MANCIPIA

THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER

MARCH/APRIL 2015



"Mind the things that are above,
not the things that are upon the earth."
-Colossians 3:2



Br. André Marie, M.I.C.M., Prior

PRIOR'S COLUMN
THE EVIL IN OUR HEARTS

"Blessed are the clean of heart: for they shall see God." (Mt. 5:8). Without a doubt, the sixth Beatitude pertains to sexual purity, but not exclusively so. Its scope also includes purity of charity and of faith, as well as love of truth in general. Saint John Chrysostom goes so far as to make it synonymous with the presence of all the virtues and holiness itself.

We are yet in the midst of Lent, nearing its end, when our early Lenten fervor has sometimes, Alas!, waned a bit. Lent is, more than any other, a time to follow the directive of Saint James: "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. *Cleanse your hands, ye sinners: and purify your hearts, ye double minded*. … Be humbled in the sight of the Lord, and he will exalt you" (James 4:8,10).

During Lent, we are called upon to confront the evil that dwells in our own heart, and to do something about it by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. A necessary beginning to all this is to admit that evil really does lurk in our hearts, and that we augment it by giving in to sin.

In Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*, there is a passage of rare brilliance concerning good and evil in the human heart. Having just explained to the reader his own capacity — had circumstances been different — for being the torturer and not the tortured, Solzhenitsyn explains that his book is not a "political exposé" pitting the good people on one side and the evil people on the other. An ardent anti-communist, anti-liberal, and counterrevolutionary, the great Russian thinker was not, however, a simpleton; he realized that the reality of human evil is complex. (He also realized that there do exist genuinely evil people, as he says some pages later.)

"If only it were all so simple! If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds, and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?

"During the life of any heart this line keeps changing place; sometimes it is squeezed one way by exuberant evil and sometimes it shifts to allow enough space for good to flourish. One and the same human being is, at various ages, under various circumstances, a totally different human being. At times he is close to being a devil, at times to sainthood. But his name doesn't change, and to that name we ascribe the whole lot, good and evil.

"Socrates taught us: *Know thyself!*

"Confronted by the pit into which we are about to toss those who have done us harm, we halt, stricken dumb: it is after all only because of the way things worked out that they were the executioners and we weren't.

"If Malyuta Skuratov [the feared and odious leader of the secret police during the reign of Ivan the Terrible (1533-1547)] had summoned *us*, we, too, probably would have done our work well!

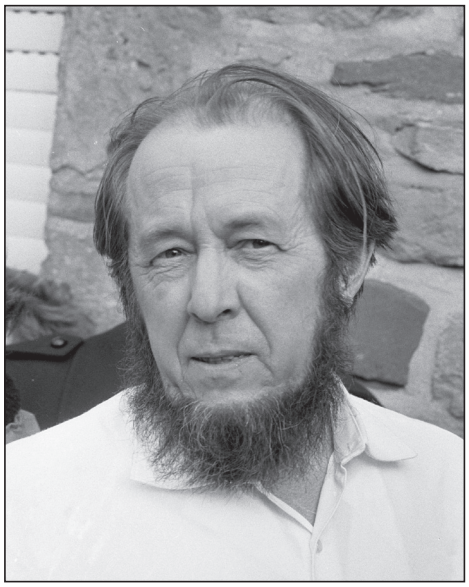
"From good to evil is one quaver, says the proverb.

"And correspondingly, from evil to good." (*The Gulag Archipelago*, Harper & Row Publishers, 1973, pg. 168)

The passage is worth reading over a few times.

We do not purify our hearts; God does, by His grace. But because we are not Protestants, we recognize the necessity of our cooperating with grace and *doing something* for God's glory and our salvation.

As we have said recently, and will keep saying, all the problems that beset us in Church and family, in State and even geopolitics have the same solution: the Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary — not simply *made* but actually *lived*.



Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

Let us consider now one aspect of the Total Consecration. Solzhenitsyn touched on it above, when he wrote, "Socrates taught us: *Know thyself!*" The attribution to Socrates (470-399 BC) via the writings of Plato is correct, but that Greek maxim γνῶθι σεαυτόν (*Gnothi seauton*) was first attributed to Thales of Miletus (c. 624-546 BC), and was engraved on the facade of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi.

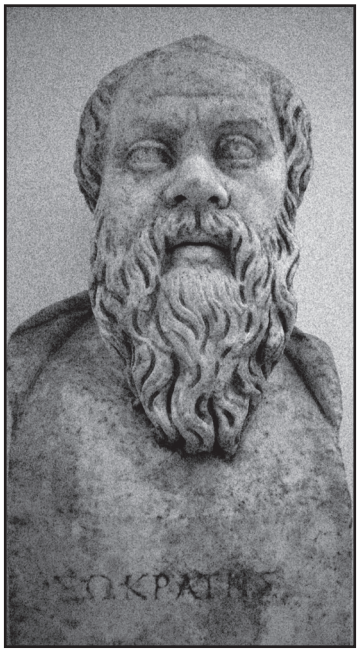
In short, it is old as well as wise.

Christian writers did not despise this pagan wisdom, but elevated it. Thus, Saint Augustine prayed, "O Lord, teach me to know Thee, and to know myself." Saint Francis of Assisi asked God, "Who art Thou, and who am I?" All this makes perfect sense, for the spiritual life is a partnership between God and each of us. In order to improve the quality of this life, of this relationship, I must know both partners: God and myself. Thus we see that Saint Augustine and Saint Francis (and Saint Teresa, and Saint John of the Cross — the same could

be said of the whole heavenly host!) joined knowledge of self to knowledge of God.

Self knowledge is useful at every stage in the spiritual life: as a means to combat sin, mortal and venial, and as a means to grow in perfection by rooting out bad habits and imperfections, ridding ourselves of attachment to creatures so we can be more united with God — keeping in mind that union with God is the very purpose of the Christian life. Self-knowledge has many other practical utilities, and is most necessary in improving relationships between husbands and wives, parents and children, etc.

If you are preparing to make or renew your Total Consecration on the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25), then you would have observed the week of self-knowledge from March fourth to tenth. During that time, you would have been reading about Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell; about several "judgment" parables from the Gospels: the parable of the ten virgins, the two different parables of the talents (from Saints Matthew and Luke), the parable of the fig-tree, the parable of the unjust steward, and the parable of Dives and Lazarus. You would also have read about the end times and the Last Judgment as recorded in Saint Matthew's Gospel.



Socrates

Saint Louis Marie wants us to look ahead to the inescapable judgment that awaits us, and, enlightened by the spirit of Christian fear and compunction, to make those changes in our life now that we will want to have made when the dreaded day comes.

Authentic self-knowledge can be disturbing, but we must face it truthfully, courageously, and humbly. Let us not be like Cain, who said, "My iniquity is greater than that I may deserve pardon" (Gen. 4:13), but rather like David, who said, "Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy. And according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my iniquity. Wash me yet more from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my iniquity, and my sin is always before me. To thee only have I sinned, and have done evil before thee: that thou mayst be justified in thy words and mayst overcome when thou art judged" (Psalm 50:3-6). Or again, let us not be like Judas who despaired, but like Peter who repented, having "wept bitterly" (Luke 22:62) for his sin.

Our knowledge of self should make us feel compunction of heart, and this compunction should lead us to genuine conversion of life, otherwise it will become fruitless and lead us to despair, as it did for Cain and Judas. True compunction does not lead to despair but to humility of heart and hope in God's grace. Hope, in turn, manifests itself in prayerful calling on God — knocking, seeking, and asking. And more than simply calling on God's help, we are led to make concrete resolutions to do better by cooperating with His grace.

To be complete, knowledge of self has to comprise not only our sins, but much more, including our good qualities. In fact, it should include all that is ours: temperament, qualities and defects, natural and supernatural gifts, likes and dislikes, our personal history, our faults, our efforts, and our progress.

United to knowledge of Our Lady and knowledge of Our Lord, knowledge of self is a powerful means of purifying our hearts and sanctifying our souls. A staple of traditional piety, it is of perennial value, but we may find it especially necessary if our twenty-first century produces, as it well may, terrible Gulags of its own. ▪

Email Brother André Marie at bam@catholicism.org

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Sr. Marie Thérèse, M.I.C.M.,
Prioress

CONVENT CORNER
LADIES ONLY

My Dear Catholic ladies, I am writing this article especially for you. I hope you enjoy it.

Many years ago I found myself, as a brand new religious, traveling to Texas to do missionary work. In fact, it was my first missionary trip via airplane, so it was very exciting. To prepare for the trip we gathered about 20 cases of missionary materials and wrapped them so they could be shipped with us on the plane. Each case weighed 30-40 pounds, and to make our shepherding of these items simpler we used packing tape and rope to create ten double cases (60-80 pounds apiece). The Brothers loaded our vehicle, and when we got to the airport, the porter unloaded the vehicle.

Onto the plane we went and arrived at our stop-over. Actually, as we discovered, it was not just a stop-over but a change of planes, and we had to collect from a conveyor belt and transfer all of the luggage we had brought on the plane. Being the youngest and fittest Sister on the trip, I was poised in anticipation by the bend in the conveyor belt so that I wouldn't miss a single item. When I finally spotted our luggage, I realized to my horror that it was all coming at once. As it began to round the bend, I reached over and hefted the double-wrapped packages as a farmer might heft bales of hay. A nearby man came to help me, and as he attempted to lift a double package off of the conveyor belt, not only his face but his whole body showed he had not anticipated the weight he now had in his hands. It was one of those embarrassing moments. As I perkily thanked the gentleman for his help in removing the one package, he slunk away into the crowd. My superior, who was on the trip, had surely noticed the drama and, in her wisdom, would later turn it into a teachable moment.

While we were all standing around our mountainous pile of unusual packages and still had to transfer them to their next location, a gentleman head and shoulders above the crowd approached. Actually, he was head, shoulders and fancy cowboy hat above the rest of the crowd. As the wave of persons parted and we saw this giant cowboy's shining regalia, we guessed that he was traveling by plane to some sort of rodeo or cowboy show. He gallantly took a step forward, removed his hat, and bowed from the stratosphere to our own layer of the atmosphere, making a wide flourish with his hat that fanned the floor. When he rose again, he asked if he could be of service. And so my superior said, "Oh, thank you," in her irresistibly quiet and lady-like manner as she smiled. He immediately bent his tall frame and in each huge hand, picked up at least one of the double packages to carry them. My superior must have noticed some movement from my quarter because she turned and whispered decidedly into my ear, "Look helpless, Sister." To be honest, I was stunned by the command. However, it was not only effective, but also got me thinking for the rest of my life.

> "Look helpless, Sister."

My dear fellow ladies, you have been most valiant in following the example of Judith, Joan of Arc, and even Moses' wife! These ladies, as you must know, showed themselves so virile when the men failed in their duties that they are now famous in history and scripture for their courageous and faith-filled deeds. You, too, will be rewarded for doing the difficult tasks that God has allowed you by His Providence. And now, sweet sisters in Christ, you have before you a task greater than those you have thus far performed. It will take all of your courage and all of your heart to perform it. It is this: The very men whose deficiencies you have been supplying, need your unique help to be the men that God wants them to be. In the words of my superior from long ago, dear ladies, "Look helpless."



Virgin and Child
Bartolomé Esteban Perez Murillo

This will take all of your courage because it takes more courage to look helpless and thereby stir the men to action than it does to spring onto a warhorse. It will take all of your heart because you will need to practice a greater love than you ever have in helping the men in your life to rise to their potential.

Let's take a minute to meditate on The Valiant Woman. Yes, at the wedding feast of Cana, she noticed the deficit in the wine and simply stated the fact to her Man: "They have no wine." His response seemed to indicate that He had no intention of doing anything about it. And now, please help me, my dear lovely sisters in Christ, to remember how the rest of the story goes. Was it that our Blessed Mother, who was all-powerful by grace, took up the responsibility of

providing the wine by working her first miracle since her Man wasn't interested in it? I don't think so. If I remember correctly, she didn't say anything back to her Son, but did speak to somebody else. So without any argument she quietly turned to the servants and told them, "Do whatever He tells you to do." Ah! What an intelligent, prudent and valiant woman! She just set the stage for her Man to rise to the glory of His first miracle. Ah! If only we women could be like this valiant woman in figuring out clever ways to get our men to be the men God wants them to be, rather than giving up hope in them and taking on their tasks ourselves. As my own dear mother used to say to me and my sister, "Which woman is more powerful — the one who can lift 200 pounds, or the one who can get a man to lift it for her?"

There is also the valiant woman of Proverbs. Included in a long list of praises and virtues is what I will term her crowning virtue. "Her husband is known in the gates." If we, my lovely ladies, can accomplish the same with the men in our own lives, we certainly will be wearing the crowns of valiant women.

My beautiful daughters in Christ, I know that you bear in your heart many swords of sorrow. These swords remind me of the swords that are in the heart of The Valiant Woman at the foot of the Cross. It will not be easy for you to "look helpless," and it may bring upon you more suffering from the very man you are trying to help. Please, get support as even The Valiant Woman herself did in the company of Saint Mary Magdalen, the holy women, and Saint John. You will become a saint as you make the effort to create opportunities for your man to rise to the fullness of his manhood. You will become great women, my dear daughters. Truly, behind every good man there is a great woman.

Would you please pray for me as I recommend you to The Valiant Woman's Immaculate Heart? ▪

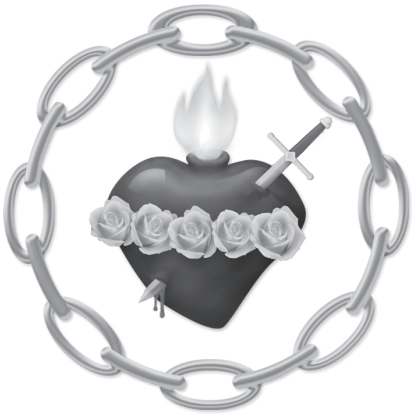
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Proverbs 31:10-31

Who shall find a valiant woman? far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her. The heart of her husband trusteth in her, and he shall have no need of spoils. She will render him good, and not evil all the days of her life. She hath sought wool and flax, and hath wrought by the counsel of her hands. She is like the merchant's ship, she bringeth her bread from afar. And she hath risen in the night, and given a prey to her household, and victuals to her maidens. She hath considered a field, and bought it: with the fruit of her hands she hath planted a vineyard. She hath girded her loins with strength, and hath strengthened her arm. She hath tasted and seen that her traffic is good: her lamp shall not be put out in the night. She hath put out her hand to strong things, and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle. She hath opened her hand to the needy, and stretched out her hands to the poor. She shall not fear for her house in the cold of snow: for all her domestics are clothed with double garments. She hath made for herself clothing of tapestry: fine linen and purple is her covering. Her husband is honourable in the gates, when he sitteth among the senators of the land. She made fine linen, and sold it, and delivered a girdle to the Chanaanite. Strength and beauty are her clothing, and she shall laugh in the latter day. She hath opened her mouth to wisdom, and the law of clemency is on her tongue. She hath looked well on the paths of her house, and hath not eaten her bread idle. Her children rose up, and called her blessed: her husband, and he praised her. Many daughters have gathered together riches: thou hast surpassed them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands: and let her works praise her in the gates.

Thank You!

We want to thank the generous donors who contributed towards the $6000 we urgently needed for a new boiler. The old one, which services the high school was beyond repair. The winter freeze is still very much with us. God bless you for your generosity!





Sister Catherine, M.I.C.M.

FOUNDERS' COLUMN
WHAT IS A CATHOLIC LIBERAL?

(From the Loyolas and Cabots, *Chapter Seven)*

The first issue of *From the Housetops* came out in September 1946. It was very well received. Monsignor Hickey called upon us to tell us how much he liked it. Monsignor Wright said that His Excellency, Archbishop Cushing (to whom we had gone when we first conceived the idea of the magazine, for his approval and blessing) would be glad to contribute some articles for it. In the December 1946 issue, Archbishop Cushing had an article in the *Housetops* entitled, "Catholic and Communism." In the March, 1947 issue, His Excellency wrote on "The Catholic Chaplains." In 1947 also, someone in the Vatican wrote a letter in praise of *From the Housetops.*

The circulation of our magazine resembled very much the representation of people in the Center. Subscriptions came from countries in Europe, from India, the Near East, the Far East, South America, Canada, most of the states of the United States, the Philippines. College libraries subscribed to it. Priests contributed to it; nuns wrote for it. We came to have a group of distinguished writers, as well as a list of distinguished readers.

As our message grew clearer, and our voice stronger, the general praise of us grew more wary. We were startling the Liberals, who had expected that under Father's direction the *Housetops* would take on the charming humor, the delightful wisdom, the joyous entertainment of his own earlier books.

We have been asked many times what we mean by a "Liberal." It is evident we do not mean a Liberal in the political sense, but in the religious sense, and as pertaining to the Catholic religion, inasmuch as religion in the abstract has no meaning to a Catholic. A Catholic Liberal is one who, having taken all his cultural standards from a non-Catholic society, tries to make his Catholic dogmas square with these standards. Liberal Catholicism can occur in any country because it is a relative thing. Our battle with it is particularly as it has occurred in the United States, where non-Catholicism anteceded the advent, in large numbers, of Catholics. This situation induced Catholics to attempt to reconcile beliefs they had brought over from Europe with the humanitarian, utilitarian, pragmatic and political ideals of the new world into which they now moved. As a result, Catholics stopped being interested in Christ, and started being interested in Christianity. This term Christianity quickly became hyphenated with the various secular group movements, and it ended up by leaving Catholics with a set of relative standards as regards religion, and caused them to abandon, little by little, their dogmatic certitudes.

The Liberal Catholic, it may be said, is one who always knows how God should behave. God's behaviour is invariably made to conform with the Liberal's own fine feelings in any situation. Father Feeney once said, "A Catholic Liberal tries to make the Jesus described in Holy Scripture square with his own preconceived notion of how an incarnate God should talk and behave. He wants to seek first the mercy of God, and objects that His justice will be added to it."

A Liberal Catholic does not like the statement "No Salvation Outside the Church," because "it isn't nice". One of his favorite expressions is, "My dear grandfather was not a Catholic, but he was a good man in every way."

A Liberal Catholic does not like the statement "No Salvation Outside the Church," because "it isn't nice."

Father Feeney had come to know Catholic Liberalism in England and in America, in his work at Oxford, and in New York, where he was an associate editor of *America*, the Jesuit weekly. He had come to be aware of it with that sixth sense which is the poet's, that keenness of perception which is denied those who are not poets, and which is the cause of much suffering for the possessor of it because he must wait until his more unseeing brothers catch up with him. A poet, like a prophet, is never without honor save in his own country.

Father had long seen where liberalism in Catholicism was going to lead us. In 1935, almost innocently in the midst of what was supposed to be his lighter verse, we find issuing from the pen of the so-called "whimsical Leonard Feeney" a poem as stark and challenging as any poet of modern times has uttered. The fact that it went unnoticed was not Father Feeney's fault, for he was realistic enough to call it by the name it deserved. Its title was "The Hound of Hell":

Pray for the fragile daughter,
And the frail, infant son,
Whom, at the font, the baptismal water
I pour upon.
The cycle has swung to sorrow,
Our ranks have begun to fail;
We know not what gate of Hell tomorrow
Will not prevail.
The foam-at-the-mouth is frothing
In the Beast with the flashing tooth;
The Hound that was sent on the scent of Nothing,
Has found the Truth.
The guns will be hard to handle
In the forts we will soon forsake.
Pray for the light of the single candle
On the birthday cake.

Father Feeney had despaired of doing anything about Catholic Liberalism until he was at the Center for several years. When so much came clear to us about the state of a world which would permit the dropping of the atom bomb on Japan; when the boys came back to study and found in every class, practically, the same philosophy which had brought on the war; when we came to the realization that we must speak out no matter who was hurt or whose sense of expediency was outraged; Father knew we at last saw the problem. And when Father had, finally, strong and holy men and girls (become so under his direction) who were as eager as he was to work for the Truth, then he knew that something could be done about it.

He changed, then, from the "poet priest" his admirers had known. (Father used to say that this title gave one the impression of a poet who did a little priesting on the side.) He changed from the priest who had been lionized in literary circles in many cities, who had been in demand as a dinner speaker, a lecturer, a famous humorist, who had delighted all and challenged none. He became instead the thundering, fighting missionary who, warring in the name of the Wonderful Mediatrix of all Graces, God's Mother, filled students with a love for God which sent them into all the churches around for daily Mass, which led them to spend their spare time studying the Scriptures and the Doctors, which fired them to make sacrifices so heroic that they left homes, parents, prestiges, to face disgrace, ignominy and persecution.

It was not until the second year, however, that the shouting *From the Housetops* really pierced the ears of the Liberals. One article, principally, caught their attention. It was in Volume II, No. 1, the September, 1947, issue of the *Housetops*. It was called "Sentimental Theology," and was written by Fakhri Maluf.

After the publication of that article, we were able to discern, far out, signs of a gathering storm. However, we were too busy trying to get to the bottom of Liberalism to regard these signs as ominous. We had come to know that our work of the moment, namely, the charting of clear values to replace the shattered certitudes of the students, was work on the periphery only. There was, somewhere, a serious disarrangement of truth, and we knew that if we prayed hard enough, groped long enough, worked steadily enough we would find the doctrine, the displacement of which had made Catholic Liberalism possible. ▪

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also called metaphysics is the science of the immaterial. This is the highest branch of philosophy. It is the study of existence, or "being as being." This science also includes the study of the transcendent attributes of God, which are: Oneness, Truth, Goodness, and Beauty, especially as they are reflected in the created universe.

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Mr. Brian Kelly

KELLY FORUM

LU ZHENGXIANG: A PROPHET FOR CHINA

If I were to tell you that in the early 1900s, during China's short-lived Republican era (which followed the overthrow of the imperial dynasties that ruled the nation for 4000 years), China had a Catholic Prime Minister, would you be surprised? If I were to tell you that this first Prime Minister of China resigned his office and entered a Benedictine monastery in Belgium, would you be surprised? If I were to tell you that this Prime Minister, turned monk, was appointed by Pope Pius XII as a titular abbot for the monastery of Saint Peter's in Ghent, would you be surprised?

Meet Lu Zhengxiang

He had a vision for his country, inspired within him by a Catholic friend, that for China to be a great country it must find its greatness in the Christian religion.

Lu Zhengxiang was born in Shanghai to well-to-do Protestant parents in 1871. His father had been involved with the London Missionary Society as a catechist and had instilled in his son a love for classic Chinese literature.

Having studied foreign languages at a school in Peking, Lu's fluency in French and Russian led to his being appointed in 1892 as a translator at the Chinese Legation in St. Petersburg. He served at this post for fourteen years. One of the diplomats under whom he served had a profound influence upon the young linguist, so profound that it would one day mature into a religious vocation. That man was Xu Jingcheng, a kind of ambassador at the Court of the Tzar. It was Xu Jingcheng's belief that what underpinned the moral strength of the West (not just its technological advances) was Catholicism. It was the diplomat's strong conviction that for the renovation of China's cultural virtues and good social traditions the country needed to be elevated by grace through the Church and her sacraments. Xu Jingchen was beheaded by the revolutionaries behind the anti-Christian, anti-imperialist, Boxer Rebellion around 1898.

Lu Zhengxiang later served the Qing regime as the Chinese delegate at the first and second Peace Conferences in The Hague (1899 and 1907) as Minister to Belgium, and later as Ambassador to Russia. He could not help but harbor a lingering resentment that the Qing regime did nothing to liberate his friend and teacher from the Boxers. He served the imperial government but, at the same time, he had affinity with the revolutionaries in their quest to abolish tyranny and give China a government that was republican (read, not democratic), more representative of the voices of the oppressed, and totally independent of foreign colonialist ambitions. The mainland would not become like India or, closer to home, another Hong Kong at the service of British drug-traffickers. Lu recalls the lesson Mr. Xu gave him in a book that he wrote during his years as a Benedictine:

"I remember very clearly the first conversation in which he spoke to me of it, giving to the expression of his thought, as he often liked to do, the form of a fable. He had got me to call at his house and he began thus: 'One day the minister of commerce in England noticed the arrival and the entry into the country of a new commodity, previously unknown in Europe — tea; ten chests of tea, coming from China. The following year the number of these cases increased tenfold. Two years later it rose to a thousand. Surprised by the unexpected growth of this import, he called a tree-planter and bade him set out for China and there study the cultivation of tea, instructing him to choose some of its finest seeds and then to betake himself to Ceylon, in order there to introduce this crop, so that England might no longer need to purchase her tea in China.'

"Mr. Xu went on: 'The strength of Europe is not to be found in her armaments; it is not to be found in her science; it is to be found in her religion. In the course of your diplomatic career you will have occasion to study the Christian religion. It comprehends various branches and societies. Take the most ancient branch of that religion, that which goes back most nearly to its origins. Enter into it. Study its doctrine, practice its commandments, closely follow all its works. And later on, when you have ended your career, perhaps you will have the opportunity to go still farther. In this most ancient branch, choose the most ancient society. If you can do so, enter into it also. Make yourself its follower, and study the interior life, which must be the secret of it. When you have understood and won the secret of that life, when you have grasped the heart and strength of the religion of Christ, bring them and give them to China.'" (Dom Pierre-Celestin/Lu Zhengxiang, *Souvenirs et pensées,* or in English translation, *Ways of Confucius and of Christ*, pp. 11-12.)

> "The strength of Europe...is to be found in her religion."

The Prime Minister Seeks Relations With the Holy See

In 1917, after he had been appointed Foreign Minister of China, Lu tried to establish diplomatic relations between his country and the Holy See. He wrote about this in his *Souvenirs* (Memoirs):

"Since joining the Government, convinced of the superior importance of the spiritual values and of the support that they represent for the countries which keep them in high esteem, I tried to obtain for the Chinese Republic the

cooperation of the Catholic Church, whose life and work I had observed for a long time, and of which I had become a member. Given a proper occasion, with the agreement of the Cabinet of Ministers, I asked the Vicar Apostolic [of Beijing] to officially sing a Te Deum in order that Almighty God might bestow His blessings upon the country of China. Such a ceremony was an unprecedented innovation. It took place in the North Cathedral [Beitang] in the presence of the diplomatic body. The aim was to publicly give a spiritual boost to relations between the Chinese state and the religion of Jesus Christ, that is, with the Catholic Church. In my mind, such an act was only a beginning.



Lu Zhengxiang

"In 1917, the opportunity to proceed further was offered to me. I proposed that the Government reach an agreement with the Holy See in order to establish diplomatic relations between the Republic and the Holy See. And since such a proposal was accepted, I started contacts with the Vatican, who at once gave their consent… The intervention and the systematic opposition of a great European power, that declared that it was acting to 'protect' the Missions, forced us to give up the project... The project had to wait until February 1943, more than a quarter of a century later, to be achieved…" (*Souvenirs et Pensees Ricordi e Pensieri* (Brescia: Morcelliania, 1947), pp. 105-106 translation from *Tripod*, Holy Spirit Study Center, Spring 2009, by Del Brouwer)

In 1919, Lu Zhengxiang represented China, in the aftermath of World War I, at Versailles. He was the only representative who refused to sign the Treaty because it left Japan in control of certain territory in China that, with the help of Germany, it had seized during the World War. He did this on his own. Here are the words of his protest:

"The Chinese delegation beg to express their deep disappointment at the settlement proposed by the Council of the Prime Ministers. They also feel certain that this disappointment will be shared in all its intensity by the Chinese nation. The proposed settlement appears to have been made without giving due regard to the consideration of right, justice and the national security of China – consideration which the Chinese delegation emphasized again and again in their hearings before the Council of the Prime Ministers against the proposed settlement, in the hope of having it revised, and if such revision cannot be had, they deem it their duty to make a reservation on the said clauses now." ("Why China Refused to Sign the Peace Treaty." The Wason Pamphlet Collection, Cornell University. Chinese Patriotic Committee, New York, 1919. p. 4–5.)

China's delegation was the only one at the conference to reject the Treaty.

Mr. Lu continued, from Switzerland and the Netherlands, to serve the Republic from 1922 until 1927, as envoy to the League of Nations. After this tenure Lu Zhengxiang retired from public service. There were too many issues upsetting his conscience. Lu was not a politician. He had had enough with the warlords who controlled the provinces and Peking leaving the Republic a mere de jure regime without de facto authority.

Lu Tseng-Tsiang Becomes a Catholic and Grows Disenchanted With the Chinese Republic's Ambivalent Policies

Let us backtrack twenty years. In 1899, at St. Petersburg, Lu Zhengxiang had met Berthe Bovy, who was from a family of Belgian army officers. They were married there in St. Catherine's Catholic Church. The priest who officiated at the marriage, Father Antonin Lagrange, O.P., would, in 1912, receive Lu into the Catholic Church. That was the same year that the Qing dynasty ended and a constitutional republic was established on January 1 under an elected provisional president, Sun Yat-sen. Sun resigned two months later to avoid civil war with the leader of the army, Yuan Shikai. By this time Lu Zhengxiang was back in China. The second president, Yuan Shikai, made use of Lu's diplomatic expertise, soon making him his Prime Minister. However, in 1915, when President Yuan made him a liaison (against his better judgment) in negotiating with the Japanese regarding their Twenty-One Demands on China of 1915, Lu fell into disfavor with the nationalists. He knew that this negotiation was bound to fail and he suffered for it.

For a while, he took up work for the relief of famine victims, but when, in 1922, his wife fell seriously ill they moved to Switzerland to provide better health care for her. Lu Zhengxiang devoted all his time to the care of his sick wife but he did take an opportunity to go on a pilgrimage to Rome, where he was received in audience by Pope Pius XI.

Dom Pierre Celestin

After his wife's death in 1926, Lu, remembering the advice of his friend and mentor, decided to become a Benedictine monk and joined the Abbey of St. André-lez-

Kelly Forum continued on page 15



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

PREFECT'S COLUMN
WHY MUST I SUFFER?

This article's title belongs to a little book, *Why Must I Suffer? A Book of Light and Consolation,* written by Father. F.J. Remler, C.M. He discusses fifteen major reasons for suffering and why we must embrace suffering. Father outlines for us the varied causes of suffering (uniting the spiritual with the physical) and the immense spiritual value of suffering. This little book is full of gems of information with counsels for all. In that sense it is a pragmatic book, and one perhaps needed more today (on account of the added sorrows of the ill who so often see loved ones leaving the Church) than when it was published in 1923. No one escapes some kind of suffering. In fact, we will have a lot of suffering to do.

What is suffering? Dictionaries define it as a means to undergo or feel pain or distress; to sustain injury, disadvantage, or loss; to undergo a penalty, as of death; to endure disability, death, patiently or willingly. No one escapes suffering. Not one saint has entered into Heaven without suffering. That statement alone should be an encouragement to those who not only accept suffering, but embrace it as a grace.

I will tell you a little secret. I will not recount my own sufferings, but I will tell you that I always felt I led a "charmed" life with little suffering. I asked God to permit me to suffer. To modern man, that would be a silly request. Let me assure you, however, it is not as silly as trying to avoid all suffering. I also guarantee you, when you ask for suffering, God will oblige. One of the many reasons Father gives is that it is for your sanctification.

Many who have come to live in our community, near to the monastery, know the troubles they have experienced in their efforts to move here and in their efforts to stay here, in the mere act of doing their Consecration, in joining the Third Order.

For some years now, I have moderated a private email prayer list. People send requests for prayers for relatives and friends in pain or distress. I pass on those intentions to 150 souls on my prayer list, asking only for one Hail Mary for each appeal. The entire length and breadth of human suffering seems to have been recounted in the emails over the several years it has been in existence. The requests have been for: babies, brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers, husbands and wives, grandfathers and grandmothers, aunts, uncles, and friends. The intentions include: those about to die, recently diseased souls, those in distress, for conversions to the One True Faith, for all kinds of cancer, pneumonia, kidney stones, diabetes, heart attacks, etc., for surgery on the heart, lung, kidney, hip, liver, brain, stomach, leg, thyroid, pancreas, eye, intestines, amputations, etc. They beseech prayers for atheists whom they know, those fallen-away Catholics whom they know, Protestants, family crises, etc. Each and every one of these petitions has a central theme: suffering.

Let me add here that praying for those who suffer is an obligation for Third Order members. Some people have written that they attribute cures to the prayer list. One gentleman, of no particular faith, was hospitalized, with severe diabetes so bad, he was to have one of him legs amputated. His friend, who happened to be one of our tertiaries, put him on the prayer list. When his leg healed, as well as heart problems he was having, his three doctors called it a miracle. The cured man attributed the healing to the prayer list.

Reasons for Suffering

The first reason Father Remler provides for suffering is due to the consequence of Original Sin, which brought on our defects of body and soul. Father says, "Left to ourselves and unaided by grace, we tend toward sin as naturally as a stone is drawn to the earth by gravity… Sin is a deadly poison to soul and body alike." The upshot is that we will suffer for a grave sin that our father, Adam, committed.

The second reason **(Expiation of Public and National Sins)** Father gives is this: as a "member of society and a citizen of [our] country," we "must unite with the rest of the citizens in making the atonement and reparation which Divine Justice requires for the public and national sins committed in the community in which" we live. A current example would be abortion (murder which is legal, but decriminalized) — a sin committed on a large scale by many persons. Another current example is apostasy from the Faith, a sin that has become more prevalent than during the Arian heresy or any other heresy in the history of Christendom.

Of course one can ask: How does God permit those of us who are innocent of these sins to suffer, especially those who, for example, have been on the front lines of the battle against pre-born baby-killing? Father cites several reasons, among them: the good enjoy in common the blessings of peace, tranquility and national prosperity; so it is just that they "should lend a willing hand in offering to God the atonement made necessary by public sins. Those not directly taking part in public sins are often guilty of these sins in an indirect manner, i.e., as accessories. They may not have protested against it, neglected to use their authority, or influence, to stop it, or right to vote against it." Another ground on which God permits the innocent to suffer is that such "sufferings endured by the good have a much greater atoning value than those endured by the wicked." But we must never forget that God is easily moved, due to the pains endured by the good, such that He will greatly mitigate His punishments and, sometimes, even eliminate them.

Natural Results of Indiscretions is the third reason, i.e., "a large amount of human suffering is not at all of God's sending, but entirely of man's own making." Father conjectures that half of present-day sufferings would disappear if people could be convinced to do two things: live according to the dictates of right reason and common sense by observing the fundamental laws of health and well-being, "and that they make an honest effort to shape their moral conduct according to the Ten Commandments and the maxims of the Gospel." He covers the first thing in one chapter. He is speaking of over-indulgences, irrational and intemperate living, e.g., gluttony, alcohol and drug abuse, etc.

Reason number four is the **Natural Results of Sins Against the Ten Commandments.** He believed violation of the Decalogue is directly responsible for "the greatest portion of misery that scourges the human race." He advises us, "dear reader [to] learn the secret of turning these (deficiencies) to good account by… [imitating] the Prodigal Son… [humbly acknowledging] that you have fully deserved your sufferings… [and in] the spirit of an abiding sorrow for your sins, make sure to unite all your sufferings with those of Our Lord dying on the cross."

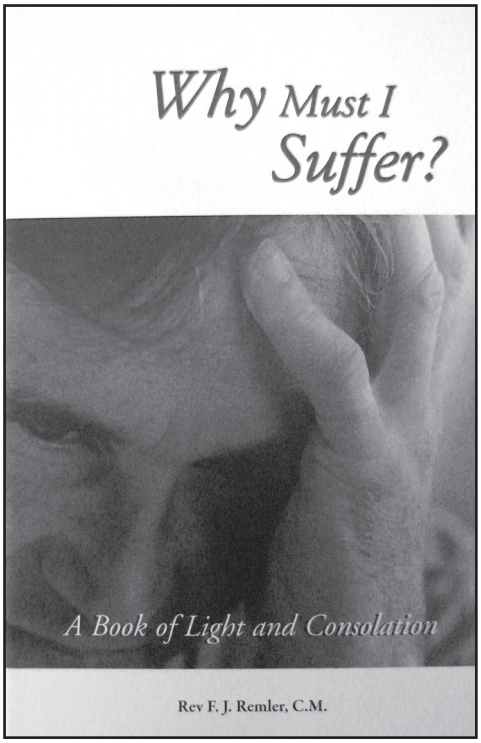
My guess is that most of us would think **Temporal Punishment for Your Sins** as the first reason, but Father numbers this as the fifth and says, "You have committed many sins, and thereby contracted a large debt of temporal punishment. You must cancel this debt either here or hereafter."

The sixth is that God wishes to preserve us from the exceedingly painful and completely unmeritorious sufferings in Purgatory so He substitutes punishment and sufferings in this life rather than hereafter.

We will not cover all the reasons our author presents, but suffice it to say that the body must share in atonement, as does the soul; we all need conversion, and God will do all in His power to save us from Hell; in fact, we must strive that our conversion be "perfect" as nothing sinful enters Heaven. Here and now, we also are given an opportunity to make atonement for the sins of others (oh, that we do this cheerfully, knowing our own weaknesses and sins!); we, the faithful, all of us, have been chosen by God to be, in a real sense, by our union with Christ, victim souls; He wants us to procure the conversion of sinners (God has specifically chosen some of the faithful just for this role); and, finally, the last reason for our suffering: God has predestined those who suffer in union with Jesus to an "exalted degree of glory in heaven."

And now for the "how" to suffer. It is simple. Dear reader, we must follow the examples of the saints, our models. They are in Heaven now. They are ready, willing and able to help us. We should not only emulate them, but also pray to them for the strength to suffer properly. Finally, let us unite all our suffering to the Exemplar of Suffering, The Man of Sorrows, and to His Sorrowful Mother. Who better can we follow? ▪

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

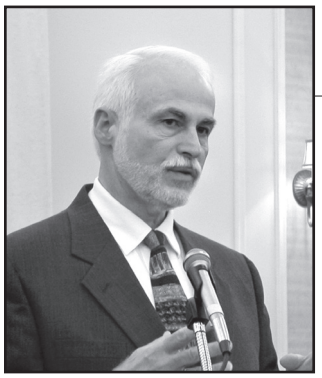


Why Must I Suffer?

Rev. F.J. Remler, C.M.

Whether it be due to our own over-indulgences in abusing the varied and sundry goods of this earth, our own seemingly countless transgressions against God's commandments, or the providentially paternal designs of our Creator and first Benefactor, we will have our lot of suffering in this life. There is no escaping that. The question is how to benefit from it individually unto our everlasting glory and happiness in heaven.

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Brother Lawrence Mary, M.I.C.M., Tert.

GUEST COLUMN
WHY PHILOSOPHY?

Over the years, Brother Francis spoke many times about why the study of philosophy is essential for us at the Saint Benedict Center. To his great disappointment, Brother had discovered that friends of the Center or members of the Order who failed to appreciate true philosophy were the very people who either fell away or split the Order. Countless times, Brother said how it broke his heart to witness such division and what a powerful force for good the Saint Benedict Center would become if only the factions were reunited. Unfortunately, Brother Francis did not live to see them reunited.

Today, modern schools and all other enemies of the Faith who control almost all education want to get rid of true philosophy. They have substituted sophistry (clever sounding arguments that sound true but are not) for true wisdom. The vast majority of modern philosophers are not philosophers at all but merely well-paid sophists. A genuine philosopher is a lover of wisdom, not someone who obscures the truth and subverts it.

Brother Francis proposed and provided a variety of answers to the question, "Why philosophy?" I have reviewed many of Brother Francis' lectures and put together a list of some reasons why we need not only to study, but to love *Philosophia Perennis* — the Perennial Philosophy — the true philosophy.

General Answers to the question "Why Philosophy?"

It is natural for man to raise the questions common to all men and seek for answers. This proceeds from his essence as a rational being. When true philosophy is not cultivated, false and subversive philosophies inevitably arise.

Because all of man's activities and achievements in art, science, politics, etc., proceed from thought as their proper principle. These can be subverted by bad thinking about fundamental matters. This is the province of philosophy.

There is a history, a tradition of true philosophy. When we unite our minds to this tradition, we unite with the best minds of other ages and other countries. We join in the common effort of humanity to seek, attain, and preserve the higher values.

Philosophy prepares the mind for the higher values. True philosophy prepares the mind for God's Revelations and helps defend the Faith. It is the *ancilla theologiae* — the handmaid of theology. Without a solid philosophic foundation, both piety and morality become superficial, unstable, and ineffective.

The spirit and method of philosophy save the mind from the narrowing effects of the scientific method and from its hasty and unwarranted conclusions, which are so often opposed to Faith, Revelation, and proper order.

Philosophy upholds the reality of the spiritual, the primacy of the contemplative over the pragmatic, and restrains against the scientific tendency towards materialism and other monisms.

Sound philosophy is one of the weapons used in the evangelization of the nations, having a common human value — wisdom. It is a value received from Adam, the father of all mankind.

Brother Francis defined wisdom as "the most perfect knowledge of the most important truths, in the right order of emphasis, accompanied by a total and permanent disposition to live accordingly."

Reason is the noblest thing in man and makes us to be in the image of God. Take it away and a man is reduced to an animal.

Philosophy is natural wisdom. Errors and heresy divide. Orthodoxy and truth unite. Philosophy gives us the ability to know the difference.

Philosophy is necessary but not sufficient. Philosophy is not the only wisdom. Something else is needed. If one were intended to be only man, philosophy would be the highest study. However, when we are baptized, we are supernaturalized while remaining human. Therefore, philosophy is necessary but not sufficient.

From the start, Saint Benedict Center intended to have and teach a complete philosophy. The failure of modern education is that the modern sciences have replaced sound philosophy.

In the natural order, all human knowledge must proceed from the senses. There is nothing in the intellect that did not somehow arise from the senses.

Five Values that are Defended by the True Philosophy

The following list describes causes of error and not just symptoms. As described below, one cause is a belief in materialism and one of its many symptoms is Communism.

The spiritual world is a reality. This is opposed to materialism, of which Communism is a symptom.

Immortality of the soul. Most people do not live as if this is true — even Catholics who recite the Creed at every Mass.

Liberty. The freedom of the will versus Determinism and the resulting lack of moral responsibility.

Teleology — the perception of purpose. The material sciences systematically deny this sense of purpose.

Objectivity. This is opposed to Subjectivism — the belief that there is no such thing as objective reality outside of my own mind. The symptoms of this error are: relativism in morality; sincerity in religion to the exclusion of dogmas; idealism or subjectivism in philosophy, which has become the rule rather than the exception.

Seven Truths Concerning Philosophy and Science

Modern science deals with proximate causes, while philosophy seeks the ultimate causes.

All sciences stay on the plane of matter and deal with material and efficient causes. The philosophic method leads to the Ultimate Cause (God), while the scientific method never leaves the plane of matter.

Science serves the practical ends, while philosophy is contemplative. Those who study nothing but modern science become agnostics, atheists, and finally wind up in false mysticism. Philosophy is "useless" because utility is not the highest good. Efficiency is the product of science.

Science proceeds from experiment, while philosophy proceeds from experience.

Science seeks greater precision in details, while philosophy aims at the total picture. A scientist cannot see the forest because of the trees. A bad philosopher cannot see the trees because of the forest. Wisdom consists in being able to see both. Precision has its value, but when it becomes an obsession, it can make us lose the complete picture.

Philosophy is the Queen of the Sciences. Sciences left to themselves become an anarchy. Philosophy puts order in the sciences and gives the mind a certain discipline. It lets you know the ontological status of things. For example, a biologist can spend a whole lifetime in his science and never know what life is.

Philosophy is the handmaid of theology, while science has no relation to anything else, such as morals, etc. Anyone who gives the whole of his intellectual life exclusively to science becomes at least an agnostic, if not an atheist. His training makes it impossible to understand the ontological basis for morality. When you understand the essence of human nature, you have the basis for everything else, including how man should behave. You can study man in any of the sciences and you still have no basis for making any moral judgments and no foundation for any ontological judgments, nor do you understand his relation to the ultimate things.

Some Final Thoughts

The above ideas were presented in brief summary. In Brother Francis' lectures, he develops them further and provides a more in-depth discussion of their meaning. If you have not already done so, I strongly recommend you listen to Brother's philosophy courses which are available from the Saint Augustine Institute.

I will end with two quotes from Brother Francis:

"When we use our minds as God intended, we achieve our perfection. We maintain ourselves by our labor and we arrive at happiness — a contemplative good."

"Man's proper perfection consists in the knowledge of the absolute good, and in response to beauty." ▪

Kelly Forum continued from page 11

Bruges in Belgium taking the name Pierre Celestin. This came as a shock to those who were hoping on his prudential and balanced leadership qualities at home. Nevertheless, his old friends respected him for his decision, knowing that even away from home he would pray to his God for China. Dom Pierre was ordained a priest in 1935 and in 1946 Pope Pius XII appointed Dom Pierre Celestin titular abbot of the Abbey of St. Peter in Ghent. This appointment frustrated his hopes of returning to China as a missionary priest. It was providential, however. He lived only three more years, dying on January 15, nine months before China (and his beloved Shanghai) fell to the Communists.

In fact, Dom Pierre Celestin's writings did have a temporary liberating effect on China. In his effort to Christianize whatever wisdom he could find in the writings of China's sages, especially in those altruistic axioms of Confucius and his teachings concerning filial piety, Dom Pierre demonstrated, not just for non-Catholic Chinese, but for all non-believers seeking the true religion with good will, how all natural wisdom and goodness must find its fulfilment in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior and Redeemer of all men. (*Ways of Confucius and of Christ,* Michael Derrick, 1948) In this regard Dom Pierre followed the method of Saint Thomas Aquinas who used the insights of Aristotle (as early fathers did with Plato) to win the Greeks to the wisdom of Christ, the Logos. Father Matteo Ricci did the same with the Chinese in the sixteenth century in his efforts to harmonize the philosophical teaching of Confucius (minus any idolatrous superstition regarding exaggerated reverence to deceased ancestors) as a preparation for the gospel. In one year alone, probably the most successful out of his nearly thirty years in China, Father Ricci baptized 2000. His catechism in Cantonese was so highly regarded, even by those who did not convert, that the pagan emperor granted it full rights of distribution.

In the monastery, Lu Zhengxiang found the truth and the peace that his mentor told him would be found in the Catholic religion. In the silence of those walls Lu found the key to his own happiness. He found it in community life with his fellow monks. He found it in the beauty of the liturgy and the chanted hours. He found it at the altar. He found it in total sacrifice of self beneath the Cross.

The Cross will save China. "For the word of the cross, to them indeed that perish, is foolishness; but to them that are saved, that is, to us, it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18). ▪

Email Brian Kelly at bdk@catholicism.org

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EXTRA ECCLESIAM NULLA SALUS

Ex Cathedra: "There is but one universal Church of the faithful, outside which no one at all is saved" (Pope Innocent III, Fourth Lateran Council, 1215).

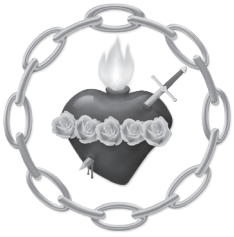
Ex Cathedra: "We declare, say, define, and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary for the salvation of every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff" (Pope Boniface VIII, the Bull *Unam Sanctam,* 1302).

Ex Cathedra: "The most Holy Roman Church firmly believes, professes, and preaches that none of those existing outside the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics, can have a share in life eternal; but that they will go into the eternal fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels, unless before death they are joined with Her; and that so important is the unity of this ecclesiastical body that only those remaining within this unity can profit by the sacraments of the Church unto salvation, and they alone can receive an eternal recompense for their fasts, their almsgivings, their other works of Christian piety and the duties of a Christian soldier. No one, let his almsgiving be as great as it may, no one, even if he pour out his blood for the Name of Christ, can be saved, unless he remain within the bosom and the unity of the Catholic Church" (Pope Eugene IV, the Bull *Cantate Domino,* 1441).

Notes:

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