A month or two ago, I posted to our website a YouTube video of G. Edward Griffin explaining how the Communists manipulated racial divisions in America as early as the 1920’s. The same methods are being employed right now as a means of tearing the country apart.

Mr. Griffin’s is an important lesson that can help all red-blooded Americans to resist and rebuff this corrosive agenda, but I would like to push the point much further in these present lines. What I propose in this article is that the one and only remedy to this problem is the Catholicity of the Church.

In his remarkable book, Labido Dominandi, Dr. E. Michael Jones discusses at some length the Jamaican immigrant and Harlem Renaissance poet, Claude McKay. McKay was a “proxy warrior” used by certain wealthy white leftists who were his patrons. In addition to his dabbling in Communism that took him on a sacred pilgrimage to the Soviet Union during some months of 1922–23, McKay was also a sexual revolutionary who abandoned his wife and daughter in order to pursue a promiscuous life of venereal pleasure. His Soviet sojourn took place during that little remembered era of the early Communist war on the family which made Russia into a playground for reckless venereal decadence, and so it was that McKay contracted a bad case of syphilis during that trip, necessitating a move to Paris where he could get safe medical treatment.

Mention of this particular brand of immorality is not without purpose here. It is important when we consider that revolutionaries in general use sexual license to accomplish their destruction of traditional societies: The Jacobins legalized divorce. The Bolsheviks legalized abortion. The Mexican revolutionaries in the time of Padre Pro imposed radical sex education on their country’s schoolchildren. The revolutionaries in our own day have employed no-fault divorce, abortion, contraception, sex ed, AIDS ed, sodomy, “domestic partners,” and “transgenderism” to obliterate what remains of Christian civilization. Polyamory will be next. Sexually “liberated” (i.e., enslaved) people are ripe for the political control that revolutionaries want to exercise because they are slaves who are deluded into thinking they are actually free.

Claude McKay was brought up by a strict Presbyterian father on a Caribbean island where baptized Christians and pagans intermingled. He was early on influenced by the complete unbelief of his older brother, and in time came to view Christianity as a “white-man’s religion.” In the context of the decadence of the roaring 20’s and the contemporary Communist efforts at manipulating race relations, this meant that the moral law that Christianity preserved was also a white-man’s institution. By contrast, sexual liberation was something more in keeping with the “primitive vitality” (McKay’s words) of the African race. He had a lot to say about the sexual mores of Africans, even though he had never been to that continent, and even though the particular sexual decadence into which he had fallen — including bisexuality — was behavior he learned experientially from affluent white liberals in America, followed up by his promiscuous Russian and Parisian travels.

Thankfully, McKay’s story has a happy ending: towards the end of his life, McKay became a Catholic after being exposed to the charitable work of the Catholic Church among his own people. He may have been moved by the good example of Catholics, but his conversion was no less intellectual for it; he even engaged in apologetics to explain the need the world has for the papacy. Sadly, those decades between his bitter rejection of Protestantism and his happy acceptance of Catholicism witnessed his promotion of a false and toxic narrative of class struggle, race struggle, and un tethering from the moral law in the name of race that is curiously identical to the present agenda of Black Lives Mat-
ter. “Nothing under the sun is new,” said Solomon the Wise (Eccles. 1:10). McKay’s life provides us an object lesson in the ongoing phenomenon of revolutionary manipulation at the hands of progressivist elites.

From Jamaica and Harlem, we turn briefly to Japan, where the Church was despised and persecuted as a “European religion,” and consequently produced numerous martyrs, not only of foreign missionaries, but also of native Japanese, like Blessed Leonard Kimura, Saint Paul Miki, Saint James Kisai and Saint John de Goto, along with the Mexican-born Saint Philip of Jesus. (See Evil Silence and Holy Silence for more on Japan.)

Looking at the Religion as a despised foreign import has a long pedigree, and the Japanese hold no monopoly on it. The ancient Irish pagans might attack Catholicism as being a Continental, non-Celtic import, while the twentieth-century Chinese could attack the Irish Columban missionaries for imposing an Irish religion on China — which had already been evangelized by Italians, at least one Pole, and perhaps even the Jewish Apostle, Saint Thomas. For that matter, if the Africans who had been evangelized by the French could and did at times attack Catholicism as a French Religion imposed upon them by colonial rule (for which the Guinean, Cardinal Robert Sarah, was quite grateful), the earliest French, the pagan Franks, might just as easily have despised it as a Roman Imperial religion, much as the earlier pagan Romans could and did despise it as a Jewish sect.

The fact is that, wherever it exists, the Religion came there initially as an import, being brought thither by missionaries who trace their pedigree back to Jerusalem where the Holy Ghost came upon a group of Jews hiding out in a certain Upper Room. But even in the Holy Land, the Religion was an import — brought down to earth from Heaven whence came the Son of God incarnate in the womb of a Jewish Virgin by the power of that same Holy Ghost.

Its being “foreign” or “imported” does not make the Church any less true nor any less appropriate for every place and every time after Our Lord’s advent. Among the four marks of the Church founded by Jesus Christ — one, holy, catholic, and apostolic — there is one that makes it recognizable as the one religion for all mankind: its catholicity.

By the note of catholicity (or universality), the Church is widely diffused throughout the world while yet remaining one and the same — for spacial extension and local diffusion mean nothing if the body is not one. The Biblical proofs of the Church’s catholicity (e.g., Matt. 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16, Acts 1:8), are at the same time explicit proofs of her divine mission; such diffusion would not be possible without her proactively laboring to incorporate all men and nations into her bosom. Further, the catholicity of the Church is proof of the exclusivity of that mission, for the mandate to bring “all nations” into the one Church is by a logical necessity an exclusive one. Our Lord could not possibly have told the Apostles, “Bring all nations into my Church — and then I’ll send other churches to preach to certain nations.”

Theologians distinguish “catholicity of right” from “catholicity of fact,” the former being the right the Church has to be the one diffused among all nations, while the latter is her actual extension among all nations. In the BAC Sacrae Theologiae Summa, Father Salaverri explains “catholicity of right” in these terms:

Christ committed to one Church the right or office of gathering to herself everywhere all men, with the obligation of men corresponding to this right or office. But the catholicity of right consists in this right or office with the corresponding obligation. Therefore the Church necessarily is catholic with a catholicity of right.

It follows that no other institution or person has a right or a divine mission to preach the Gospel. It is therefore execrable, and even treasonous, when Catholics disparage as “sheep stealing” the noble attempt to convert non-Catholics — including non-Catholic Christians — to the Catholic Faith.

If it is true that the Catholic Church is that one religion all men need both to adore God in spirit and in truth, and to save their souls, it is also true that this same Church, one and universal, will manifest itself differently in different places. This is implicit in that shortest of Psalms (116): Laudate Dominum omnes gentes, laudate eum omnes populi; quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia ejus, et veritas Domini manet in aeternum. “O praise the Lord all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his mercy is confirmed upon us; and the truth of the Lord remaineth forever.” This Psalm does not say that the one Church will make for “one nation” or “one people”; no, there were prophesied to be all nations and all peoples — and all tribes and tongues, too (Apoc. 7:9) — in the true Church. Each one will assimilate the same truths and the same worship in such a way that Catholicism will be at once universal and also proper to each nation in which it finds itself. This is sometimes called by the much abused name, “inculturation.”

The amazing martyrdom of the Japanese Jesuit lay Brother, Blessed Leonard Kimura, witnesses to the universality of that very Psalm I just cited, for he died singing the Laudate Dominum, fully cognizant that the Japanese people were among its omnes gentes. He was not the only Japanese martyr to make this particular Psalm his hymn of triumph.
If black lives really matter — and they do — then we should treasure those of black African descent who not only live, but live “more abundantly” (John 10:10) the supernatural life of grace. These embody not only the Church’s unity and catholicity, but also her note of holiness. There are many of them: Saint Moses the Black (whose holy utterances made their way into Cassian’s writings cited here), Saint Martin de Porres, O.P., Saint Josephine Bakhita, Blessed Mikael Gabra, and Father António Vieira, S.J.; here in the United States, there are six servants of God of African descent considered for canonization, including these three: Venerable Mother Henriette Delille, Mother Mary Lange, and Pierre Toussaint.

At Pentecost, the Holy Ghost came down to reverse the confusion introduced into the world at the Tower of Babel. Many Fathers of the Church cite the episode of the Tower of Babel as a sort of anti-antetype of Pentecost. While restoring the fundamental unity of the human race in the Mystical Body of Christ, the Holy Ghost did nothing to destroy the diversity of nations and peoples, a diversity God evidently wills as a sort of beautiful harmony within the unity of the Church.

This reminds me of the formula Brother Francis used to utter frequently: God wants one religion and many nations; Satan wants one nation (globalism) and many religions.

Authentic Catholic evangelism respects what makes us diverse as peoples and nations while uniting us in those things that are essential to our common good both in time and in eternity. If we Catholics possessed all the virtues we need to act upon that fact, we would not cede the field of battle to godless revolutionaries who can build nothing but only destroy.

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Dear Reader, I have been considering writing about the phenomenon of “virtual reality” for some time now. Yes, Virtual Reality; a computerized world created by fallen human beings. In it, we may find our own perfect allurement to each of the Seven Capital Sins: Pride, Envy, Covetousness, Gluttony, Sloth, Lust, Anger. Yes, and this in the privacy of our own computer screen.

But, Dear Reader, you already know that! So where is this article going? Hold on!

Saint Teresa of Avila, discussing meditation, describes it as sewing. As a person considers the truths/points of meditation and then applies them to himself, it is like putting a needle back and forth through two pieces of material. This action of sewing continues until the end of meditation. The garment of perfection is thus worked on. However, our saint says, if the needle is not threaded with the golden thread of holy resolutions, the end result is merely holes in the material and not an effective sewing job. Conclusion: if meditation is merely an intellectual exercise and the will is not engaged in making resolutions, it is not helpful to us and may actually be harmful.

Yes, there is a “higher reality” compared to which the things of this world are merely “dreams.” As Saint Teresa said another time, “That which ends should not be called life”. And Holy Scripture says that we “should make use of the things of this world as if we made no use of them at all.” And, “be in the world, but not of the world.”

The things I can see, touch, hear, taste and smell seem so very “real”! And, they are “real”, but are not the highest realities because they are not lasting. The things perceived by our senses are part of material reality which will end. There are also spiritual realities such as angels and immortal souls (let alone God Himself) which will never end.

In all of this, my mind and will (by God’s grace) have the operative role of changing what is material and temporal into what is immaterial and eternal. This process is called “meriting” (or “demeriting”). And so, Dear Reader, we come to the “golden thread” of this article.

There is no “down time” in the spiritual life. Even our times of recreation are part of our spiritual life and we will be judged for them.

Unless we are doing something intrinsically evil, any of our acts can be meritorious. Using the internet to help me to do God’s Will in my daily duties can be meritorious. “Abusus non tollit usus.” “The abuse of a thing does not prevent its proper use.” So, even the computer, which we certainly know is abused, can be used well. And, the “golden thread” is that constant realization of the Great “Reality” that will lead us to live supernaturally, and therefore use all things correctly…even Virtual Reality (the computer).

Of course, if we are not prayerfully careful, we will easily use the internet (and other things) in a way that rules out our eternal happiness. What a shame and a waste!

Dear Reader, let’s take more care to include the Golden Thread in our daily lives [to live each moment in God — “in Whom we live and move and have our being” (our “Reality”)]…lest we come to the end of our life and discover to our Eternal dismay…that we have been living in our own “virtual reality”…whether we use a computer or not.

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Sister Marie Thérèse, M.I.C.M.

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A Catholic Media Breakthrough Without Precedent

“But” Mike went still further. He began broadcasting explicitly Catholic material on the air, showing how Church teaching is intrinsically related to a just and moral resolution of political questions and that religion has everything to do with politics rightly understood. In short, there was nothing like the Mike Church Show in the entire history of American talk radio.

“And the results were astonishing”: Mike was changing minds and hearts and making converts almost weekly. He began receiving one email after another from Protestants whose eyes had been opened by the truth he was presenting. They were joining the Catholic Church because of the Mike Church Show. I think you know what happened next. Four Mike received word from the Sirius Radio management that after thirteen years his show was being cancelled. The only reason given was “editorial decisions.” In other words: Mike had become too Catholic for Sirius Radio.

And that is where you come in.

“Mike knew what was coming when he began to speak the truth about God and His Church on the air, and so he prepared for the day when Sirius Radio would shut him down. Almost from the moment he heard the news, Mike was ready to launch the project I am personally asking you to support now: The Veritas Radio Network’s CRUSADE Channel, featuring The Mike Church Show.” - Christopher Ferrara.

Read Chris Ferrara’s entire essay on Mike’s story “The Only True Voice In ‘Conservative’ Talk Radio Has Been Silenced. Here is what we Catholics can do about it.” at: mikechurch.com

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The sixties were a rough time to go through Catholic schools, especially after Vatican II. Nuns were modifying their habits, which meant shortening not only their veil, but even their skirts. The modified habit didn’t last long before religious garb went altogether. No need to bring it all up now; it’s really irrelevant today, now that the experiment is over, having failed in whatever the goal was when the novelty was launched. For almost a generation now, thanks be to God, young women, who feel the calling to religious life, are drawn to orders in which full habits are worn, prayers are said in common and by the hours, Holy Mass is the center of the day, and meals are taken communally. In other words, the espousal to Jesus Christ is now the reason for the resurgence of the consecrated life; and active social work, if the order isn’t cloistered, flows from the goal was when the novelty was launched. For almost a generation now, thanks be to God, young women, who feel the calling to religious life, are drawn to orders in which full habits are worn, prayers are said in common and by the hours, Holy Mass is the center of the day, and meals are taken communally. In other words, the espousal to Jesus Christ is now the reason for the resurgence of the consecrated life; and active social work, if the order isn’t cloistered, flows from the religious’ mystic life as a bride of Christ.

I don’t need to mention where I went to grammar school. I was taught by the Sisters of Charity, who went from wearing a torturous-looking wimple, which literally carved itself like a frame into and around their face from chin to forehead, to a regular veil that allowed peripheral vision (but still covered the eyes in the back of their head), to no veil and no habit, all in less than ten years. My aunt, now deceased, was a member of this same order, and she always wore her habit. I visited her a few years ago, having had to pick her up for an uncle’s funeral. The old sisters at the convent call her the “saint” because she is always joyful and willing to do the most menial of chores. They say this right in front of her, and she just smiles. It helps that she can hardly hear, never remembers to replace the batteries in her hearing aid, and has no clue what her dear sisters are saying about her. One of the old sisters was the sibling of Father Flanagan founder of the Boys Town . . . when it was Catholic.

While at the funeral, my aunt informed me that my kindergarten teacher, whom I can never forget, because she was the first “nun” I ever really “encountered” — having had the privilege of her intimate presence from 8:00 to noon five days a week, for all but three months of the year 1957 — was still living. The first day I went to school at five years of age, I remember leaving my mother’s hand and staring at a goldfish aquarium sitting on a ledge as high as my eyes outside a huge playroom. There, standing right by my side, was this very tall sister with a very warm smile who was waiting to give me a seat on a rubber cushion. Her name was Sister Margaret Gregory.

The few memories I have of my early years in grammar school were pleasant enough, and the sisters of the lower grades were all angels. And, actually, so were the laywomen teachers. Even though I had an aunt that was a sister, whom I didn’t see all that much, I really did think these black-robed figures with the scary-looking wimple were — well, not angels — but angelic. You see, they all had this heavenly fragrance about them. I would take in the wafting scent with wonder every time one of them would swoosh past my desk with her rosary rattling against the desk’s metal legs. What a disappointing revelation it was when someone told me years later, upon my reminiscing aloud about the “odor of sanctity” thing, that it was just fabric softener.

Sister Barbara played baseball with the little boys in the school playground at recess. I can remember her showing those who couldn’t figure it out, or had no baseball dads, how to hold and swing a bat. And, no, these angelic sisters did not force lefties to write or bat righty. Sister Barbara, no exaggeration, could belt a hard sponge ball with her fist further than any of the boys even in the older grades. City guys my age may remember “punch ball,” or “curb ball” in the street when no bats were around?

There are so many memories. Sister Regina Marie was my very pious and sweet sixth grade teacher. She was very much into physical education; and she was German. Of course we had no physical education classes in Catholic grammar schools back then, so she’d improvise. She’d have us stand at attention by the side of our desks and rotate our shoulder cuffs over and over again. Liebe Schwester Mueller did not like slouching in any form: “Stand up straight!” she’d say, “Hold those shoulders back!” Her favorite exercise was plunging and she would lead the way with gusto. This was an easy one for her, and that’s why she would always push it on us after we did our stretching. Only God knows how many times a pious sister would genuflect during the day, and “plunging” was sort of like genuflecting, only with a forward thrust. I’ll never forget her drills, nor her voice, “Now Pluuuuunnging,” she’d say, and we’d all fall into the rhythm. Whenever I get together with old friends from town, every one who had these Sisters of Charity agrees on who their favorite sister was — Sister Regina Marie, hands down.

Still, there was Sister Leonora, our fourth grade teacher. I could go on writing about all the sisters, but Sister Leonora is the reason why I decided to share these memory morsels with you this morning. She was tough, very tough, but also beautiful. I think, like many other sisters who taught in our grammar school, that she must have hailed from Bahston,

Continued on page 10
“Immunizing Ourselves against Viruses of the Mind”
Annual Saint Benedict Center Conference 2020

Brother André greeted the attendees with a recap of what has been going on here at Saint Benedict Center and throughout the Church since last year. He asked for continued prayers for our legal case calling our local situation with the diocese a “sacramental robbery.” For those not acquainted he introduced them to the Saint Isidore Project which is an evangelizing tool with local farmers. Of particular importance was the vindication of Cardinal Pell.

Brother’s own talk, “Acquiring Spiritual Immunity; the Virtues and Gifts that turn Pathogens Into Abundant Life,” spells out the grand theme of this year’s conference. He spoke about the theological virtues as infused habits which we receive at Baptism, the moral virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance, the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost which are not infused virtues but are like sails on our ship awaiting the wind of the Paraclete for their activation into acts. Nor did Brother forget to explain the twelve “fruits” of the Holy Ghost which are present when we are in the state of grace. They flow from the practice of the virtues. The Eight Beatitudes are contained in and excel the twelve fruits. Brother Andre devoted a good part of his practical advice at the end of his talk to the current war we are engaged in and how not to be overwhelmed by the lies of the media. Everyone needed a spiritual reboot.

In keeping with the theme of the conference, “Immunizing Ourselves against Viruses of the Mind,” Sister Maria Philomena utilized a term quite foreign to all attendees, homeostasis, and its emphasis on seeking peace within ourselves. Quoting Saint Augustine, she defined peace as “the tranquility of order”, and then expounded on that theme. She spoke about the importance of taking care of one's health in order to stabilize a natural harmony that in normal circumstances ought to exist between body and soul. In physiologist Claude Bernard’s teaching he called this a controlled stability of the internal milieu, or internal environment. His disciple, Walter Bradford Cannon, coined the word homeostasis. The attendees were all familiar with holistic treatment of physical ills as used by homeopathic doctors. One could easily see where Sister was headed with her title and she did not disappoint. It was an extremely uplifting presentation that focused on the spiritual aids we Catholics have and our obligation to utilize them that we may maintain the state of grace outside of which the tranquillity of order cannot dwell.

Michael Hichborn is the president of the Lepanto Institute and for almost eight years was American Life League’s Director of the Defend the Faith project. His talk is entitled “Modernism and the Plague of Social Justice.” First he explains that there are two aspects to a plague: a pathogen and the disease caused by the pathogen. Modernism, he says, is the pathogen that causes the disease of social justice. What does he mean by that statement? Envy, greed, fear of calamity, and the desire to live as one wants, not as God wants, never being satisfied is at the root of so-called social justice. Modernism is a materialist heresy. It seeks to establish science as the ultimate authority of all things. The Church must be wed to the world. Eliminate suffering. Heaven on earth is their goal. Ergo the Communist Manifesto. The worst modernists are those within the Church, those Saint Pius X sought to eradicate. Hence his encyclical Pascendi Dominici gregis issued in 1907. Modernists went underground and are omnipresent today, especially after the oath against modernism was rescinded by Paul VI in 1967. Truly it is as Pope Pius X said it was, “the synthesis of all heresies.” We must not give up but continue to expose the Modernists.

Gregory Carpenter, graduate of Seton Hall University, is Chief Security Officer of Knowledge Bridge International where he leads many aspects of information technology. His presentation, via video recording, was titled “Disease and Epidemiology: Scientific Fact and Conjecture regarding COVID-19.” It separated what is fact from what is fiction regarding the coronavirus. He began with a history of major plagues in the West and compared their rate of contagion, endurance, and mortality with our current Covid-19. The Black Plague of the 14th century for example, killed twenty-five million people, one third of Europe (and more in Asia) during its peak. Before that was the Plague of Justinian which lasted from 541-750. In all at least fifty million people died. The Spanish Flu of 1918 killed fifty million in one year. Smallpox, the next most deadly disease, has taken around 16% of human lives. Now compare that with modern viruses: SARS coronavirus mortality rate is .0122%, MERS was .0029%, and Covid-19 is .0130%. Mr. Carpenter followed with a study of what is involved with getting proper data on actual infections and risk factors. We need to know exactly what we are fighting and its cause; what treatments work as cures and as preventions (masks and social distancing do not); and how to efficiently apply these. Sweden has no mask or social distancing laws and they have a much lower percentage of Covid-19 cases than the US. Before dealing with the issue of masks at the end of his talk, Mr. Carpenter reminded his audience that the major causes of death in the US are cancer and kidney failure.

Brother André’s second talk was titled “The Lernaean Hydra of Heresy and the Timeliness of Our Crusade.” The intriguing title is a take-off from the Greek poet Hesiod’s legend of the nine-headed sea serpent. The four main heads of the monster are religious Indifferentism (condemned by Pope
Gregory XVI), Liberalism (condemned by Pius IX), Americanism (condemned by Leo XIII), and Modernism (condemned by Saint Pius X). Pope Gregory twice condemned Indifferentism in 1832. It is found in all heresies and leads directly to Liberalism, free Church in a free State, people's exaggerated democracy and sovereignty. Brother spoke about the Syllabus of Errors of Pope Pius IX and the Church's tolerance of evil in a State is not a license to evil. Attendees were very grateful to learn more about the history of the defense of extra Ecclesiam nulla salus in America even before Father Feeney. Father Michael Mueller defended the dogma against the liberal Paulists and was himself silenced by his own Redemptorist Order. Father Isaac Hecker, founder of the Paulists was an avid Americanist. The last part of Brother's talk was an excellent exposition of Modernism, which although it went underground under Pius X with his encyclical Pascendi and required Oath Against Modernism for priests, has rallied its four main heads in “modern” times in revolting fashion. He ended with an appeal to evangelize. This is our duty as baptized faithful.

Our conference moderator, Mike Church, titled his presentation “The Holy Family: A Vaccination Against Devilio.” The war on the family, he said, began with the war on women. The canard is ubiquitous. One hears it everywhere, A woman must have a “career” outside the family in order to be complete. My favorite line was the feminist chant “We will not be dictated to” and so women became stenographers. “Honor thy father and thy mother” is a command not a counsel. Real fatherhood is ridiculed today, especially in entertainment. We must exalt fatherhood, authority, if we are to survive as a Christian society. Our model is Saint Joseph, head of the Holy Family. Imagine, even Jesus was subject to Saint Joseph! What is Satan’s most powerful tool against Christian fatherhood? Pornography! A man cannot lead a family if he is a slave to filth. We must exalt holy men like Saint Louis IX and the father of Saint Therese, Saint Louis Martin and so many others. Chesterton once said “When we step into a family we step into a fairy tale”. Be a family, pray the Rosary together.

Dr. David Lang's presentation was titled “Unmasking the Enemies of Being: The Transcendentals as our Defensive Weapons.” Dr. Lang is an adjunct professor of Logic and Math at Boston Northeastern University and a professor of Systematic Thomistic Philosophy at Our Lady of Grace Seminary in Boston. Being a Thomistic philosopher Dr. Lang dedicated his presentation to the beauty of truth through the transcendental: Being, One, True, Good, and Beautiful. True perennial philosophy seeks to answer the question Pilate cynically asked Him who was Truth incarnate: What is Truth? He lays a foundation for his subject by explaining truth as it is ontologically, logically, and morally. Ontological truth flows from being. A thing is what it is, or put another way, truth is declarative being. Logical truth is the conformity of mind to reality. And moral truth is the conformity of expression to the mind. Our society is wearing a collective mask hiding the person from reality as Adam sought to hide himself in fig leaves and Cain from his fratricide. It was a very uplifting talk. Our speaker did not intend to minimize the evils of our day but he sought to elevate the true, the good, and the beautiful as they are manifest in the highest Good, the One God, Who is ontologically His own existence. “I am Who Am”. Professor Lang referred at the end to the exquisite passage from Saint Paul to the Philippians: “For the rest, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever modest, whatsoever just, whatsoever holy, whatsoever lovely, whatsoever of good fame, if there be any virtue, if any praise of discipline, think on these things.” (4:8).

Joe Doyle wrapped up the conference with his talk, “Culturecide: How Revolutionaries Deform History And Destroy Culture To Gain Power.” The war is all around us. It began with toppling statues of Confederate generals, then Saint Louis IX, then Saint Junipero Serra. Now it’s Our Lady herself and Catholic Churches. Iconoclastic vandals have invaded our cities and, in Europe, Islamists have attacked people at Mass. In Nice, inside the Norte Dame cathedral there, three victims were beheaded while the killer shouted “Allahu Akbar!” Joe supplied a little history to demonstrate that iconoclasm has been around since Protestantism. We see it today but our ancestors lived its worst horrors. Even before the Spanish Civil War began in 1936, 12,000 Catholic buildings and churches were destroyed. Even a statue of the Sacred Heart was executed by firing squad. Under Henry VIII, 200 monasteries in Ireland and 800 in England were destroyed. Being a resident of Massachusetts Joe cited recent attacks perpetrated there against Catholic churches and statues. Between 2012-2016 there were four cases of vandalism; sixteen incidents between 2016 and 2020; and seven attacks in the past eight months. Joe ended his talk with showing that Satan has his minions in high places within the Church. The worst of all acts of iconoclasm and culturecide are those taking place within the Church. It began with Vatican II and continues unabated.

All of the talks together or individually as well as the concluding panel discussion with questions from the audience for the speakers are available on CD, DVD, MP3 or MP4.
Massachusetts. (Our school janitor would always tease the sisters from Bahston with his hearty greeting “Good maaahnin, Sister.”) If indeed Bostonian, that means she was probably Irish. Good Sister Leonora gave me the back of her hand once because she thought I was giving my homework to copy to the boy sitting next to me in class. That’s another story. At the start of the school year Sister inaugurated a new seating strategy called “coupling.” Naturally I got “coupled” with the class wise guy Steve, a likable rascal (once you got to know him), who had been kept back a grade and already needed to shave (well, maybe I’m exaggerating just a bit). That “strategy” of desk coupling would be repeated by our eighth grade teacher, too. And, once again, I got partnered with the school’s other “hoodlum,” Frankie. There were only two of these characters in my class, both prime candidates for the *Costa Nostra*, and I got to spend two years of my primary school education shackled to each of them for eight hours a day.

By the way, going back to fourth grade and Sister Leonora, it just so happened that I was innocent of that particular crime of giving out my homework. All I had given my friend Steve was a piece of blank paper, which is what he had asked me for. But, I sure knew how to look guilty. Sister certainly thought so, and therefore, *whaaack*, I got it across the kissers, not so much for helping the incubative hood to cheat, but for denying that I was helping him to cheat. Other things (really mean things) that I was guilty of, and got away with, deserved a lot more punishment than a slap. And, as anyone my generation can testify, even if on a rare occasion you were innocent, boys *did not* go home and tell their parents that they got whacked in school. That would not have been wise.

I don’t want you to get the wrong impression of this good sister. She was really a lovely sister with a heart of gold. But she was not averse to some occasional *heavy-handed* medicine, if soft words proved futile. Oh, yes, that’s another thing about Sister Leonora: she was strong, but thin and wiry, with the worst kind of hands for dispensing corporal punishment. One must remember that these sisters were dealing with all sorts of little munchkins in a class of about thirty: some were good, some naughty; some were respectful, some defiant; some were thoughtful of others, some spoiled; some well-groomed, clean, and hygienic, others, well let’s just say, unhygienic. Order required discipline, and discipline, when there were no more corners to stand in, could often be painful. One of my fellow fourth graders was the poster child for a spoiled brat. It was during a French lesson, which the class was tuned in to for a half hour a day by way of a Canadian television station, that “Johnnie” finally got what all of his classmates thought he needed. The program one November 22, 1963, was interrupted with a report that the president, John Kennedy, was shot in Dallas. We were all stunned even at ten years old, and the sister from Boston was having a hard time keeping her emotions in check. Maybe it was the tension that got to the spoiled brat; whatever it was, he started laughing. I remember watching Sister Leonora march down the aisle and wipe the grin off this poor boy’s face. I guess when people asked him in adult life where he was when Kennedy got shot, he got a little nervous. Poor Johnnie. I hope he learned from his mistakes and became a man.

That same year, on a different mission, I remember Sister Leonora running down the far aisle of our classroom. It was to grab a little girl and take her in her arms and hold her while she cried and cried. She held the child’s head against her breast and stroked her blond hair over and over saying, “I’m so sorry, I’m so sorry! He’s with Jesus now,” or, words to that effect. The girl’s name was Karen and she had an identical twin sister in the other fourth grade class. You see, Sister Leonora had a woman’s heart, a mother’s heart, besides a heart of gold. Every day — I never could forget this — she would greet the class and then ask Karen how her older brother was doing. She cared for each and every child in her class, but had some special interest in Karen. We all just figured that Karen’s brother was sick. Well, every day Sister would ask about him, and Karen would answer, “He’s OK, Sister.” When Sister asked on this particular day, I remember looking at Karen when she didn’t respond right away. The rule was when a sister addressed you, you stood up when you answered. Karen was standing and her knees were shaking. She began studding, “He’s dead,” then she said it again more clearly, “He’s dead!” Sister Leonora ran to her, took her in her arms, catching her as she was about to drop. I cannot forget that scene. I cannot forget Sister caressing her hair and giving Karen her words of sympathy.

The next day, Karen being home with the family, Sister Leonora spoke to us just as if we were adults. She asked us to pray for Karen, for her twin, whom we all knew, for their family, and for Karen’s brother. She told us that Karen’s brother had been in a coma for a number of weeks as a result of a drug overdose. It was the sixties and many of the young were experimenting with very dangerous drugs. We were only ten years old when Sister Leonora warned us about drugs. I always wondered what happened to her. My aunt told me that she ended up working with the poor somewhere. •

Email Brian Kelly at: bdk@catholicism.org
In this series of articles, we have addressed the spiritual antidote for our times, our troubles, our illnesses, pandemics, epidemics, etc. – a True and Perfect Devotion to Our precious Lord, through a most Holy Slavery to His holy mother’s Immaculate Heart. I have found that some have misconceptions about this matter, and even the general purpose of this column.

Firstly, there is a difference between making this Perfect Consecration to Jesus, through Mary, and becoming a member of our Order. Anyone may make this total Consecration. There are books to assist you and other sources which also outline the method. One need not be a member of our Order to make the Consecration.

Secondly, most of you are lay folks. If you have a vocation to the religious life, you can make the Consecration in whatever Order you join. You may be a diocesan clergyman. And, of course, you can make this Consecration and remain in the lay state. If you desire, you may apply for entry into our Third Order. To join the Third Order one must make this Consecration.

Thirdly, there are other consecrations one can make, however, this particular one, i.e., based on the method of Saint Louis Marie de Montfort, is time-tested, tried and true, short, secure, easy, quick, the most fruitful and papally recommended, but which asks the most of you.

Finally, this column is meant for any reader of the Man-cipia. One need not be a tertiary in our Order. Let me take a moment, however, to emphasize a difference in our Third Order and others. We require each candidate to be mentored. This mentoring program is unlike any other I am aware of. It is often done at a distance. It teaches the charisms, history and simple devotions of our Third Order. It is one-on-one proposition and adjusted to the candidate’s and mentor’s schedules. Not until the mentoring is complete, does the applicant enter as a tertiary. Mentoring often takes a year.

Our Order differs from any other in that we fully offer ourselves as slaves – without any reservation – to Jesus, through Mary. This asks a lot of us, but the reward is great.

Our Order is the only one with the dual purposes to defend valiantly all the dogmas of the One True Church, especially extra ecclesiam nulla salus (No salvation outside the Church) and to make America Catholic. This is also asking a lot, but look at the prize we gain by fighting this good fight.

Recall the entire reason for our coming into being: to know, love and serve God in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in the next. To fulfill this duty, to get to Heaven, one must be perfect, for nothing imperfect is allowed in Paradise. Saint Louis makes this clear, as follows:

“All our perfection consists in being conformed, united and consecrated to Jesus Christ; and therefore, the most perfect of all devotions is, without any doubt, that which most perfectly conforms, unites and consecrates us to Jesus Christ. Now, Mary being the most conformed of all creatures to Jesus Christ, it follows that, of all devotions, that which most consecrates and conforms the soul to Our Lord is devotion to his holy Mother, and that the more a soul is consecrated to Mary, the more it is consecrated to Jesus.”

The words of this Marian saint are often echoed by other saints. “St. Peter of Luxemburg was a saint from the cradle, because he always strove to live only for God, and his divine honour. If one spark of that ardent love of God which inflamed the saints in their actions animated our breasts, it would give wings to our souls in all we do. We should devote ourselves every moment to God with our whole strength; and by our fidelity, and by the purity and fervour of our intentions, we should with the saints make all our actions perfect sacrifices of our hearts to him.”

If we love Jesus Christ, we must imitate the saints. Which saint do you think He most desires us to imitate? Email Brother John Marie Vianney at: toprefect@catholicism.org

1. Treatise on True Devotion, n. 120
This article appeared in a very early edition of From the Houstop. It has long been out of print.

And behold, two of them went, the same day, to a town which was sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, named Emmaus. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that while they talked and reasoned with themselves, Jesus himself also drawing near, went with them.

But their eyes were held, that they should not know him. And he said to them: What are these discourses that you hold one with another as you walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleophas, answering, said to him: Art thou only a stranger to Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that have been done there in these days? To whom he said: What things? And they said: Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet, mighty in work and word before God and all the people; And how our chief priests and princes delivered him to be condemned to death, and crucified him.

But we hoped, that it was he that should have redeemed Israel: and now besides all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea and certain women also of our company affrighted us, who before it was light, were at the sepulchre, And not finding his body, came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, who say that he is alive. And some of our people went to the sepulchre, and found it so as the women had said, but him they found not. Then he said to them: O foolish, and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken.

Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the scriptures, the things that were concerning him. And they drew nigh to the town, whither they were going: and he made as though he would go farther. But they constrained him; saying: Stay with us, because it is towards evening, and the day is now far spent. And he went in with them. And it came to pass, whilst he was at table with them, he took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to them.

And their eyes were opened, and they knew him: and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to the other: Was not our heart burning within us, whilst he spoke in this way, and opened to us the scriptures?

(Luke 24:13-33)

We have read the facts as given by Saint Luke, and we sigh, and wonder, and ask within ourselves: What does it all import? What means this feigning to go away? And this allowing Himself to be prevailed upon to stay? And if, as it seems, he had the intention all along to remain with them, why did He act as if it were their proposal, not His?

It is in such matters that we must go to the Church for enlightenment, and the Church sends us to those set up for us to be our exemplars and teachers: the Saints and the Doctors of the Church. Saint Bernard, from the depth of his meditations on the mysteries of Scripture, will give us many important clues. With such help, we find ourselves capable of understanding other mysterious parts of the Bible, as well as understanding much that is enigmatic in God’s dealings with us, whether in our own personal spiritual lives or in the general history of the Church.

“Perhaps,” answers Saint Bernard, “He withdrew Himself, that He might be recalled the more earnestly, and the more ardent. For thus He feigned to be going farther, not that He intended to do so, but so as to be invited to stay with that tender solicitation, ‘Stay with us, because it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent.’ (Luke 24:29). This kind of pious feint is rather a salutary dispensation of Providence, meant to exercise a truly devout soul. Passing by, He means to be stopped; going away, He is willing to be recalled: His departure is a dispensation of Providence; His return is ever the purpose of His will; and both are the effects of infinite wisdom, the great ends of which He alone can fathom.”

These are the words of Saint Bernard, shedding light on what the Saint calls a “dispensation of Providence,” and what earlier Fathers preferred to call the “Economy,” meaning by that term God’s government of the world in the interest of the salvation of souls. For God seeks souls by a kind of stratagem, wishing not so much to impose His truth, as to attract us to Himself; to be sought after, won over, and even prevailed upon. He reveals, in order that He may be, as it were, a discovery of love. Instead of flashing like a shooting star, His truth rather dawns like the morning. This keeps our
faith free and meritorious. It also keeps our life on earth a decisive trial of fitness for the life of heaven.

But let us continue with Saint Luke's narration:

And it came to pass, whilst he was at table with them, he took bread and blessed, and broke, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to the other: Was not our heart burning within us, whilst he spoke in the way, and opened to us the scriptures?

(Luke 24: 30-32)

Every word is full of deep mystery, and how our own hearts would burn within us were He to walk also with us, and in like manner, to “open to us the scriptures”? For not only the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, but all believers on the way to heaven, need to have the Scriptures opened to them. This therefore is the fundamental prayer of the Church, and is fully answered for all those who persevere in faithful docility and seek the Church as a teacher.

One such faithful son of the Church, the great biblical scholar, Cornelius a Lapide (1567-1637), having sought the answers from the Saints and Doctors of the Church, has this to communicate to us of their collective wisdom. Commenting on the last episode we quoted from Saint Luke, he says:

Verse 30: He took bread and blessed. He blessed it by causing it to become His body as in the consecration of the Eucharist.

And after giving many excellent reasons for his Contention that Our Lord vanished mysteriously after having given Himself to the disciples in the consecrated Host, a Lapide concludes with the testimony of tradition, thus:

“Furthermore, this is the opinion of the great majority of the Fathers. So the author quoted by Saint Chrysostom says, ‘The Lord not only blessed the bread, but gave it with his own hand to Cleophas and his companion. But that which is given by His hand is not only sanctified, but is sanctification and the cause of sanctity to the recipient.’

“And Saint Augustine in his homily on this passage says: ‘How did the Lord will to make Himself known? By the breaking of bread. We are content then, that in the breaking of bread the Lord is made known to us. In no other way is it His will to reveal Himself. Therefore, although we shall not see Him in bodily form, He has given us His flesh to eat.’

This therefore is the testimony of a most competent authority on the general and traditional understanding of what actually took place at Emmaus on that first Easter Sunday. And we who seek to learn God’s ways in dealing with us are thus encouraged to draw a few spiritual conclusions, knowing that the Holy Ghost must mean to teach us, since He inspired Saint Luke to report with such care all those sacred events.

The first Easter Sunday was unquestionably the climax of Our Lord’s physical life on earth; the same day was also the beginning of His mystical life in the Church. Our Lord’s physical presence among men was terminated by His victory over death; His mystical presence will last to the end of time. And so as soon as He placed Himself sacramentally under the guise of the Eucharist, His physical presence vanished mysteriously from before the eyes of His disciples.

And it is now in the Sacrament of the Altar that we must recognize His presence, for it is in the same sacrament that He must continue to “walk with us in the way, and to open to us the Scriptures.”
GUEST COLUMN
WHY PHILOSOPHY XXII—ALL LITERATURE REVOLVES AROUND THREE THINGS

Imagine all of the novels, short stories, plays and scripts that have ever been written. If the pages were stacked up, the pile would be enormous. This is not even considering all of the digitized literature that is being produced in cyberspace. The number of words must be in the trillions.

With that huge number in mind, consider this: every piece of literature ever written, whether printed or electronic, has dealt with three main problems and no more. One may be emphasized over the other, and there are countless combinations and variations, but you will never find more than three.

The three things around which all literature revolves are: 1) The problem of reality, 2) The problem of knowledge, 3) The problem of good and evil. That's it. You will never discover any others.

Brother Francis, when he was still the young Professor Fakhri Maluf, issued the following challenge to a university audience where he was a guest speaker: Try to find a topic outside of these three, and you will always fail. It is impossible to find any others. Even though there may have been some skeptics in attendance, till the day Brother died, no one was able to overcome his challenge. Let us look at some examples to see why this is the case. I will treat the problems in reverse order.

First, the problem of good and evil. It does not take much effort to find this notion throughout literature, from the crimes being solved in mysteries, to the social wrongs portrayed in the higher romance novels. It is not even necessary to delve into the more prurient examples of the latter. In many cases, the arc of the story is generated by some wrong that needs to be righted or some debt of justice that needs to be repaid. If everyone behaved properly and did what was good all the time, most stories would fall flat. Conflict is often generated or enhanced by someone's naughtiness.

If that naughtiness is only perceived but is not real, we may be dealing with the second problem, that of knowledge. The entire novel may revolve around the question of "How do we know?" or "What do we know?" Maybe naughtiness is not the problem at all. Partial knowledge alone can be the reason for conflict. A young woman has overheard the snippet of a conversation involving the man she loves, a comment that seems to indicate he does not care for her but only for another. She is devastated. The story revolves around the effects of that lack of full knowledge. How does she find the truth? How can she know for certain? How can she ever trust him again? The story can then turn to the problem of good and evil if she plans to take revenge on a person who has done nothing wrong. The questions of evil and knowledge are also very much part of mystery and detective stories. The authors limit the knowledge available to the readers as they lead them through the process of uncovering a crime and bringing the malefactor to justice.

The first problem listed above, that of reality, has come to the forefront in recent literature. Works featuring fantasy worlds and science fiction are hugely popular. Both feature alternate realities, from trees that behave like men, people traveling back and forth through time, and space aliens that infect the brains of the victims, to computer games that trick their players into becoming part of the electronic process itself. If the author denies identity and substance, things can be malleable, transforming from one thing to another — a beast or a man at one moment, a monster or superhero at the next. The man trapped in the video game must contend with the world inside of the game and the reader is often left to wonder what, if anything, is real.

Although we can view each problem separately, it is rare to find a work of literature which deals with one of the problems exclusively. In the same work, we often find reality, knowledge, and good and evil in an intricate pattern that intrigues the reader and propels him to read to the end. Is the space alien real or just a mirage? How do we gain the knowledge which would allow us to find out? In the process of discovery, are real crimes being committed? And so it goes, in an amazing array of combinations and inventions.

But, what about Brother's challenge, that all literature revolves around these three problems? There is a very sound basis for Brother's self-assurance. As a philosopher, he knew that, in our universe, there is nothing beyond these three problems — reality, knowledge, and morality. Every work of literature asks: What is this thing? What are the world, the surroundings, the environment? Do the actors know what they are and how do they know it? Is it even possible for them to know it and how much of it are they able to know? How do the actions of the characters compare with their knowledge of reality? How do their actions affect the lives and actions of others?

We can cite any passage in literature and it will fit into one of these three categories. Even straightforward descriptions help to answer these questions. Each of the problems is intimately connected to the others.
In philosophy, the three questions or problems are known as the Ontological Problem, the Epistemological Problem, and the Moral Problem. Brother Francis understood they are intimately related and that they cover everything that exists. A man’s entire view of the world is determined by how he answers any one of these questions. For example, if he believes that everything is only matter, his knowledge will be limited to what can be known by any animal, any sentient being. His ethics will be hedonism, doing what feels best for himself. There will be no consideration of the spiritual, no reference to a God who punishes evil or rewards good, no thought about an afterlife, no concern for the souls of other men which are destined to live forever. We see this view of reality in much of today’s literature, from the hard-boiled detective or action hero, to the heroines of romances or romantic comedies. Reality is stark, material, natural, earthy. In fantasy literature, the view of spirituality is truncated, twisted, not matching the true nature of the supernatural world. Mostly it turns the spiritual into a modified version of the material.

On the other hand, in the writing of someone like J. R. R. Tolkien, the view of reality is vastly different. He has invented a fantasy world in which the spiritual reality overshadows everything. The ontological problem is approached in an elevated manner, not limited by the myopia of materialism. Ultimately, in life as in literature, it is the ontological problem which determines the other two.

In conclusion, students of philosophy can state with confidence that, without exception, all writers deal with one or more of the three philosophical questions — reality, knowledge, or morality — explicitly or implicitly. They cannot avoid it. How authors approach the problem of reality determines how they will handle the other two. How they deal with knowledge and ethics exposes and highlights their view of reality.

In a few words, Brother, as a philosopher, summarized the fundamental nature of the universe and everything in it, the very stuff of all literature. Because of this, his challenge lives on and will continue to remain unanswered as long as literature exists in the world.

**RECONQUEST**

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PRAYERS FOR THE HOLY FATHER
V. Let us pray for our pontiff, Pope Francis.
R. The Lord preserve him, and give him life, and make him to be blessed upon the earth, and deliver him not up to the will of his enemies (Roman Breviary).
Our Father. Hail Mary.
V. Let us pray.
R. Almighty and everlasting God, have mercy upon Thy servant, Francis, our Supreme Pontiff, and direct him, according to Thy loving kindness, in the way of eternal salvation; that, of thy gift, he may ever desire that which is pleasing unto Thee and may accomplish it with all his might. Through Christ our Lord. Amen (Roman Ritual).

EXTRA ECCLESIAM NULLA SALUS

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

Notes:
- SAI: For more information, including videos and a free class, go to the Saint Augustine Institute: www.SaintAugustInstitute.org
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