Theology" was the very first public defense from Saint Benedict Center of the defined doctrine "Outside the Church there is no salvation." Thus, it marked the definitive birth of the doctrinal Crusade for which Father Feeney and Saint Benedict Center became known worldwide. But, being the first such defense, understandably, it was not the most theologically refined. Consequently, a very slight lingering residue of somewhat vague theological concepts and terminology managed to surface in the article.

There is a certain irony to all this. For the author, of course, is known today by his religious name, Brother Francis, M.I.C.M., our beloved editor and publisher, as well as successor the late Father Feeney in heading our doctrinal Crusade. Sad to say, the most vocal critics of Brother Francis nowadays are not liberal theologians, but actually those who call themselves traditionalist Catholics. Together with even the most liberal of Catholics, however, they rather consistently follow a pattern that is worth noting.

Making No mean Yes

It is a paramount dogma of the Catholic Faith that any truth solemnly defined by the Church is protected by the Holy Ghost and therefore must be believed by all Catholics. To reject, to doubt, or to call into question any article of the Faith, in effect, would be to deny its divine source – to deny even the Church’s divine Founder. Three popes and an ecumenical council have proclaimed *de fide* that no one who is not united to the Church under the supreme pontiff can be saved. Other popes, as well as doctors of the Church and saints beyond number, have reaffirmed it again and again since the Apostolic Age.

Those determined to repudiate the doctrine usually attempt to establish their personal credibility by first insisting that, yes, indeed it is a doctrine of the Faith that outside the Church there is no salvation. The more conservative ones among them – who generally are our most strident antagonists – seem compelled to establish more conservative credentials by further insisting that, according to this same doctrine, it is therefore almost – almost – impossible for one outside the Church to be saved.

In so doing, these “conservatives” oftentimes appear to be invoking a more restrictive doctrinal interpretation than perhaps one might even have inferred from “Sentimental Theology”! In other words, the very same types – in some instances, the very same persons – who thunderously inveighed against the “un-Christian” and “uncharitable” if not “heretical extremes” of Saint Benedict Center’s earliest published defense of *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus* today can seem to stand to the right of that initial, less refined defense!

A Deadly Deceit

Of course, it’s all just deceit. It is self-deceit by which they pretend their own disbelief in the doctrine is, by some contorted logic, consistent with the Catholic Faith that demands belief in this same doctrine. And it is deceit calculated implicitly to portray Father Feeney and Brother Francis as overzealous fanatics, so as to distort an infallible teaching that these imposters refuse to accept, despise with every fiber of their being, but certainly would never dare to deny openly.

When a pope solemnly proclaims a *de fide* truth, he does so, under guidance from the Holy Ghost, to define a truth, to protect it against abuse and misuse by making clear precisely what the Church teaches – what a Catholic must believe. When popes and councils have declared that there is no salvation outside the Church, they have not proposed some fuzzy formula to be manipulated and twisted at will by constructionist theologians and sentimentalists of little faith.

They did not mean, for example, that the Virgin Mother of God “almost” was assumed body and soul into heaven. They didn’t mean that we can not be absolutely certain Jesus Christ had both a human and a divine nature. They didn’t mean that under some circumstances human souls might not contract original sin, or might not suffer its effects if those souls remain “sincere.” They didn’t mean that only for Catholics is abortion a heinous sin crying to Heaven for vengeance, or that an immortal spiritual soul, the principle of human life, might not be infused by God into an embryo at the very instant a mother conceives, if she happens to be a non-believer.

Any faithful Catholic – and certainly every traditionalist Catholic – must know that to propose such notions in direct contradiction of explicit articles of the Faith would be an act of heresy. How, then, would anyone dare to pretentiously nod assent to the doctrine *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, while fashioning emasculating exceptions and qualifications never in any way hinted by the Supreme Magisterium of the Church!

This issue of the *Housetops* celebrates a new beginning for our Crusade marked by the recent renewal of our Third Order. We thought it fitting, therefore, to reprint the explosive little article that began it all 43 years ago. In so doing, however, we felt it advisable to offer, by way of this introduction, a caveat to our readers, explaining that, were its author writing it today, he would express some of his points differently. And we are inserting occasional footnotes approved by Brother Francis to serve that same purpose.

For we’re also conscious of the fact that some of our “conservative,” traditionalist detractors otherwise would be all too eager to pounce on those points which might be construed as self-contradictory, to try to discredit Brother Francis and the Crusade. We can fully expect as much, because the very same ploy was used against Father Feeney when one of his early writings was republished in recent years.

In defense against such an eventuality, we note that in writing “Sentimental Theology” to defend an abused doctrine of the Faith, the author’s use of imprecise language was unintentional. On the other hand, there are the many “theologians” who presume to interpret what the popes really meant when defining the doctrine. They can hardly claim such innocence when they mingle some orthodox language with the gall of error to deliberately misrepresent the Church’s teaching.

It is, in fact, an unspeakable offense on their part to falsely brand as heretics those who teach the doctrine in precisely the same language that Our Lord Himself taught it, and who defend it in exactly the same language that popes and saints used to defend it. ■

Note: Br. Francis’ original article *Sentimental Theology* can be found on our website, catholicism.org.



Br. John Marie Vianney,
M.I.C.M., Tert., Prefect

PREFECT'S COLUMN

THE HALLMARK OF THE SLAVES OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

If you believe there is a God; if you believe He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to save us from our sins; if you believe He came to us through the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of us all; if you believe that He opened the closed gates of heaven for us — if we follow His instructions; if

you know all this and know that if you pick up your cross and follow Him, then you, as I, may still be very unhappy, frustrated and, sometimes, angry that you have trouble convincing your family members, friends and associates to follow the one true Faith outside of which there is absolutely no salvation.

The following are true stories of events that occurred within the last two weeks of the writing of this article, March 14 to 25, 2017, from the Feast of Saint Maud to the Annunciation of Our Lord. If, in some way, they help you to continue your efforts to save the souls of those around you, they were worth the telling. I am always looking for conversion stories people have experienced. You may recall my article about the death-bed conversion of my wife's mother a few years ago.

On March 14, I took my wife to a hospital where a surgeon discussed the planned operation to remove her large kidney stone on April 20. Before we left our home for the trip, I had a feeling that I should bring a Miraculous Medal with me. I have a little table with sacramentals on it, so I picked up one. I always have some Miraculous Medals, Green Scapulars, Rosaries, and the like in my car, but I made sure this Miraculous Medal had the pamphlet with it and was in my coat pocket.

After a lengthy visit with the doctor, we went to another room to schedule the date of the appointment. I remembered the Miraculous Medal in my pocket and asked the Scheduler if I could give it to the doctor. I had no idea of what religion this doctor was. As it turns out, he was Jewish and it was his birthday! When I came back to the doctor, I wished him a happy birthday as I gave him the medal. He looked at it and must have had some understanding of

what it was as he responded, "Thank you! I can use all the blessings I can get!"

Almost as soon as he said this, the Scheduler, who was a Catholic, said, "May I have one too?" She explained that she just lost her pregnant daughter and her pre-born, apparently during delivery. She then went on to say that her mother and

"My mother will be so happy." To which I, perhaps assisted by the Holy Ghost, said, "Your Mother in Heaven will be much happier."

her uncle died within the last six months. The loss of four relatives, evidently greatly loved by this dear lady, all gone in a short period of time, caused considerable distress. She told me, "You see, I need the Miraculous Medal." I had no more with me, but promised to get her one.

It just so happens that when I had a stent put in my left carotid artery, I promised a male nurse/manager — at the same hospital — that I would bring him a Brown Scapular, which I delivered to him that very day, March 14. You see, immediately after I came out of the surgery that placed the stent in my carotid, I met the nurse in recovery. He saw my Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. I asked him if he was wearing his. He said he was not, as he lost it as a child. I told him I would get him one. He said, and I will never forget this, "My mother will be so happy." To which I, perhaps assisted by the Holy Ghost, said, "Your Mother in Heaven will be much happier."

On March 23, just nine days later, I learned a dear, close friend (we were brought up together from childhood) was going in for an operation. It is my belief that my friend was not receiving the sacraments and was otherwise not practicing the Faith. A year ago, I learned he had prostate cancer, but wished no one to know. In fact, he demanded that his girlfriend not say a word about the matter. She called my relatives and I learned of it. When I reached out to him at that time, I did not reveal I knew of his situation, but encouraged him to pray the Rosary, call me if he had knowledge of anyone who might



"The Virgin and Saints" Giovan Battista Tiepolo

need prayers so I could place them on my email prayer list. I left the door open for him.

To the great surprise of my close relatives, my dear friend emailed me on the 23rd. He wrote, "Hope all is well. Going in for surgery tomorrow, could use some of your prayers to the Blessed Mother... thanks." I was the only person to whom he reached out. I placed him on the prayer list and called him two days later, after he was released from the hospital.

During an hour conversation, I related the above story regarding the Miraculous Medal to him. During the telling, he exuberantly said, "Can I get one too?" I promised him, not only three Miraculous Medals, as there are three in his household, but Brown Scapulars and other items. He told me that a second cancer event was upon him and the doctors did not know how bad it was at the time. There is no ques-

tion that he was afraid when he went in to the recent surgery. We also promised to keep in touch. I want to continue to help him return to the one true Faith outside of which no one at all is ever saved.

We may never know the relatives, friends, even our enemies, who are saved by the intervention of someone else. We may never know how many are saved by our intervention into the lives of others. That is, we may never know until we get to heaven. We should always know this: never, never, never give up. Perhaps God placed you in front of someone for that explicit reason. Will you deny God?

Saving souls is the hallmark of the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary — to convert America to the one true faith. ■

Email Brother John Marie Vianney, at toprefect@catholicism.org

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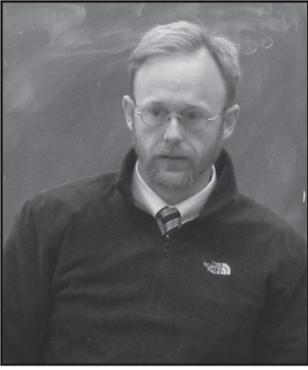
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Brad Grinstead, Headmaster, IHM School

FROM IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY SCHOOL MEET MR. MARTIN CHOUINARD: HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER

Mr. Brad Grinstead: Tell us about your education.

During these years my career goals changed more times than I can now remember. What I do remember most of all was discovering what the liberal arts were. I left high school with no clearly defined plans for my future beyond the resolution to study the liberal arts at a faithful Catholic college.

I cannot speak highly enough of Thomas More College of Liberal Arts. It gave me everything I had wanted in a Catholic liberal arts college, as well as many things that I never would have expected but for which I am very grateful. Whenever I need to explain the value of my education to a skeptic of the liberal arts, I always start with three points: logic, writing, and ethics. At Thomas More College I was exposed to, and unconsciously adopted, the Aristotelian system of thought, based on cause and effect, deduction and example, classification and definition. Everyone, no matter what his or her vocation, needs to know how to reason correctly from observable first premises to true conclusions, and learning how to think is an inestimable advantage. Likewise, everyone needs to know how to express their thoughts clearly in writing. At Thomas More College I went through an extensive two-year writing program, imitating the styles of great writers and undergoing hours of peer review and revision. When it came time to prepare my senior thesis defense, I was very grateful for the time spent improving my writing. Finally, Thomas More students learn ethics. Through the writings of Aristotle and Aquinas, we learned that ethics are based not on custom or feeling, but on the purpose of each thing, a purpose that exists in itself regardless of our opinion of it.

All these points are true, but they were not even my favorite parts of college. Thomas More College has a humanities program that spans all four years. It examines the intellectual history of western civilization through a reading of the most influential works

of each epoch, from the Greek philosophers and poets as a freshman to the moderns as a graduating senior. The result is a bird's-eye view of the culture we live in and an increased appreciation for the subtle interplay between ideas and events. My students would tell you that no matter what I teach, sooner or later I always come back to its historical and intellectual context within the tradition of western thought. In the same vein, I studied abroad in Rome for a semester with my class and was privileged to be selected for a summer program in Oxford, England in 2014.

Like many Thomas More College students, I was drawn to teaching after my graduation. After four years of the academic life where study, writing, and presenting were the order of the day, I had fallen in love with it. Teaching at IHM gives me the opportunity to continue engaging the best that has been thought and said. I graduated from college in May of 2015. This has been my first year teaching at IHM. In addition to my academic experiences, I have taught CCD and run retreats at my parish, volunteered with the Naugatuck Special Olympics, and informally taught friends fencing at the YMCA.

Mr. Grinstead: What classes did you teach at IHM last academic year?

Mr. Chouinard: Last academic year (2015-2016) I taught the Junior High English and Spelling class and the High School Logic and Rhetoric class and the Latin classes. In addition, I inherited the High School Literature class last October. I also host a reading group on Thursday nights, where we meet to discuss cantos from Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*.

Mr. Grinstead: Explain what you covered in your classes.

Mr. Chouinard: The English and Spelling class covered basic English writing, spelling, and grammar. The students worked through the *Institute for Excellence in Writing* program, learning how to summarize a variety of sources and outline the essential points. The students then practiced writing clearly and eloquently based on the details from their outlines. In the same class, the students learned twenty five new spelling words each

week, on which they were tested on Friday, and did grammar exercises from their textbooks with my supervision.



My Logic and Rhetoric class with the high school students was exactly what it sounds like. For the first semester my students studied formal logic, culminating with deductive reasoning and the rules of a valid syllogism. In the second semester we studied rhetoric. For the third quarter the students learned general techniques and the specifics of persuasive writing and speaking, while analyzing examples of each. We also discussed the proper purpose of rhetoric according to St. Augustine. The last quarter was devoted entirely to debate, allowing the students to apply all they had learned and rhetorically engage each other on a given topic.



My Latin students worked through Fr. Baumeister's *New Missal Latin* textbook. They learned the ins and outs of Latin grammar while building a working vocabulary and practicing translations. They also practiced reciting basic prayers each day in class. In the Literature class the students read from a huge selection of works. I took my cue from the textbook, *Joy in Reading*; in the class the students learned to appreciate great literature and recognize why a work is considered great. This has involved identifying literary devices, studying the context and themes of a text, asking what purpose the author wrote for, and looking and how different authors have answered life's perennial questions. When I took up the class in the first quarter the students were in the middle of Robert Lewis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*. They studied Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner," Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, and a selection of poems and short stories. In the third quarter I taught a brief overview of classical mythology. We finished with Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and *Julius Caesar*.

Mr. Grinstead: Why are each of these classes important for a students' development?

Mr. Chouinard: As I mentioned regarding my own education, being able to understand and communicate in English is essential for all students, regardless of their plans for the future. In some schools the classics are now considered inaccessible for the modern student, who never learned how his language worked at a competent level. To fix that, you need to start with the basics of spelling and grammar.

Being able to combine ideas accurately to reach valid conclusions is the business of logic, and sorely lacking in the world today. As for rhetoric, St. Augustine says it better than I ever could: "Now, the art of rhetoric being available for the enforcing either of truth or falsehood, who will dare to say that truth in the person of its defenders is to take

its stand unarmed against falsehood? For example, that those who are trying to persuade men of what is false are to know how to introduce their subject, so as to put the hearer into a friendly, or attentive, or teachable frame of mind, while the defenders of the truth shall be ignorant of that art...who is such a fool as to think this

wisdom? Since, then, the faculty of eloquence is available for both sides, and is of very great service in the enforcing either of wrong or right, why do not good men study to engage it on the side of truth, when bad men use it to obtain the triumph of wicked and worthless causes, and to further injustice and error?"

Latin is essential because our civilization is still, at its heart, Roman (or at the very least running off the last fumes of Rome). The proof of this that men still say "by Jove" but nobody says "by Thor." As such, Latin remains an elevated language, the language of the sciences, the foundational works of literature, and, an infinitely higher use, the Catholic Mass.

Regarding literature, I'm going to borrow a quote from Chesterton: "One poet did not provide a pair of spectacles by which it appeared the grass was blue, or another poet lecture on optics to teach people to say that the grass was orange; they both had the far harder and more heroic task of teaching people to feel that the grass was green. And because they continue their heroic task, the world, after every epoch of doubt and despair, always grows green again."

I would only add that a working knowledge of the Greek and Roman myths is essential to any student of western literature. The great writers like Shakespeare and Dante assumed that their audiences would possess as much. And time spent reading Shakespeare or Dante is never wasted. ■

Email the School: ihmschool@catholicism.org



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

GUEST COLUMN FORMATION OF A CRUSADER — THE SAINT AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE

As a new Third Order member, I had willingly accepted the Invitation to a Crusade set out by the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. I believed in everything the Crusade of Saint Benedict Center stood for and wanted to be a part of the preservation of the dogma

Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus and the conversion of the United States of America to the Roman Catholic Faith, but where to start? How does one become, not merely a part of the crusade, but an effective member of the crusade, one sharing in its commitment to prayer and action and being a part of the same school of thought?

Fortunately, I was not left alone in this quandary. Saint Benedict Center, originally founded as a Catholic educational institution, had anticipated this. The booklet, "Invitation to a Crusade," specifically states, under the heading Third Order Foundation: "During their basic training, soldiers learn about their weapons and practice using them. Our weapon is the truth. We must learn about it in order to use it. To learn it we must study. Study informs the intellect and strengthens the will for our interior life and our apostolic life. *Nemo dat quod non habet*, (No man can give what he does not have); therefore, study of the Faith is essential for spreading the Faith."

The means by which the Tertiary is formed is through the Saint Augustine Institute, which has classes that can be taken online, in person at the Center, or in Circles of Study with other interested individuals. For my purposes, it had to be online. Looking into the program (a Syllabus is available from Saint Benedict Center) I discovered that it had five goals to it: familiarity with Church Latin, knowledge of Holy Scripture, a general acquaintanceship with Catholic philosophy

and theology, a knowledge of Church history, and general Catholic erudition.

Although I had read many of the publications of Saint Benedict Center over the years, I knew that a formal, structured approach to learning about the Faith and the Crusade was exactly what I needed. And I was right. The classes are categorized as follows: Sacred Doctrine, History, Sacred Scripture, and Philosophy; the course itself consists of sixteen trimesters in each class. There are also book reports to be completed. I soon discovered that every class delivered more than it promised! For instance, the first trimester of History consisted of an overview of all of history, from Creation, through the Old Testament periods, (including ancient Greece and Rome), the New Testament periods, and subsequent history, based upon Brother Francis' designated twenty four important dates of history. The first trimester was a very informative overview of all of history, with subsequent classes comprising a more detailed look at each specific period.

The Sacred Doctrine class, I discovered, also delivered more than it promised. Sacred Doctrine, as taught by Sister Maria Philomena, is comprised of three parts — the History of Saint Benedict Center (absolutely vital to one who wants to be able to understand our crusade and

explain it to others), Latin, and Doctrine. The Latin portion of the class, while requiring study, should not present a major problem to anyone who regularly attends the Tridentine Mass. The chief texts used in the classes are the *Loyolas and the Cabots* and the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*. One thing that keeps one from being overwhelmed by the amount of material, in both this and the History class, is the



fact that Sister Maria Philomena is an excellent instructor. With over 20,000 hours of teaching experience, It is clear that she really loves her subject(s), she knows how much students can handle, she is an informative speaker, and she makes effective use of aids such as slides, etc.

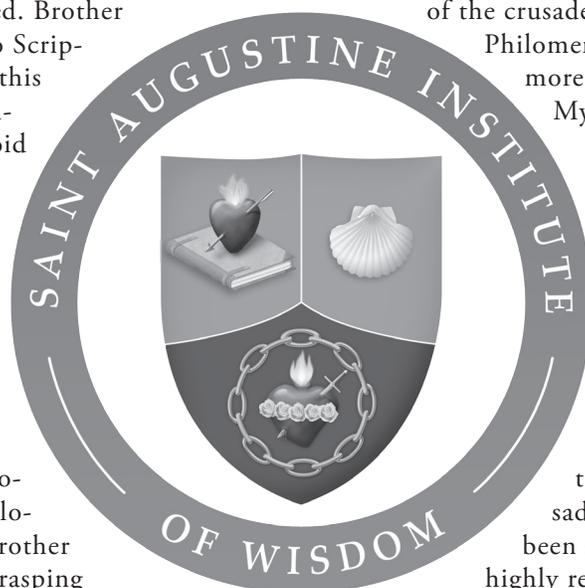
The Philosophy and Sacred Scripture classes are both recorded lectures of Brother Francis; to someone like myself who never had the opportunity to meet him, these recordings are a real blessing, indeed. Brother Francis had a profound insight into Scripture and Philosophy that is rare in this day and age, and I would affirm unequivocally that if one wants to avoid the errors of modern thinking he is the teacher to make one's guide. That is the role of an educator. The Latin verb *educere* means to "lead out", which is to say "to lead out of ignorance" to knowledge.

Additionally, we are provided written material by Brother Lawrence Mary (M.I.C.M., Tert.), along with a question and answer forum conducted by Sister Maria Philomena. Both of these additions to Brother Francis' lectures are invaluable in grasping the concepts set forth in the class.

These classes provide an opportunity to study the dogmatic and doctrinal teachings of the Church and Church

history. Through the study of the life and teachings of Our Lord Himself, along with the great Popes, Saints, and Doctors of the Church, one can become an effective member of the crusade, or, in the words of Sister Maria Philomena, at the very least become one more badly needed "Healthy Cell in the Mystical Body of Christ."

The classes can also be taken at one's own pace. In my case, I am only able to take one class per week, on the average. The cost is surprisingly low in relation to the knowledge and wisdom imparted. I, for one, am convinced that there is no better method to learn the Catholic Faith, and I consider it indispensable for anyone aspiring to maximize his benefit to the crusade. I feel extremely blessed to have been given this opportunity for study and highly recommend it to anyone. ■



For more information on the Saint Augustine Institute, email Sister Maria Philomena: smph@catholicism.org

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V. Let us pray for our pontiff, Pope Francis.

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, Francis, 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).

EXTRA ECCLESIAM NULLA SALUS

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).

Notes:

- Listen to Reconquest on internet radio: www.reconquest.net
- The 2017 Conference will be October 6th and 7th.

Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary



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