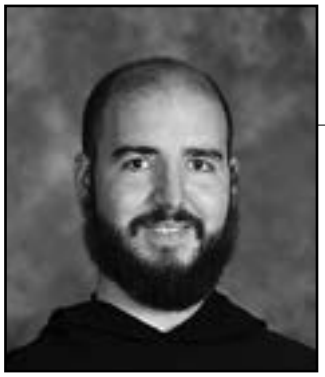
MANCIPIA

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2014

THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER



Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 14th



Br. André Marie, M.I.C.M., Prior

EXPLORING NATURE TO FIND GOD

Our readers may be aware that here at Saint Benedict Center, we have a scouting apostolate affiliated with the Federation of North American Explorers (FNE). The FNE has enshrined the following as point six of its Explorer Law: "An explorer sees in nature God's creations; he loves plants and animals."

Short and sweet, but there is much behind it.

Ancient Greek philosophers believed that nature was a knowable reality that could lead man to wisdom if he contemplated it. The Bible makes it very clear, as we will soon see, that God can be discovered by the reasonable consideration of His Creation. Medieval Catholic theologians referred to "the Book of Nature," which they saw as the natural revelation of God standing alongside the supernatural revelation of God in Scripture and Apostolic Tradition. And Vatican I infallibly teaches us that man, using his unaided reason alone, can come to the knowledge of the one, true God.

There are those who see and love God's wondrous creation, but stop short of seeing God in it. There are even people who *worship* the created world. Of these, Saint Paul says that they "changed the truth of God into a lie; and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever" (Rom. 1:25).

But God made his Creation in such a way that we could see Him reflected in its beauties, and He wants us to find Him there. This is how Solomon put it: "For by the greatness of the beauty, and of the creature, the creator of them may be seen, so as to be known thereby" (Wis. 13:5). Saint Paul, agreeing with this testimony, writes, "For the invisible things of him [God], from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also, and divinity" (Rom. 1:20). Saint Paul is being deliberately ironic here when he writes that what is "invisible" in God is "clearly seen" in creation. Our intelligence can see (hear, smell, taste, touch) the visible universe and reason to the existence of God, and even to some of His divine perfections.

This means that plants, animals, rocks, oceans, rivers, clouds, the sky, etc., can teach us about God. In his *Confessions*, Saint Augustine beholds the marvels of nature, and imagines them telling him, "We are not God, but he made us." He goes on, "My inner man knew these things through the ministry of the outer man, and I, the inner man, knew all this — I, the soul, through the senses of my body. I asked the whole frame of earth about my God, and it answered, 'I am not he, but he made me.'"

When we see truth, goodness, and beauty in creation, we see a reflection of God's truth, goodness, and beauty. The depth of the ocean, the vastness of space, and the enormity of a whale point us to God's immensity. A crack of thunder, a flash of lightning, and a storm at sea teach us of God's might and power. The repeated motion of the heavenly bodies, the cycles of the seasons, and the progress of time point us to God's eternity. A mother hen brooding over her young shows us a faint glimmer of God's tenderness. This last is not my image, but was taught us by Our Lord Himself: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, *how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings,* and thou wouldest not?" (Matt. 23:37).

Is it any wonder that King David, in Psalm 148, invites all of creation — sun, moon, stars, dragons, fire, hail, snow, ice, winds, cattle, serpents, feathered-fowls, etc. — to join him in praising God? (Crack open your Bible and give that Psalm a read. Better yet, *pray* it.)

When the Eternal Word through whom all things were made became Incarnate, He taught us in parables. Saint Matthew attributes these words of King David to our Savior: "I will open my mouth in parables, *I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world"* (Psalm 77:2, Matthew 13:35). How did Jesus "utter things hidden from the foundation of the world"? In parables that speak





St. John

of such things as a mustard seed, vineyards, rain, soil, pearls, fish, sheep, birds, the sky, the lilies of the field, herbs, yeast, trees, figs, wine, wheat, and even weeds (called "cockle" or "tares"). He tells us "Now of the fig tree learn ye a parable" (Mark 13:28).

God made a fig tree a teacher!

Jesus would have us explore these creatures of His to discover Himself and His Kingdom — the Catholic Church.

And yes, for all eternity, God knew that His Church would be built on the rock of Saint Peter. When He created rocks, the Divine Mind already knew that the solidity, strength, gravity, and firmness of that noble substance would one day stand for His first Pope and His only Church.

Find, if you can, a grape vine and then read this: "I am the true vine; and my Father is the husbandman. … I am the vine: you the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing. ... In this is my Father glorified; that you bring forth very much fruit, and become my disciples" (John 15:1,5,8). From this vine, learn a lesson: God wants you to bear fruit. What fruit? The fruits of good works, the fruits of holiness, the fruits of the Holy Ghost: Charity, Joy, Peace, Patience, Benignity, Goodness, Long-suffering, Mildness, Fidelity, Modesty, Continency, and Chastity.



St. Luke

When you see that vines really have to be "purged" (John 15:2) in order to bear more fruit, you will understand the reality of suffering and mortification better.

Because we can see God in creation, the Catholic imagination has found in plants and animals many diverse symbols of God, Our Lady, the saints, the sacraments, the Christian virtues, and other mysteries of the Faith.



St. Matthew

If you are interested in further explorations of the "Book of Nature," you may enjoy finding out the answers to these questions — to which many more might be added:

Why is a bee the symbol of Our Lady?

Why is a fish the symbol of Saint Raphael?

Why is a Pelican the Symbol of Jesus on the Cross and of the Eucharist?

Why is a Phoenix the symbol of the Resurrection?

Why is a man the symbol of Saint Matthew?

Why is a lion the symbol of Saint Mark?

Why is a bull the symbol of Saint Luke?

Why is the eagle a symbol of Saint John?

Why is a raven the Symbol of Saint Benedict?

Why is a shell a symbol of Saint James? (Hint: It's the "cockle shells" of "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary.") ▪

Email Brother André Marie at bam@catholicism.org



St. Mark



Sr. Marie Thérèse, M.I.C.M., Prioress

CONVENT CORNER
FISHING WITH PETER

Arriving at the lake, I ate a quick picnic dinner with the sisters and girls before we unleashed the canoe, and blew up the inflatable kayak. Down to the water we went and prayed a Hail Mary across the mirrored surface as they paddled off into the scenic distance of islands. I turned to go back to our car to sequester myself and finish my *Mancipia* article on the Seven Sorrows when I paused to consult the big board of regulations for the park.

"Hello!" chirped a little boy, about 10. "Are you a nun?", he asked expectantly. "Yes, I am" I said matter-of-factly. "What is that?" he queried, pointing to my fifteen-decade Rosary. As I took it off to show it to him, I explained that the beads represent prayers that we say every day along with meditating (thinking) about events in Our Lord's (and His Mother's) Life, Passion, and Life in Heaven. He declined my offer to get a Rosary for him from our car and mentioned that he only goes to Church on Sundays. With great interest he caught sight of the fish illustrations on the regulation board and proudly told me which ones he had just caught. With fishing pole and bait in hand, he was, indeed, quite a fisherman!

I told him he (let's call him "Peter") reminded me of my little brother and the times we used to go fishing together. He asked if I would like to go fishing. I told him I certainly would but that I didn't have a license. In manly fashion his small hand swept through the air providing the needed dispensation, and he declared that it was no problem since I would be fishing with him.

The next hour and a half was a grace-filled fishing excursion. I followed my little man down the floating pier where he very deftly arranged his belongings on the deck and began baiting the hook. I honestly can't remember the conversation too well. I had let him lead it and kept praying for guidance. We spoke about God, creation, prayer, meditation, heaven and eternity. He knew about the Twelve Apostles a little, and was interested that St. Peter had fished with a net. Our chat was peppered with many fishing hints and some great fish stories. He even provided singing and dancing! I asked him what was the largest number of fish he had caught in one fishing trip and he immediately said, "80."

We talked about God creating everything (and my little man added zealously to my own list of creatures). Then he added emphatically and definitively that, "God created LIFE" (actually, quite a deep point). I explained that God creates nothing new now, since dogs have baby dogs and cats have baby cats. The only exception is that He still creates human souls. I explained that the fish will die, the trees will die, the turtles will die and that is the end of them. But, human beings live forever. As for my little man and me, I told him that when we finished fishing and went our separate ways, even if we never see each other again in this world, we will never cease to exist and will definitely meet again one day. He concluded my thought by saying, "In Heaven." When I didn't immediately agree, he asked, "Do you believe in Hell?" as though my answer would determine his own belief.



I responded that I did, and told him that although it is a horrible place, you won't go there if you love God. After a pause, he concluded the thought with, "I bet not many good people go there."

He was having a great time showing me his casting skills and was amazingly chivalrous. He wanted to make me happy by reassuring me, sharing his things with me, entertaining me with his skills and gallantly covering for my ignorance and weakness. (Ah! What a lost art chivalry is!) His father (a very quiet man of about 60) eventually joined us at a short distance. Although my little man ran back and forth between us, loudly conversing and commenting (and throwing rocks into the water where his father was fishing!!!), his father was very placid.

Everything my little man did was done with pizzazz and lots of enthusiastic sound accompaniment. I dubbed one of his most raucous dances the "fish dance," since, despite the noise and waves produced by his activity on the floating dock, he caught two fish in the process! Ah! Perish the thought that quiet is important for successful fishing!

At a particularly exciting moment, he began whipping his line from one side of the pier to the other, slapping the water with it. Wondering how to stall this dangerous activity, I asked him if he had ever caught a fish that way. He replied with deft certitude that he had caught 6 perch. After he explained their condition, I was a bit more inclined to believe him.

One grand cast lassoed my ankles and caused the baited hook to disappear beneath my habit. After recovering from his surprise and putting everything in proper order, he let me cast. He then lightened the spirit by saying I would be the new bait. Later, he said, "Duck." I looked over, puzzled; then, understanding that he was planning to cast over my crouched figure, I decided to walk a few paces to safety.

Finally, he said in gallant fashion, "Well! It's time to leave." I thanked him several times as I fumbled to help him clean the hook and bend the pole according to his directions. I told him it had been a long time since I had been fishing with my little brother. "What, about 30 or 40 years?" he inquired pluckily. I paused, thinking. I told him I had been in religious life for more than 25 years, so it was probably about 35 years since those lovely days.

As we walked toward the bank, I again offered him a Rosary. "That's ok!" he said with a manly air, "I don't need one." I told him that every Catholic needed a good sword for the battle, but he again assured me that he was ok. What was I to do? I then told him that, at least, I had to give him a Rosary pamphlet and pulled from my pocket a tattered pamphlet with colored pictures. I explained that he could surely get a Rosary somewhere else, but that this pamphlet had the mysteries in it. "Mysteries!!!" he exclaimed. "It has Mysteries in it?" I assured him that it did (allowing the needed explanation to come from another source) and he enthusiastically took the well-worn pamphlet, and trotted over to his approaching father. "Daddy, she hasn't been fishing for 30 years!!!" His father quietly nodded and smiled.

I expressed my gratitude again as I headed toward our vehicle and said, "Good bye! God bless you!"

"Daddy! You have to say, God bless you!" Which, my dear reader, he did.

As I finished walking to our car and prepared to work on my article about the Seven Sorrows for this *Mancipia*, I realized that Our Blessed Mother had something else in mind for you, dear reader. If you love our Blessed Mother and pray to her, she will make use of you in the daily events of your life. By the way, could you say a Hail Mary for my new little brother, "Peter"? Little did he know that I was enjoying two fishing trips at once! ▪

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Fr. Leonard Feeney, M.I.C.M.

FOUNDERS' COLUMN
OUR LADY'S BAPTISM

Editor's note: Excerpted from Father Feeney's Bread of Life *with some deletions necessary in order to fit in this issue of the Mancipia*

And now I speak to you a profound and reverential thing. I say it with the deepest humility in my heart and the deepest reverence in my mind, and I hope the deepest courtesy in the words in which I say it.

What I say is this: The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Immaculate Mother of God, was baptized by water; and had to be baptized in order to be saved.

Our Lady was redeemed in her own special way. She was preservatively redeemed. From the very first instant Our Lady entered existence, she entered it as a justified child. The stain of original sin had never been allowed to touch her because of the foreseen merits of Christ, her Child. She was not only a just maiden, she was highest of all the just. The angel called her "full of grace." And the angel said, "The Lord is with thee." (Luke 1:28.)

But it was not enough, even for the Blessed Virgin, to have been preservatively redeemed and kept free from the stain of original sin. Her Child was her Savior, and she had to share in the fruits of salvation which it was His to bestow.

To be redeemed, therefore, and to be saved are not one and the same thing. Many souls, once redeemed, are now damned; Judas Iscariot, for instance.

Q. Did Christ redeem the whole world?

A. Yes, Christ redeemed the whole world. That is to say, He paid a price large enough to redeem the whole world. But the fruits of this Redemption were not applied to all souls. The fruits were theirs for the asking but they would not ask, and so they did not receive.

Q. Were the fruits of Redemption ever applied to some souls who are now in Hell?

A. Yes. Some souls benefited by the fruits of Redemption, entered the state of justification, lost it by mortal sin, died in that state and went to Hell. Therefore, it is true to say that many of the redeemed are now in Hell.

Q. Did Christ save all men?

A. Christ did not save all men. Christ died for their salvation, but most men refuse to be saved.

Q. Does not Christ wish all men to be saved?

A. Yes. Christ wishes "all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. 2:4.) This is called the *salvific will of Christ*.

Q. Does Christ wish men to be saved without coming to the knowledge of the truth?

A. He does not! This is not the salvific will of Christ.

If anyone shall say to me, why did Our Lady need to be baptized if she was conceived without the stain of original sin, I shall ask in reply, why did John the Baptist, who was sanctified in his mother's womb, need to be baptized in order to be saved?



"I ought to be baptized by thee," Saint John the Baptist said to Jesus, "and comest thou to me?"

"Suffer it to be so now," Jesus answered him. "For so it becometh us to fulfill all justice." (Matt. 3:14,15.)

Was John the Baptist baptized? Of course, he was baptized, else why did he say, "I ought to be baptized by Thee"?

One needs to receive the waters of Baptism even if one be John the Baptist. Our Faith tells us this innocently and clearly. And the great Doctors of the Church, including Saint Jerome and Saint John Chrysostom, positively affirm it to be so, and go out of their way to tell us that John the Baptist was baptized by Jesus.

When Our Lady journeyed down the hill country to visit her cousin Elizabeth, it was then that John the Baptist, the child of Elizabeth, leaped in his mother's womb. Why did he leap?

Saint John the Baptist leaped because he was in the presence of the Mother of God, who was sinless from the first moment of her conception; who was full of justification; who was full of grace! John leaped in his mother's womb because he was the flesh and blood precursor of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, the Saviour even of the Just — the Saviour even of the Queen of the Just! He knew by some mystical insight the purposes to which the waters of Baptism were going to be put when they were poured on the head of the future Queen of Angels.

We know that were it not for the presence of Jesus in Mary's womb, her journey down the hill country and into

the house of Elizabeth would have no efficacy on its own. We know well that the sanctification of the infant in Elizabeth's womb was due to the Divinity of the Child tabernacled in the womb of Mary. But neither God the Father in Heaven, nor mothers like Elizabeth on earth, distinguish with too much precision between a woman and a child when the woman is with child.



Elizabeth did not cry, "Whence is this to me, that my God should come to me?" She cried, "Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"

Not even Mary's entrance through Elizabeth's door sufficed for the sanctification of the Precursor. Our Lady's footstep and voice both were needed, for Saint Luke tells us that it was when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary that the infant leaped in her womb:

"And it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost" (Luke 1:41).

Our Lady, herself, when she answered Elizabeth, admitted the distinction between justification and salvation. And this is the point which I am trying so hard to make for you, dear children of Saint Benedict Center, so as to preserve your Faith. Our Blessed Lady said, in the very first words of her Magnificat: "My soul doth magnify the Lord." (Luke 1:46.) And well might she say this, because she was in the state of sanctifying grace, where magnifying the Lord is the soul's privilege.

But Our Blessed Lady immediately added: "And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." (Luke 1:47.)

Why did Mary need a Saviour? The answer is, because the waters of Baptism, which her Son would give, were necessary for her — not as redemption from original sin since she had already been preserved free from the stain of original sin — but to open for her the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven. The King must enter first, and the Queen must enter on the King's sacramental terms. ▪



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

PREFECT COLUMN
THE *REAL* BOTTOM LINE

Sufferings, disappointments, persecutions, frustrations, contradictions, insults, the low opinion of others, lack of consideration, coldness: all these are permitted by God as a challenge…The Challenge of Faith — Brother Francis

The saints have told us that the more they concentrated on conforming their will to God, the greater the gifts they received from God and the greater progress they made toward perfection.

The question is: How do I know what God's Will is for me? If we pray to God for His help, it will come. King David said to God, "My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready" (Psalm 56:8). He asked God for one thing alone… "Teach me to do thy will" (Psalm 142:10).

Saint Alphonsus is the Moral Doctor of the Church. *Catholic Online* writes, "Few saints have labored as much, either by word or by writing, as St. Alphonsus . . . a prolific and popular author, the utility of whose works will never cease. His last years were characterized by intense suffering, which he bore with resignation, adding voluntary mortifications to his other pains." Apparently one of his most painful sufferings was the loss of his spiritual advisor, confessor and friend, Father Paul Cafaro, C.Ss.R. The death of this worthy priest deeply affected him and the result was *Uniformity with God's Will*. One of his smallest works, this is one of my favorite books.

In one of the chapters, *Uniformity in all Things*, he writes, "In prosperity, even sinners find it easy to unite themselves to the divine will: but it takes saints to unite themselves to God's will when things go wrong and are painful to self-love."

How we act under fire, so to speak, is the measure of a man's love of God. "Saint John of Avila used to say: "One 'Blessed be God' in times of adversity, is worth more than a thousand acts of gratitude in times of prosperity." (St. John Avila. Letters # 41)

There is a certain happiness derived from perfect uniformity. Following the above examples, one not only becomes holy, but enjoys perpetual serenity in this life… "To them that love God, all things work together unto good" (Rom. 8:28).

Saint Alphonsus writes, "God wills only our good; God loves us more than anybody else can or does love us. His will is that no one should lose his soul, that everyone should save and sanctify his soul: 'Not willing that any should perish, but that all should return to penance' (2 Peter 3:9). 'This is the will of God, your sanctification.' (1 Thess. 4:3)." Remember, what can the omnipotent God deny us when He has given us His own Son?

The practical matters of uniformity, the saint boils down to four (and these are excerpts from a longer meditation):

1. "I*n external matters.* In times of great heat, cold or rain; in times of famine, epidemics and similar occasions we should refrain from expressions like these: 'What unbearable heat!' 'What piercing cold!' 'What a tragedy!' In these instances we should avoid expressions indicating opposition to God's will. We should want things to be just as they are, because it is God Who thus disposes them…"

2. "*In personal matters*… matters that affect us personally, let us acquiesce in God's will. For example, in hunger, thirst, poverty, desolation, loss of reputation, let us always say: 'Do Thou build up or tear down, O Lord, as seems good in Thy sight. I am content. I wish only what Thou dost wish.'"

3. "Let us not lament if we suffer from some *natural defect* of body or mind; from poor memory, slowness of understanding, little ability, lameness or general bad health. What claim have we, or what obligation is God under, to give us a more brilliant mind or a more robust body? Who is ever offered a gift and then lays down the conditions upon which he will accept it? Let us thank God for what, in His pure goodness, He has given us and let us be content too with the manner in which He has given it to us."

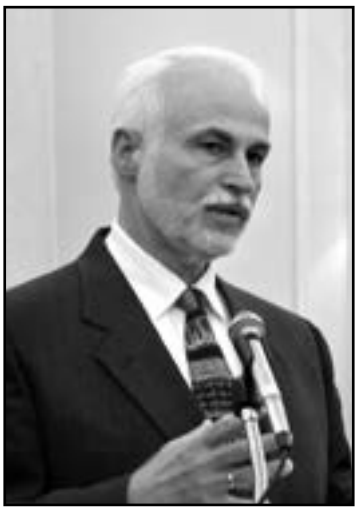
4. "It is especially necessary that we be resigned in *corporal infirmities.* We should willingly embrace them in the manner and for the length of time that God wills. We ought to make use of the ordinary remedies in time of sickness — such is God's will; but if they are not effective, let us unite ourselves to God's will and this will be better for us than would be our restoration to health. Let us say: **'Lord, I wish neither to be well nor to remain sick; I want only what Thou wilt.'**" (Bold added)

"But where it is a case of real suffering, we have the example of our Lord, who, at the approach of His bitter Passion, made known His state of soul to His disciples, saying: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death." and besought His eternal Father to deliver Him from it: 'Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me.' But our Lord likewise taught us what we should do when we have made such a petition, when He added: 'Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.' Matthew 26:38-39. In fact, Saint Alphonsus wrote, "Sickness is the acid test of spirituality, because it discloses whether our virtue is real or sham."

Through God's grace and Our Lady's prayers may a diligent reading of *Uniformity with God's Will* bring us far along the way of perfection by the cultivation of uniformity with God's holy will! I maintain that this little book (only thirty-one pages), if you accept the graces by a loving reading of it, will change your life. God bless you and Our Lady watch over you always. ▪

Email Brother John Marie Vianney, at BrotherJohnMarieVianney@gmail.com

INTERVIEW WITH LARRY KORALEWSKI



Larry Koralewski

This is part of an interview that Sister Maria Philomena conducted with Saint Augustine Institute graduate and long-time friend of Saint Benedict Center, Larry Koralewski.

SMPH (Sister Maria Philomena): What is the value of the Saint Augustine Institute? How has it benefited you?

LK (Larry Koraewski): The Saint Augustine Institute includes, as you know, a variety of different courses with a variety of different topics from history, theology, philosophy… It takes in a wide variety of things — all of which are Catholic, all of which go together, first to enhance our knowledge of the Faith, and, secondly, with knowledge, to enrich our devotion. In learning about the history of the Church, one also will learn more about the history of the Mass. In our Institute of Studies there is hierarchy of what is more important and what is less important. There are truths that all Catholics must hold, such as the sacrificial nature of the Holy Mass and the Real Presence in the Eucharist, and there are things that are not defined matters, theological opinions, disciplinary things, certain preferred devotions, and on these we can agree or disagree with other Catholics. Charity obliges us to keep Catholic unity in essential things, and liberty in matters of opinion, but in all things charity.

The Saint Augustine Institute gives us balance. The courses that Brother Francis offers us manifest this balance. Although we are committed to the traditional Latin Mass and we encourage those who would like to see reverence and mystery in the liturgy to join us in attending the Ancient Mass, we have no authority to give them a conscience problem if they turn our offer down. The dogma on salvation, on the other hand, is essential. One must believe this dogma, as defined, in order to be saved. It is not the greatest of dogmas, the Trinity and the Hypostatic Union in the Incarnation are certainly greater truths, but it is the most foundational dogma because, if there is salvation outside the Church and the One True Religion, then believing in the Trinity and in Jesus is not essential. One can take it or leave it.

SMPH: Can you say a word about Brother Francis as a teacher?



Sister Maria Philomena, M.I.C.M.

LK: Brother Francis had the most comprehensive knowledge of the history of the Church, of history in general, of the councils, of theology, of philosophy, of anyone I have ever heard. I considered him my mentor; I considered him my guide in the Faith. I don't know of any time — in any significant matter — that I have ever had to question his teaching. He was always so careful to make sure that he had the right answer for any important question he was asked.

In treating of complex matters in theology or philosophy, he had a gift of making them understandable; and you don't realize how understandable they are until you take the references he uses — the very books that he refers you to — and read them. In other words, though he may be a technical philosopher, he doesn't teach philosophy in a technical way. He addresses you like a child (he doesn't treat you like a child, but he addresses you like a child) making sure that you understand the concepts. He doesn't overwhelm you with terms just to impress you. When you are done with one of his courses you have what you need. It is complete.

SMPH: If he makes everything so simple, is there a chance that the student is going to get bored?

LK: Not boring, no! It is never boring. If you at all have a love for the Faith, at all have a love for wisdom and a love for learning, you will never, ever, be bored in Brother Francis' class. He does several things: When he teaches, he doesn't just dump something on you. There's repetition. He brings an idea in, he tests it, allows you to hear it, then he'll address it again — in the matter of the course. You see the idea again, presented differently. So, each time it makes more sense; it is much more comprehensive. So, it is very exciting.

SMPH: What is your personal opinion about the re-structuring that's going on with Saint Augustine Institute?

LK: I am very excited about it. The Saint Augustine Institute project has always been a bit confusing to the Third Order members and others who have encountered it. Those who wanted to participate didn't know precisely what they should do. I spent over a decade reading the books and doing the studies and listening to Brother's lectures, and never

Interview continued on page 14



Mr. Brian Kelly

KELLY FORUM

THE CHURCH IN KOREA, FOUNDED BY SAGES, NOT MISSIONARIES

Sometime in the mid eighteenth century, Korean ambassadors working in China came across Catholic books in Beijing that the Jesuits had distributed there going back to the mission days of Matteo Ricci (1597-1610).

The ambassadors were of the noble class, well-educated, and considered to be sages by their people. The predominant religion in Korea at that time, at least among the upper class, was Confucianism. These sages brought the Catholic books back to Korea, studied them, shared them with the educated class, but did not convert at that time because they were waiting for the leaders of the nation to do so first. One of them, however, Ni-seung-houn, decided to go to Beijing in 1784 to study Catholicism. While in Beijing he was baptized Peter Ri. He returned to Korea and won many converts. Then began the one hundred years of persecution that produced 10,000 martyrs. Many of Peter Ri's converts, among whom were Church leaders Paul Yun Ji-Chung and Jacques Kuen, and 122 of their companions, were martyred in 1791.

The first missionary to Korea was a man from China, Father James Tsiou. When he came to Korea in 1794 he found 4,000 baptized Catholics. Astounding! One man, Peter Ri, a layman, was responsible for that many converts! Father James Tsiou remained in Korea, building the Body of Christ sacramentally until 1801 when he was arrested and martyred. The persecution did not diminish; it grew worse. The torments these 10,000 Catholics endured were among the most gruesome recorded in the Acts of the Martyrs.

Around the 1830s, a letter, pleading for help and missionaries, was smuggled out of Korea and carried to Rome. Pope Leo XII responded by sending missionaries and establishing an apostolic prefecture for the mission land. In 1836, Monsignor Lawrence Imbert and other priests from the Paris Foreign Mission Society managed to enter Korea. They worked until 1839 when a full scale persecution was launched by the Buddhist authorities. The European priests were martyred. Native Korean seminarians had to get out of the country and they went to Macau, China, to be ordained.

The first Korean priest was Andrew Kim Taegon. He, too was destined for martyrdom, being slain for Christ in 1846. The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church in Korea as it was in the early Church. In 1864, an even more severe persecution began which took the lives of two bishops, six French missionaries, another Korean priest, and eight thousand Korean Catholics. The persecutions lasted until 1888. In 1984, while visiting South Korea, Pope John Paul II canonized *en masse* 103 of these martyrs, whose trials were more carefully documented. The Pope, himself, at the canonization ceremony gave the figure of 10,000 martyrs from the period between 1791 to 1866. Incredible as it may seem, Korea has the fourth largest number of canonized saints among all the nations of the world. Almost all of them are martyrs.

Here is an excerpt from the Pope's eulogy for the 103 martyrs:

They are your ancestors, according to the flesh, language and culture. At the same time they are your fathers and mothers in the faith, a faith to which they bore witness by the shedding of their blood.

From the thirteen-year-old Peter Yu to the seventy-two-year-old Mark Chong, men and women, clergy and laity, rich and poor, ordinary people and nobles, many of them descendants of earlier unsung martyrs — they all gladly died for the sake of Christ.

> "May I never betray him who is the Father of us all!"

Listen to the last words of Teresa Kwon, one of the early Martyrs: "Since the Lord of Heaven is the Father of all mankind and the Lord of all creation, how can you ask me to betray him? Even in this world anyone who betrays his own father or mother will not be forgiven. All the more may I never betray him who is the Father of us all".

A generation later, Peter Yu's father Augustine firmly declares: "Once having known God, I cannot possibly betray him". Peter Cho goes even further and says: "Even supposing that one's own father committed a crime, still one cannot disown him as no longer being one's father. How then can I say that I do not know the heavenly Lord Father who is so good?".

And what did the seventeen-year-old Agatha Yi say when she and her younger brother were falsely told that their parents had betrayed the faith? "Whether my parents betrayed or not is their affair. As for us, we cannot betray the Lord of heaven whom we have always served". Hearing this, six other adult Christians freely delivered themselves to the magistrate to be martyred. Agatha, her parents and those other six are all being canonized today. In addition, there are countless other unknown, humble martyrs who no less faithfully and bravely served the Lord.

One of the most beautiful exhortations I have ever read, short and stirring, was a farewell letter written by Korea's first priest, Father Kim Taegon, for his parishioners while he was awaiting martyrdom along with twenty others. It was found among the manuscripts of French Bishop Antoine Daveluy, also martyred in Korea.

"My dear brothers and sisters, know this: Our Lord Jesus Christ upon descending into the world took innumerable pains

upon and constituted the holy Church through his own passion and increases it through the passion of its faithful… Now, however, some fifty or sixty years since the holy Church entered into our Korea, the faithful suffer persecutions again. Even today persecution rages, so that many of our friends of the same faith, among whom I am myself, have been thrown into prison... Since we have formed one body, how can we not be saddened in our innermost hearts? How can we not experience the pain of separation in our human faculties?

However, as Scripture says, God cares for the least hair of our heads, and indeed he cares with his omniscience; therefore, how can persecution be considered as anything other than the command of God, or his prize, or precisely his punishment?… We are twenty here, and thanks be to God all are still well. If anyone is killed, I beg you not to forget his family. I have many more things to say, but how can I express them with pen and paper? I make an end to this letter. Since we are now close to the struggle, I pray you to walk in faith, so that when you have finally entered into Heaven, we may greet one another. I leave you my kiss of love."



Monument to the Korean Martyrs

A list of the 103 canonized Korean martyrs, along with an abbreviated history of the founding of the Church in Korea can be found on the Catholic Online website here: *http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=4774*

There is more. 124 more Korean martyrs were beatified August 16 while Pope Francis was in the country. These martyrs, often referred to as Paul Yun Ji-Chung and 123 companions, also suffered in the nineteenth century. Paul Yun is considered Korea's protomartyr.

124 more Korean martyrs were beatified August 16 before a million people

Today the Catholic Church in South Korea is growing at an astounding rate. In 1960, Catholics made up less than 2% of the population of 23 million. From then to 2011 the population increased to 48 million, of which 10-11% are now Catholic. At the end of 2013, according to statistics supplied by the Korean dioceses, South Korea had 4,261 priests and 1,489 major seminarians.

Many of the educated are drawn to the Faith in South Korea, not only on account of the sublimity of Catholic doctrine but also because of the zeal of fervent Catholics to win converts. Most especially, however, what impresses those who have become disillusioned with Buddhism is the charity to the poor and sick that marks the life of simple Catholics. Catholics profess their Faith publicly with pride in South Korea. The whole world saw this during the winter Olympics in 2010 when gold-medal figure skating champion, Stella Kim Yu-na, a young convert blessed herself devoutly before every performance. Confucianism is now followed only by about 22% of the population, with 45% having no religion at all. What often happens in Korea is that whole families convert together, for the family is sacrosanct in this nation, as it is in other nations of the Far East. And, what is also a common practice in the East, women obey the scriptures and wear veils in church.

This does not mean that the Church in South Korea is without major problems. Retired Maryknoll Bishop William J. McNaughton, first bishop of Inchon, South Korea, from 1962 until his retirement 2002, admitted in a recent interview with Catholic News Service that there are many problems. Only 25% of Catholics attend Sunday Mass, and birth control is common. The use of contraceptives is aided and abetted by the government's population control policies. In fact, South Korea (there are no figures for the Communist North) has one of the lowest birth rates in the world — 1.25 per married couple. Bishop McNaughton blames the consumerist onslaught which has accompanied the nation's tidal-wave prosperity. I disagree somewhat. Yes, prosperity can be a curse if it spawns materialism, but the faithful need strong direction from priests and bishops who are so often reluctant to preach about the sin of birth control. The same is true, as we all know, here in the USA.

Just as a sidebar: Calling to mind the great Catholic president of South Vietnam, Ngo Dinh Diem, (shot and tortured to death in 1963), I cannot fail to mention another good Catholic Asian leader, Thomas More Kim Dae-Jung, who was South Korea's first Catholic president. He served from February 1998 to February 2003. He once proclaimed publicly: "With the knowledge that Jesus was crucified for humanity, I could overcome all hardships and trials." ▪

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realizing that this was part of the Saint Augustine Institute course and I could have used it toward the degree. After fifteen years, then I went back and said: "Oh, I've basically done everything." I went back and did the book reports and everything that I thought was needed at the time to graduate, but never understood the connection. The program needed a practical leadership. The placing of a Sister for that job who had years of teaching experience, I think was the stroke of genius that will finally bring this into the forefront as it should have been all the while. The forefront, meaning, something which is offered (not just something that you stumble upon), which is structured, something which you can look at and say "Ah, I know what I have to do. I know where to go. There's guidance. There's help. I know how to get to step one to step two and so on; it's laid out for me." It's very specific — and it gives me direction, which I (or any student) would never have experienced before. So, I think it's wonderful. I can't recommend it highly enough.

SMPH: Good! Is there anything else on the question of benefits?

LK: There really is. The courses of study give us a common language, the common language of the Church. After I had finished some of Brother's courses I could go back and read older Catholic books with new eyes. One of the simple ideas often used in these old books is the simple concept of *first* and *second*. The *first* being what is, and the *second* being something that depends on what's first (an accident). But I never knew that before — so, I learned while reading a good book, to say this is first, and second is such and such…" When I would go back, I would say: "I see it now. It makes more sense." That gives you a common Catholic heritage. The Saint Augustine Institute puts you back in touch with what our heritage had been.

I had a good Catholic education in the 50's and in the 60's. I was very fortunate, very blessed. Until I discovered Brother Francis, however, and the Saint Augustine Institute, I didn't realize how blessed I was. What I learned through the Institute of Studies was perfectly consistent with what I had been taught in my youth — what I hadn't heard for decades. It was the kind of thing that when you would go anywhere in the world, you would have an affinity with another Catholic; they had a certain aura. There was a certain understanding, a certain set of qualities, that everyone recognized. It was a certain understanding of the world, a certain understanding of the relationship of the Church to the world, a certain understanding that everyone had to be a Catholic in order to save their souls. It was something you understood; that was just there. It's not there anymore; so Saint Augustine Institute puts us in touch with that. That was something that was a re-discovery. It was wonderful.

Brother Francis would always say that Father Feeney wanted a school of thought, a Catholic school of thought. That's what Saint Benedict Center was all about from its foundation in Cambridge. Of course, there were the Benedictines, the Dominicans, and the Franciscans, and the Jesuits, etc. — there were those divisions in different mission fields — but overall, there was a Catholic sense about the world, about politics, about the Church, about family, about government, about EVERYTHING.

SMPH: Can you say a word about the importance of philosophy?

LK: Philosophy is the handmaid of theology, *ancilla theologiae,* Brother would always say. That was the Church's axiom. It gives you the tools you need to better understand theology. For me personally, I am very lazy. I like things simple. I look at this complicated world, at complicated things, and I don't like complication because it means more work for me. What I really like, is a set of simple principles, very simple guidelines, so that I can look at the world, at a book, at a movie, listen to a conversation, anything — and have the means to instantly see whether I want to pursue it, whether is is useful, what I can get out of it , what in it is of value. It's a really beautiful shorthand to understanding all of these things.

SMPH: Could you tell the story you told me about how you can take a book and quickly analyze it?

LK: At one point, Brother Francis had given me a book, *American Education,* by a Dr. Bloom. He hadn't read it. We were visiting, and he gave me a test. He said, "Would you please look this book over and tell me what you think of it?" I said, "But, I won't have time to read it." He said, "That's ok."

So, I did. I used the tools I'd gained from philosophy and all my questions for Brother Francis and all the courses I'd taken in all the different fields. I went back and looked in the index to see what his [the author's] positions were, and I took certain key things. There are certain key questions. For example, who are his heroes? Whom does he quote? What is his philosophy? Does he think that the public education paid for by everyone is a good thing? Does he make that assumption? Or does he think that there are problems with it? Or is it that he sees that the problem is the system itself? And that sort of thing…

So, I went through that book, looking at the index, looking at how he defines certain things. It was very fast. In less than a half-an-hour I had concluded that he had a certain viewpoint: he was in favor of public education, he

did not understand the basic problem and the secularization — he did not understand any of that stuff. I was able to give Brother Francis an accurate report, and he congratulated me and said that he thought that was exactly right. So I was very proud.

SMPH: You passed!

LK: Well, you know, Saint Augustine Institute gave me a shorthand key to look at any book — I'm reading one that is a secular book, *Die Empty.* It's a book about how to make sure that the things you should have done you have done. So I can go through there, and like Brother said, like the bee, go right into the middle of the thistle (which is this book) and pick out the nectar that I'm looking for. I can analyze it very quickly. Within a few moments I realized that it was, first, secular; and second, that the author's viewpoint was not Christian but secular, period. Therefore, with that in mind, I'm quickly going through the chapters and picking out different ideas that will be helpful for me.

SMPH: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

LK: Providing a structure that had never been done before (other than in a very loose way) is the goal of the re-structuring of the Institute. Brother Francis, I think, assumed (and sometimes assumptions are good and sometimes they're not) that everybody had the same ability to study and organize the same way he did. And we don't. I think he assumed that one could approach the course of studies as a graduate college student might, with the discipline of many years of doing your own research, working in symposia, doing your own papers, having your own schedule which you would impose on yourself, and, I think that that was something which simply didn't work well in practice. Brother and I had that conversation, actually — and he admitted that (just to me personally). He said that he was a teacher; he was a philosopher; he was not an organizer. He knew that was a weak spot. So, you are in charge of organizing and you also teach — you, Sister, and those people who are supporting you and working with you — are finally adding that element which has really been missing until now. Keep up the good work.

For more information about the Saint Augustine Institute contact Sister Maria Philomena at: SMPH@Catholicism.org

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- **The Saint Augustine Institute of Catholic Studies is currently recording classes for students wishing to further their Catholic education. For more information contact Sister Maria Philomena at: SMPH@catholicism.org**
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