

# MANCIPIA

November/December 2012

THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER



Father Michael A. Jarecki.  
Oct. 6, 1917 — Oct. 22, 2012.  
Requiescat in Pace!  
[See back for details.]

Foundation frost walls are finished.  
Next step will be pouring the concrete floor,  
then the framing will begin.



Br. Andre Marié, M.I.C.M.,  
Prior

movements have grown with frightening rapidity since I was a young man. One such movement — probably the most prominent — is the homosexual agenda.

Whether it be the effort to redefine marriage (so that we are expected to distinguish “gay marriage” from real marriage, which we might redundantly refer to as “heterosexual marriage”), the indoctrination of children in government schools with all manner of homosexualist propaganda, or the systematic queering of the military, the pace of the movement and the sheer arrogance of its partisans has increased beyond all proportion to the numbers of homosexuals themselves.

A subtler reality is the more widespread degeneration of masculine friendship. I was reading a passage from *The Return of the King* the other day when it struck me how often men are said to “love” other men, and that in a very devoted way. Legolas spoke of how Aragorn inspired love in all who knew him. Many of the more noble male characters, including Sam and Frodo, are said to love each other. Now, surely, the author was no homosexualist. Tolkien was describing, in very noble and beautiful terms, an ardent love of friendship between two normal men (or elves or hobbits, as the case may be).

These thoughts brought to my mind a *cause célèbre* that occurred shortly before the beatification of John Henry Cardinal

## TO FRIENDS OF THE CRUSADE: THE LOVE OF MASCULINITY

Being only slightly older than a Biblical generation, this author hardly has a right to muse on how things were “back in my day.” Which is all the more reason for me to express alarm when I observe that certain morally corrosive

Newman. There were camp assertions in the British press that the Cardinal was a homosexual. The claim was based upon the friendship that existed between Cardinal Newman and his long-time friend, Father Ambrose Saint-John. For instance, Newman wrote thus of the then-recently-deceased Saint-John:

“From the first he loved me with an intensity of love, which was unaccountable. At Rome twenty-eight years ago he was always so working for and relieving me of all trouble, that being young and Saxon-looking, the Romans called him my Angel Guardian. As far as this world was concerned I was his first and last. He has not intermitted this love for an hour up to his last breath.”

The two were buried next to one another, which led to a dustup when the Church wanted to exhumate Blessed John Henry’s body and move it as part of the beatification process. A homosexual activist shrieked that separating the two “gay lovers” was “an act of moral vandalism” and “an act of shameless dishonesty and personal betrayal by the gay-hating Catholic Church.”

The defenders of Cardinal Newman, including Jack Valero (Opus Dei’s Press Officer in the UK), made the point that, in former times, there was a nobler ideal of friendship, and that two male friends could love each other very devotedly in a way that is not so common now. In other words, the gratuitous assumption of the homosexual activist that Newman and Saint-John were queer was more a testimony to the low ebb of modern friendship than it was a critique of the moral character of Cardinal Newman and Father Ambrose Saint-John.

But the Cardinal is certainly not alone as a victim of this interested historical revisionism. According to a certain degenerate reading of the Scriptures, the relationship between such



The first, second, and third order members of the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary who attended this Conference



Biblical figures as David and Jonathan is subject to the same interpretation. (Alas! So is that of Jesus to His “Beloved Disciple,” Saint John.) In all these cases, genuine love of friendship is rendered erotic in the complete absence of evidence. Taken to its logical terminus, this process will end in defining all love as erotic. In the interests of decency, I must refrain from fleshing out this observation.

Is it the case that in place of what Saint Thomas calls the “love of benevolence” there now exists only the “love of concupiscence” — and that, of the basest and most unnatural sort? If the answer is in the affirmative, then charity has grown cold and the end times may soon be upon us: “And because iniquity hath abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold” (Matt. 24:12). Whether or not that is the case, we have work to do. That work includes safeguarding what is true, good, and beautiful in friendship.

If charity has not completely grown cold, it certainly has suffered a notable drop in temperature. Not all the blame for this falls on homosexuals, of course. If it did, their negligible numbers would make for an equally negligible effect. But we are seeing a pandemic phenomenon, which was observed above

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when I referenced Jack Valero’s defense of Cardinal Newman. One of the signs of this increasing lukewarmness of charity is that normal men do not really love each other the way men did in more Christian (and even more humane) times. Perhaps they are afraid to love one another lest they be branded perverts.

But the initial cause of the problem; rather, it is part of a continuing downward spiral. The real problem runs deeper, and has already been hinted at: The modern male — stuck in the rut of adolescence — has lost the concept of the love of benevolence, a love based upon the good of the other, and has instead made the love of concupiscence the sole love he knows. In many cases, this weak love is but an extension of his own narcissism, as if he might write, instead of the moving lines of Cardinal Newman, something like this: “I like you because you gratify me in some way — and gratifying me is what I’m all about.” Add several buffoonish acronyms, abbreviations, and misspellings and you have the definitive “text” of the modern male.

The intimate male friendships of which we have been speaking are merely natural relationships. To be sure, they can and should be elevated by divine grace so that we love one another in Christ, but, like other legitimate forms of love, they are natural to man. Taking into account the great truths that grace builds on nature, and that Jesus Christ calls us to be His “friends,” we conclude that the modern male must cultivate the authentic love of friendship if he wants to be a Christian. Otherwise,

how can he be intimate with Jesus Christ, the Man-God whom he receives in Holy Communion?

Intimacy with Jesus is necessary for sanctity. Sanctity is necessary for salvation.

Recovering true friendship is also necessary if we are to maintain (much less recover) a Christian ideal of social normalcy. Some years ago, I wrote a paper on “Saint Augustine’s Ideal of Christian Friendship.” It is posted on our website, use the search bar to find it.

The father who wishes to teach his son what real friendship is might want to give it a read. •

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

## APPRECIATION

BY BROTHER ANDRÉ MARIE

Your virtues, they are vices;  
Your deeds are each a sin.  
Inside no tad of goodness,  
Your bright veneer is thin.

Your thoughts must all be darksome,  
Your plans self-serving, too.  
That smile masks all your malice —  
But I see straight through you.

O sure, you look all sweetness  
To those that are naive.  
What tangled webs you’ve woven,  
You’ve practiced to deceive.

I thank the Lord of Heaven  
That like you I’m not now —  
or ever: Wretched sinner!  
I’m holier than thou!

All praise and laud and honor,  
Be to the Holy Three.  
But honorable mention,  
At least, should come to me.

Amen.





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

## CONVENT CORNER A SECRET ON MEDITATION

A few articles ago I told you about my grace-filled, one-day retreat. My intention in sharing this with you was to make you desire to go on retreat yourself. “Holy desires are the wings that make us fly to God,” said Saint Teresa of Avila. At the end of the article, I invited you to contact me so that I could

tell you a secret of that retreat. Now, I want to share with all of my readers that secret, because you may be missing the graces of retreat that God is waiting to give you.

You will recall that I had long been desiring to go on retreat. Not seeing the possibility of realizing that desire made me desire it all the more. I even entertained daydreams about it! A mental image of a tiny log cabin out in the woods grew more detailed and alluring as the months lengthened. I kept finding myself kneeling in prayerful silence in my little log cabin — alone with God. And I kept feeling myself gently, but strongly awakened by the reality that God wanted me to be consciously at my present post of duty. That is where I will find Him right now, and not by escaping into some log figment of my imagination away from His will.

And then, our students were invited to perform at the BigE (New England Exposition). This was quite an honor and opportunity! We considered, accepted, and began practicing our fiddles, guitars, mandolins, and rhythm instruments for the occasion. As the principal, I don’t usually go along on field trips, but since I provide the percussion for our group, I was scheduled to go on this trip.

The idea of going to a huge fairground with lots of worldly noise, activity, and thousands of people was not at all a pleasant one for me! I asked Our Lady to make use of me for the sake of those who would see or hear me. My anticipation was full of anxiety and provided a meritorious point of resignation for me for weeks ahead of time.

Then the day arrived and the bright, sunny morning trip to the fairgrounds was beclouded by dread for me. After finally arriving and taking a quarter of an hour to find a parking place, our little group filled our arms with our instruments, costumes, amplifier, and lunch, and plunged into the ocean of people and noise. I was wishing I had an umbrella or a shield to hide me!

After a long walk through booths, buildings, and people, we finally came to the large New Hampshire building in which we were to perform. But it wasn’t until we had ridden the whitewaters of the human river within the building that we came to the stage around which the river flowed and on which we were to perform. We set up, prayed and began to perform. Some people in the river paused to enjoy the children playing and singing folk music and to wonder at sisters in full habit. But the river didn’t ever stop and only swelled as the lunch hour approached.

Finally, I estimated that more than three hundred people were passing our little stage per minute.

At the end of our first hour-long performance, the students and adults prepared to take a break by visiting the interesting agricultural and historical demonstrations, taking a few fun rides, and eating some of the tasty fair food. It was then it came to my attention that the stage with our instruments and other belongings needed to be guarded. Being the principal, I volunteered for the job. I suddenly realized that I would be alone in the middle of my most scary imagining, for hours!

Well, there was nothing to be done but to send the others on their way to the sites and delights of the fairgrounds, and for me

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I asked Our Lady to make use of me for the  
sake of those who would see or hear me.

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to take up my post on the stage with my bagged lunch, guarding the instruments and costumes they had left behind. I sat in a “back corner” of the small stage (still fully visible to the human river), prayed my Angelus, and began to eat my lunch.

I then had the most striking experience! I felt like I was off in a solitary place as I had so desired, very relaxed and recollected, oblivious to all of the noise and sights around me. Truly, I had entered my blessed and longed-for “log cabin in the woods” — yes, right there on stage in the midst of thousands of noisy people!

I picked up a catechism I had brought and my rosary, and for the next seven hours I had the most consoling set of meditations and prayer. I honestly had thought that I would have to go far away to a solitary retreat in some natural setting to become that recollected and have such continual mental prayer! I had been longing for it. I never guessed that I could find it at the BigE — on stage! About twenty people came up to talk to me about the Faith. I gave out a few Rosary pamphlets and catechisms which we had brought along “just in case.” The visits I had were much like the highlights of our missionary work.

Then, after two more performances sandwiched between hours of worldly din, we forded the human river again and went, in the dark, to our vehicles. I was full of peace and much more conscious of God’s presence. It was as though I had been on a solitary retreat in the woods. Thank God I didn’t follow my “holy” inclinations to avoid this occasion!

“Come now, insignificant mortal. Leave behind your concerns for a little while, and retreat for a short time from your restless thoughts. Cast off your burdens and cares; set aside your labor and toil. Just for a little while make room for God, and rest a while in Him. ‘Enter into the chamber’ (Matthew 6:6) of your mind, shut out everything but God and whatever helps you to seek Him, and seek Him ‘behind closed doors’ (Matthew

6:6). Speak now, my whole heart: say to God, 'I seek Your Face; Your Face, Lord, do I seek' (Psalm 27:8)." (From the *Proslogion* of Saint Anselm)

You know, of course, that God (all Three Divine Persons) is dwelling in you if you are in the state of grace. Why can't you pay attention to God in your heart? Because you are more interested in the passing things of this world — the "cares, riches, and pleasures" of this world. Is that a problem? Well, if you were to die just now, would you want your thoughts and desires to carry you to their destination? Would they carry you to heaven? They will carry you somewhere! "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be" (Luke 12:34).

I think the very public position I was in (sitting on stage in the midst of thousands of people) actually helped to force me to withdraw into myself — into my soul. Perhaps you have had a similar experience? At an airport or wedding reception, you were perhaps able to have a private conversation while blocking out the din around you. Watching a riveting movie, it was perhaps hard for anyone to get your attention. Or, turning your attention from an unpleasant subject (such as your least favorite subject in high school), it took perhaps an Herculean effort to draw it back.

In the case of daydreaming, our mind is turning effortlessly to things that seem to please us more than our present duties. In the case of worry, our mind is slipping into the pit of a bad daydream, far from God and His loving providence. In both cases, we are prevented from attending with complete focus on what we should be doing.

All of these examples demonstrate some aspect of our focus or attention. Our attention is something we should strive to get

hold of, like the reins on a horse. Whoever or whatever controls our attention has the power to direct our destiny — eternally. This is why you will find much in spiritual books about attention — called "recollection" in most spiritual contexts.

Recollection is so important that without it you will not be able to keep your faith and endure the persecution that has begun even now — if indeed your faith is, today, alive in your life.

Do you have the courage to find out what your attention is fixed on? If so, go to the mall. Yes, you did get me right! Saint Padre Pio says that, "Your distractions reveal your attachments." If going to a mall distracts you from God, you can use the occasion to discover what your attachments are so that you can, by God's grace, rid yourself of them.

Don't imagine that a trek into the forest or desert will rid your heart of the things in the mall that delight you. The mall will follow you! While alone in the wilderness, Saint Benedict was so tormented by the memory of the young ladies he had seen while in the city that he threw himself into a patch of thorns to drive away the temptations. And, on the other hand, the saints didn't dispel their thought and love of God by merely traversing the equivalent of a mall in the ancient cities.

At the mall, do the tiles on the floor make it difficult to pray? How about the lights above? Probably not. You need to enter into yourself, get to know yourself, in order to put yourself aside and find God — at all times and in all places.

Why can't you find God at the mall? My dear reader, fellow Catholic and crusader, pray (don't just say) your Rosary, and follow the graces your Mother will give you. "Today is the day of salvation." •

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



Panel Discussion at 2012 Conference





Brother Francis, M.I.C.M.

## FOUNDERS' COLUMN

# THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED

*What follows is a good chunk from a monograph of Brother Francis' written in the mid-1980s. It is, unfortunately, out of print. The essay was written to answer basic questions interested Catholics had regarding the reasonableness of our defense of the doctrine extra Ecclesiam nulla salus. The full text can be found on our website under the title, The Stone Which the Builders Rejected — The Dogma of Faith.*

A somewhat curious accusation frequently levelled against us is that we are “monomaniacs.” Our antagonists feel comfortable judging us as excessively preoccupied with preaching all the time about “No salvation outside the Church” and nothing else — as if we were programmed to do only this by a “charismatic” founder who mesmerized us into specialized robotons. Anyone who has bothered to get to know us directly, or through our publications and cassettes, knows full well that we are a school of Catholicity. We offer an entire education in the Faith, the fruit of some forty years of prayer, study, and missionary labor. But all of our efforts would be of no avail in stemming the tide of revolution within the Church if we were not, above all else, a crusade. There is a purpose, more than just devotional, behind our persistence. We are engaged in a doctrinal battle which involves the preservation of the Church’s fundamental dogma. Our mission is to defend the Faith in its entirety and to be of whatever influence we can on the Church’s hierarchy, moving them to proclaim clearly to the world where, alone, men can find the means of salvation.

If we are indeed “monomaniacs,” it can only be in the sense that we have but one dominant concern — the salvation of souls. The whole world, as anyone can see, is starving for spiritual food. And the granaries are standing there, unadvertised, in the Catholic Church.

When a doctor examines a patient he is above all concerned with the cause of the man’s illness. He does not concern himself with the man’s heart if it is a tumor on the brain that is killing him. The tumor is diagnosed as the cause of many complications, hence the doctor directs all his efforts to remove it. Because the doctor is so preoccupied with this one consideration — health — would you call him a monomaniac? Hardly! A physician who is unconcerned with causes would be considered incompetent, and could quickly be sued for malpractice.

So let us be realistic. Every true Catholic ought to be “preoccupied” with the Church’s teaching on salvation when we consider the hierarchy of ends. Our first charity to our neighbor, if we have the Faith, can be nothing less than assisting him in attaining the ultimate Good. And we religious, who are employed by Christ to announce His Name to all men, ought to be warning the whole world that whosoever is traversing a path



Friends of Saint Benedict Center held a Rosary Rally at Central Square, Keene, NH

outside the Catholic Church is heading toward a precipice that will drop him into eternal misery. Our tactics in applying the truth we defend may vary, depending on the grace and circumstance given. But we find it outrageously offensive to charity — not to mention faith — to compromise the infallible doctrine because of human fear or human respect. In so doing we gamble with another man's eternal destiny.

### The Foundational Dogma

Why then do we insist that this one dogma, above all the rest, deserves to be called foundational?

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is not just another person. He cannot be rejected with impunity. His very Name ought to tell us that, for His Name means Savior. "If you do

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## Why then do we insist that this one dogma, above all the rest, deserves to be called foundational?

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not believe that I am He," He told the Jews, "you shall die in your sins." He who promises to lift us up to share in the divine life in eternity, can certainly lay down the terms required, and the consequences to be suffered by those who spurn His offer. The consequence of rejecting the gift of salvation, as the Gospel ("good news") relates, is very clearly spelled out: "He that believeth not shall be condemned." And faith in Jesus implies a surrender of the will in obedience to all His commandments: "If you love me keep My commandments." And again, "Go ye into all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded thee. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not . . ." Belief implies obedience. They are mutually related in the supernatural order. One cannot believe with divine faith when one refuses to obey.

Now, authority is what ultimately matters when it comes to pleasing God by faith. "Without faith," to quote Saint Paul again, "it is impossible to please God." Faith then is that supernatural virtue through which we believe all those truths revealed by God, without denying this one or that one, but believing all on the authority of God revealing and the Church teaching. Our Savior did promise that He "would not leave us orphans" and that He would be with us "all days even unto the consummation of the world." So there must be an authority speaking in His Name unto this day.

We know that when Jesus walked this earth He needed no credentials authorizing Him to promulgate His doctrine. He neither had nor sought credentials from the rabbis. The voice of His Father was enough: "This is My beloved Son; hear ye Him." Christ began His public life by performing a miracle — the changing of water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana. Everyone who witnessed the event noticed that He called upon no power to assist Him. He commanded and the elements were changed. With such power, inherent in His Divine Nature, He would perform many more miracles as a testimony to His mission. Indeed, the jealous Pharisees did inquire as to the source of

His authority: "Who hath given thee the authority to do these things?" they asked. But the more frustrated they became over this Nazarene's popularity, the more did the crowds continue to flock to Christ. For the Scripture says, "He spoke as one having authority, not as the Scribes and the Pharisees."

His doctrine had a power of its own. When Jesus spoke, grace poured out over His audience, confirming in their hearts that such wisdom surely was divine. How could this Galilean have such knowledge when He had not even studied in the Rabbinical school? A mere carpenter's son! Everything about this Man, the time and circumstances of His birth, His miracles, His wisdom, His magnetism, His awesome authority, convinced all those who relished spiritual things that, indeed, this One was the Messiah, "the expectation of the nations."

"A sign which shall be contradicted," the prophet Simeon had foretold of Him; "the cause of the rise and fall of many in Israel." Consequently, when words came forth from His lips, rapt attention followed. No, there was no applause, as one would expect for an orator. His listeners were too overwhelmed to applaud. It would have been totally inappropriate, considering the nature of the message delivered. The challenge of faith that He offered immediately created two camps among those who heard Him. While the humble were "filled with admiration at His doctrine," the proud Pharisees were "filled with rage" at the things He uttered. His words were a sword dividing the good from the bad, the proud from the humble. He was then, as He is today, a sign of contradiction. Divine Physician that He was, He upset consciences. He made men tremble, and He made them rejoice "with exceeding great joy." It depended upon where your treasure was — in the heavenly Jerusalem, or in the earthly Babylon. •

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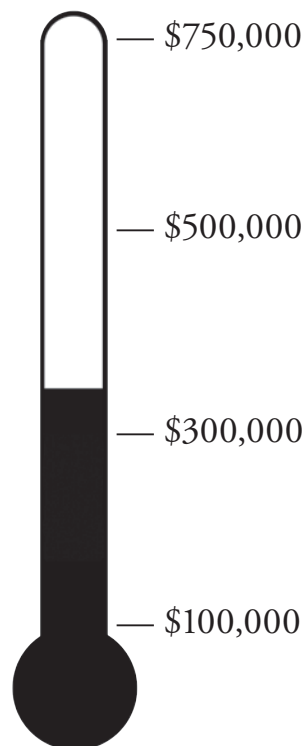
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## *Fundraising Progress*



So far, we have raised \$325,530 out of our \$750,000 goal. Thank you!

Above: We hope to have a statue like this carved for one of the side altars



Mr. Brian Kelly

## KELLY FORUM A ROSARY FOR ASIA BIBI

I have posted several news items and my own commentary on our catholicism.org website concerning a poor Catholic mother of five who has been hanging on to life, languishing in a squalid, solitary cell in a prison in Pakistan for over three years. She was arrested in June 2009, a

victim of her Moslem country's outrageous "Blasphemy Law."

Our heroine's name is Asia Noreen Bibi.

Pakistan's Penal Code 295 states: "Use of derogatory remarks, etc.; in respect of the Holy Prophet. Whoever by words, either spoken or written or by visible representation, or by any imputation, innuendo, or insinuation, directly or indirectly, defiles the sacred name of the Holy Prophet Mohammed . . . shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine."

Asia was a laborer on a village estate in Ittanwali in Punjab province. She worked together with some Moslem women who were, like her, very poor. Some of these women had been trying to convince Asia to abandon Christianity and accept Islam. Our heroine would always refuse, but one day, June 14, 2009, tired of their badgering, she courageously professed her faith in Jesus Christ as her Savior and tossed them a challenge with the bold question, "What has Mohammed done for you?" One woman, in particular, simmered, and when Asia went to drink from the common water bucket, she pointed at her and shouted "It is forbidden! The water is now impure. We can no longer drink it because of her."

That evening a mob gathered outside of Asia Bibi's home. They began chanting "Allah is great. Vengeance for the holy prophet," and then they broke in. Her husband Ashiq Mashi could not prevent the crowd from hauling his wife away, while her five children stood by helplessly pleading for them to stop.

In her own words: "At that moment, I was hit in the face. My nose is hurting. I am bleeding. I am half stunned. They pull me as though I were a stubborn donkey. I can do nothing other than suffer and pray that it stops. I look at the crowd, which seems to triumph at my feeble resistance. I stagger. The blows fall on to my legs, on to my back, behind my head. . .

"Do you want to convert, to belong to a religion worthy of the name?"

"No, please, I am a Christian. I beg you. . ."

"And with the same fury, they continue to beat me. One arm

is really hurting. I think it may be broken. 'Death to the Christian!' the angry mob screamed." (*Blasphemy*, Anne Isabelle Tollett)

The frenzied mob dragged our heroine to the police station where she was summarily arrested and incarcerated in Sheikhpura prison for the next eighteen months.

It was not until November 14, 2010, that Asia Bibi received a trial — a predetermined formality, a mockery of justice. Judge Mohammed Iqbal perfunctorily declared the defendant guilty of blasphemy and sentenced her to death by hanging. Then,

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"My good husband, continue raising our children like I would have liked to have done with you. Ashiq, my beloved children, I shall leave you forever, but I will love you for all eternity."

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with depraved insolence, he tagged on a fine equivalent to \$1100 US dollars — that would be about a two-year salary for Asia.

In her own words: "I cried alone, putting my head in my hands. I can no longer bear the sight of people full of hatred, applauding the killing of a poor farm worker. I no longer see them, but I still hear them, the crowd who gave the judge a standing ovation, saying: 'Kill her, kill her! Allahu akbar!' The court house is invaded by a euphoric horde who break down the doors, chanting: 'Vengeance for the holy prophet. Allah is great!' . . . After the newspaper reports ten million Pakistanis are ready to kill me by their own hands." (ibid.)



Asia Bibi

With the publicity, new threats against Asia and her family were generated. These were even more vicious than the local ones and they had spread throughout the province. One mullah offered 5000 euros to anyone who killed "the blasphemer." Consequently, Asia was no longer safe in the general prison population, so the police moved her to a solitary cell, a hellhole, six feet by six feet, with no toilet, sink, or windows. She has one soiled blanket and sleeps on a single mattress of braided rope, without sheets or a pillow.

In an interview with Catholic News Agency, biographer Anne Isabelle Tollett gives a description of her routine:

"She wakes up each morning, but not by sunlight, because



she never sees it, but when they bring her water at six in the morning. There is no ventilation, so she suffers greatly from the heat and from mosquitoes. She spends the day praying in her bed. And she waits every week for Tuesday to arrive, when her husband goes to the prison to see her. Otherwise she kills time reminiscing, thinking about her children and praying. . . . She prays all day long. She has never wavered in her faith . . . that has enabled her to keep going.”

The “trial” achieved one good thing. It brought media attention to Asia’s case. Pope Benedict himself called for her release three days later during his Wednesday audience: “I express my spiritual closeness to Asia Bibi and her family,” he said, “and ask that she soon regain her full liberty. . . . She should be released from prison as soon as possible.”

Another advocate for our heroine was Shahbaz Bhatti, the only Catholic then holding a position in the Pakistani government. He was the Minister for Minority Affairs. During his time in public office and as a leader of the Pakistani People’s Party, Bhatti was the principal crusader against the blasphemy law. When he took Asia Bibi’s case under his wing, even giving lodging to her family, he knew his days were numbered. He was a very devout Catholic choosing to live a life of celibacy so that he could be free at all times to help the poor and the victims of injustice.

“I have been told by pro-Taliban religious extremists that if I will continue to speak against the blasphemy law, I will be beheaded.”

Shortly after saying this he seemed to prophesy his own death while speaking of his desire for martyrdom: “I want that my life, my character, my actions speak for me and indicate that I am following Jesus Christ. Because of this desire, I will consider myself even to be more fortunate if — in this effort and struggle to help the needy, the poor, to help the persecuted and victimized Christians of Pakistan — Jesus Christ will accept the sacrifice of my life. I want to live for Christ and I want to die for Him.”

On March 2, 2011, he was gunned down by thugs from the Pakistan Al Qaeda after leaving a meeting at the PPP headquarters. He died quickly, having taken thirty bullets.

It was Shahbaz Bhatti who introduced Asia’s case to the French journalist, Anne Isabelle Tollett, who was stationed as a news correspondent in Islamabad at the time of our heroine’s sentencing. Tollett would give Asia’s husband, Ashiq, questions to pass on to his wife when he would visit her every Tuesday. This information became the matter for a book she wrote in collaboration with Asia in the form of the prisoner’s autobiography. That book is titled “*Blasphemy*.” It will be published in English sometime this fall.



Shahbaz Bhatti

In the same interview with the CNA mentioned above, Mlle. Tollette says: “Asia Bibi and her family have penetrated my heart and they are part of my family . . . but I don’t live in Pakistan. I am not threatened every day. I’m not afraid I’m going to die any second. So the least I can do is talk about her and do whatever possible to get her released. . . . This is a commitment I have

made to both of them and I won’t abandon them until I am successful.”

I end this brief summary of the plight of Asia Bibi with an extract from a letter she wrote in which she addresses each of her children and her beloved husband. It is a moving farewell salutation, and it exudes, as does the entire letter, the odor of sanctity.

“My children . . . the greatest desire of your father and I has been to be happy and to make you happy, even though

life is not easy every day. We are Christians and poor, but our family is a light. . . . I still don’t know when they will hang me, but be at peace, my loves, I shall go with my head held high, without fear, because I will be in the company of Our Lord and the Virgin Mary, who will welcome me into their arms.

“My good husband, continue raising our children like I would have liked to have done with you. Ashiq, my beloved children, I shall leave you forever, but I will love you for all eternity.

— Mom”

Asia Bibi’s lawyer and her husband had filed an appeal after the November 2010 trial. They are still waiting to hear from the higher court in Lahore, the capital of the province.

“Now that you know me,” Asia pleads at the end of the autobiography, “tell those around you what is happening. Let them know about it. I believe this is my only chance of not dying in the pit of this dungeon. I need you! Save me!”

Please say a Rosary for Asia and her family. •

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



The family of Asia Bibi



Bill Wroblewski

## GUEST COLUMN FAMOUS MARTYRS OF THE DIOCLETIAN PERSECUTION

Some of the most famous and fascinating of the early saints are those who suffered during the tenth, the last of the great persecutions of the early Church, that of the Emperor Diocletian (284 to 305 AD).

When Diocletian became emperor in 284 he realized the Roman Empire was too large for one man to govern so he created the office of Augustus, a sort of co-emperor, and of Caesar, a second-in-command to the Augustus.

He and his Caesar, one Galerius, were in charge of various eastern parts of the empire, while Maximian and his Caesar, Constantius Chlorus, had the west, this notwithstanding the fact that Diocletian was still the head man.

Sometime in 302, Diocletian and Galerius argued over imperial policy toward Christians. Galerius wanted to outlaw Christianity and terminate the Church's presence in the empire, whereas Diocletian preferred to just bar Christians from serving in politics and the army.

Upon consulting a pagan oracle, Galerius' policy won the demonic approval and, with the support of the court, Diocletian agreed to full-scale persecution. This would last from 303-311, Diocletian having retired in 305.

There were four edicts against Christians, each being progressively more severe. They were most stringently enforced in areas ruled by Galerius. The great persecution ended in 311 after Galerius had contracted a deadly disease. In an attempt to get Christians to pray to their God for his recovery from illness, he issued an edict of toleration.

After this, there were other shorter periods of persecution before Constantine finally put an end to them, saving some of the outer provinces, in 324. After Constantine, there was another Roman persecution that lasted two years, from 361-363, instigated by the Emperor Julian the Apostate. Julian's last words as he lay dying from a battle wound in his campaign against the Persians were, "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!"

Now we will look at some of the saints who were victims of the Diocletian persecution.

"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church" (Tertullian, 160-225 AD).

The thirteen year-old virgin Saint Agnes was a victim of this persecution. Many well-to-do young men of Rome sought her

hand. When she informed them that she had consecrated her virginity to Christ, some went to the civil authority and accused her of being a Christian. She was subsequently arrested and, when she refused to renounce her Faith, the judge had her sent to a house of prostitution. While there, the power of God prevented anyone from abusing her. The pagan authorities, however,

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Such talk ... so angered the emperor  
that he decreed our saint be beaten  
to death with cudgels and thrown  
into the sewer.

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would not let her go free and, in the end, she glorified God by being beheaded. The year was 304. Multiple churches were built in honor of Saint Agnes and she is mentioned in the Canon of the Mass. Her feast day is January 21.

Saint Sebastian was martyred in 288, which was during the reign of Diocletian, but before the official edicts of persecution were promulgated.

Not knowing Sebastian's religion and admiring his attributes, Diocletian made him a captain of the Praetorian guards. During that time Saint Sebastian was supportive and encouraging to his fellow Christians who were being martyred by decrees

issued by petty local magistrates. He was then himself accused of being a Christian. Upon hearing his confession of faith, Diocletian delivered him to the archers of Mauritania to be executed. When Irene, the widow of Saint Castulus, took helpers to take his body for burial she found him still alive and she was able to nurse him back to health.

Once recovered, he purposely put himself in a place where the emperor would pass and, when he did, Sebastian freely reproached him for the unjust and cruel treatment of Christians. Such talk from a supposedly dead man so angered the emperor that he decreed our saint be beaten to death with cudgels and thrown into the sewer.

His body was removed by a woman named Lucina and buried in catacombs at the cemetery of Calixtus. A church was built over his relics by Pope Saint Damasus. In 826 his relics were brought to France and placed in the church of Saint Medard at Soissons. His feast day is January 20.

Now let's take a look at the saint for whom a town in Vermont, which lies on the shores of Lake Champlain, is named:



Saint Agnes, virgin martyr



the proto-martyr of Britain, Saint Alban. According to the renowned hagiographer who bears his name, Father Alban Butler, the Faith was planted in Britain during apostolic times; however, persecution didn't reach there until that of Diocletian. Alban, a pagan nobleman, had many natural virtues and was especially compassionate and hospitable to the poor. Although still a pagan, he gave shelter in his home to a priest named Amphibalus who was being hunted for his Christian religion. The holy example and teaching of Amphibalus eventually brought Alban to the Faith. Soon it became known to the authorities that Alban was harboring the priest. He helped Amphibalus escape by dressing himself in the priest's attire and getting himself arrested. When he refused to reveal the priest's whereabouts or offer sacrifice to the gods, he was tortured and condemned to be beheaded. The year was 304.

On the way to the place of execution Saint Alban prayed and a river divided long enough to allow him and a throng of onlookers to pass. Once across the river, the axe man who was to kill Saint Alban was so moved by the miracle and the saint's charity and peaceful resignation that he fell on his

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“The blood of the martyrs is the  
seed of the Church”  
(Tertullian 160-225 AD)

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knees before him and proclaimed his desire to be a Christian. A new executioner had to be found and both Saint Alban and the converted executioner were martyred together. Saint Alban's feast day is June 22.

Some ethnic groups have a pious custom of using the names of saints for family surnames. Among the French one such fairly common name is Saint Cyr, another martyr of the persecution we are discussing.

The story of Saint Cyr is particularly wrenching due to the fact that he was only three years old. In 304, Cyr's mother, Saint Julitta, took him from Iconium to Tarsus in Cilicia to avoid the raging persecution of Domitian, the governor of that place. Before that, she had tried to stay in Seleucia, but Alexander, the governor, took Diocletian's edicts as seriously as did Domitian.

When Julitta got to Tarsus, Alexander happened to be there also and, consequently, she was arrested with her son and brought before the governor. Although she was a person of high birth she did not give that information when questioned but would only say “I am a Christian.” This occasioned her to be scourged while the governor held Cyr on his lap. As the mother was being tortured and saying, “I am a Christian,” the child kept reaching for her. Cyr then scratched the governor in the face and said, “I am a Christian.” At that, the governor took the child by the feet and, smashing his head against the corner of the stone stairs, killed him.

The brave mother rejoiced at her son's martyrdom, and this only added to the anger of the governor. She continued to

refuse to sacrifice to the false gods while her sides were torn with hooks and scalding pitch was poured on her feet. Her earthly life was then ended by beheading. Saint Julitta and Saint Cyr share June 16 as their feast day.

When discussing the virgin martyrs of the tenth persecution it would be remiss not to mention Saint Lucy. Like Saint Agnes, she, too, is mentioned in the Canon of the Mass. Also, like Saint Agnes, she consecrated her virginity to God at a young age.

Her father died when she was a baby and her mother, Eutychia, brought her up in the Catholic Faith. Not knowing her daughter's vow, Eutychia wished her to marry a young gentleman who was a pagan. Lucy contrived various methods to avoid the marriage. In the meantime her mother developed a serious illness which lasted four years. Eventually Lucy convinced her mother to go with her to the tomb of Saint Agatha to pray for a cure. Their prayer was answered and the mother was completely healed. It was then that Lucy informed her mother of her vow. Eutychia then gave complete assent to Lucy's wishes, even allowing her to give all of her substance to the poor.

Now when the young man who wanted to marry her learned of her vow, he denounced her to the local governor as a Christian. This was in the year 304. Lucy was apprehended and an attempt was made to put her into a house of prostitution, but God rendered her body immovable. She was then tortured by various means, including fire. The severity of her wounds brought her the crown of a martyr's death as she lay in her prison cell.

There are many other saints listed in the Martyrology who received the crown of martyrdom during the reign of Diocletian. They are not as well known as the five we have highlighted in this brief eulogy. That being said, let us rejoice with the Church in her liturgical commemorations of all the martyrs. If we cannot attend their Masses we ought to invoke them on their feast days. It's our way of participating in the communion of saints as loyal Catholics. •



C. J. Doyle — a regular speaker at our Conference



Sam Zahaykevitz

## GUEST COLUMN KIDNAPPED TO HEAVEN

Throughout life most people never get the chance to truly watch God work. Recently, we were privileged to see firsthand how God works miracles in many small steps.

My wife Sheila has been praying for the conversion of her family to the Catholic Church for many years. Most of her efforts were directed towards her mother, Carlene. Carlene had never enjoyed good health. Last spring she was diagnosed with a rare, aggressive form of cancer. On September 19, she was told by the doctors that there was nothing more that could be done for her so the hospital sent her home to die. At that time Sheila asked her if she could get a priest, and Carlene said, “No.”

Two separate year-long Saint Bridget prayers on the Passion had been said for Carlene. Periodic fasts and sacrifices were offered for her. Masses were offered for her. We put her on the Saint Benedict Center prayer chain — more prayers, Masses, fasting, sacrifices, and rosaries. The support was uplifting.

We consulted with Father Phillipson. During our talk I wanted to come right out and ask him if he would visit Carlene. It would be a big risk because she might just reject him and we would have wasted five hours of driving. Father graciously offered to see her even before I asked.

Carlene’s health was deteriorating quickly. Father’s appointment was the following Friday. Would she even be alive then?

Sheila and I decided to leave it up to God. Friday would be the big day.

Thursday night I asked Father if he could say Friday’s Mass for Carlene. His email surprised me. Yes, he would say the 7:30 am Mass for Carlene. I queried Father as to how he could say the Mass for her with less than twelve hours notice when he was booked out a year in advance. He told me there had been a cancellation. Thanks be to God! It was at this time I knew we were going to be fine.

Minutes before I left to pick up Father, Sheila called to tell me that they were in the process of moving her mother to a hospice center. I met Father at exactly 1:30. When we finally

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### Father then gave Last Rites and the Apostolic Blessing to Carlene Ann. She had hit a homerun.

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arrived at the hospice center — in God’s providential time, not mine — Sheila was not there. What was wrong? Father needed to make a quick phone call and, just as he finished, Sheila drove into the parking lot. But what was this I saw? A passenger! Oh no, I thought, was it her father? He might be a stumbling block in getting Father to speak to Carlene! The passenger turned out to be our Labrador Retriever.

Sheila said, “I was so worried Dad [Mr. Field] would tell you to leave, but, at 4:30, he asked me to bring him home!” I couldn’t believe my ears.

Inside, Sheila spoke to her mother first. “Mom, it’s me. I brought some people to see you.”

Carlene never moved. Sheila said that her mother had not said a word all day. Father seemed concerned. Without consent there was nothing he could do.

“Hello, Carlene, this is Sam,” I said. “How are you?” She immediately responded. Her eyelids opened, but the pupils were rolled back in her head. She moved with small spastic motions. She did not speak, but she was responding!

Then I said, “I brought a very holy man with me. He would like to speak to you. His name is Father Phillipson.”

Father asked to have the door shut for privacy and for the next hour we were not disturbed. He greeted Carlene and told her that Jesus was going to be seeing her soon. Jesus wanted her to be part of His Body. The Catholic Church was His Body.

“Do you want to be a Catholic and be part of His Body?” Father asked.

With jerky movements she finally said, “Yes.”

Tears of joy came to both Sheila and me. Her mother was on her way! All the prayers, tears, and suffering were finally going to pay off!

Father then asked for permission to conditionally baptize her. Again, she said, “Yes.” The water must have taken her by surprise but she did fine and we told her so.



Sheila’s mother, Carlene Field



Father then went on to confession. This might have been a pitfall because Carlene had a hang-up with confessing sins to a priest.

"Are you sorry for all your sins?"

It took a long time, but finally she said, "Yes!"

"I'd like to confirm you. Will that be all right?" Father asked. Carlene consented, and Father broke out the oils. I was chosen as her sponsor, the pool of choices being quite limited.

Sheila and I were praying when Father caught us off guard asking for a Confirmation name. We hadn't thought of needing a name! Instantly, the name Ann came into my head, but I did not speak it aloud. At that moment Sheila turned to me and said, "Ann." God provides for even the smallest of things. Thanks be to God!

Father then gave last rites and the apostolic blessing to Carlene Ann. She had hit a homerun.

Tears of joy and relief came to us. It was finally over! The weight of the world was lifted off our shoulders. Life was good. God was great and merciful!

I said my final goodbyes and left with Father. At the front door, as we were departing, Sheila's father pulled into the small parking lot. We headed for a second Last Rites appointment in Derry, New Hampshire. Later Sheila told me that her father never saw us. God takes care of everything.

Father and I arrived home at 10:30 pm.

On behalf of Sheila and our entire family we would like to say thank you for all the prayers, support, and shoulders to cry on. We have a truly wonderful family here at Saint Benedict Center and it is a privilege to be a part of it.

As for Carlene Ann, she never spoke another word and died two days later. Her final words, despite the years of protest, were those needed to join the Catholic Church. Deo Gratias! •



G.C. Dilsaver drives home a point

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and His Friendship with Father McNabb*

Sr. Mary Peter, M.I.C.M. – *Unsung Heroes and  
Heroines: Living Up to the Challenge of Faith  
Today*

Br. André Marie, M.I.C.M. – *My Little Heroine  
and Her Big Ideals*

Mr. Gary Potter – *The Christian: Called to  
Heroism*

Dr. G.C. Dilsaver – *Courage Amidst the Collapse  
of Christendom*

Mr. Charles Coulombe – *Heroism at Home*

Mr. Brian Kelly – *Asia Bibi, Languishing  
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## A PRAYER FOR THE CONVERSION OF AMERICA

O Mary, Mother of mercy and Refuge of sinners, we beseech thee, be pleased to look with pitiful eyes upon poor heretics and schismatics. Thou who art the Seat of Wisdom, enlighten the minds that are miserably enfolded in the darkness of ignorance and sin, that they may clearly know that the holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Roman Church is the one true Church of Jesus Christ, outside of which neither holiness nor salvation can be found. Finish the work of their conversion by obtaining for them the grace to accept all the truths of our Holy Faith, and to submit themselves to the supreme Roman Pontiff, the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth; that so, being united with us in the sweet chains of divine charity, there may soon be only one fold under the same one shepherd; and may we all, O glorious Virgin, sing forever with exultation: Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, thou only hast destroyed all heresies in the whole world. Amen.

Hail Mary, three times (Pius IX, *Raccolta* No. 579).

## 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).

## CALENDAR NOTES:

- January 18: This day begins the traditional Chair of Unity octave, originally planned to last from the feast of Saint Peter's Chair at Rome until the feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul on January 25. A PDF of the prayers can be found on this page, along with some more background on the octave: [catholicism.org/chair-of-unity-octave.html](http://catholicism.org/chair-of-unity-octave.html)

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## Father Michael Jarecki, RIP

As this issue of the *Mancipia* was going to press, at 5:00 P.M., Oct. 22, Rev. Michael Alexander Jarecki went to his reward, aged ninety-five. Father Jarecki was a priest of the Ogdensburg, N.Y., Diocese, an ardent apostle of Our Lady of Fatima, a longtime chaplain to Saint Benedict Center, devoted friend and ally of Father Feeney and Brother Francis, and an indefatigable laborer in the vineyard of Our Lord Jesus Christ. A priest loyal to the traditional Latin Mass (when it cost *dearly* to be so), and a patient confessor who

comforted many, he is much loved and lamented.

*May the  
Standard-Bearer,  
Saint Michael  
— your holy  
patron — lead  
you into the holy  
light which was  
once promised to  
Abraham and his  
seed. Thou art a  
priest forever!*



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