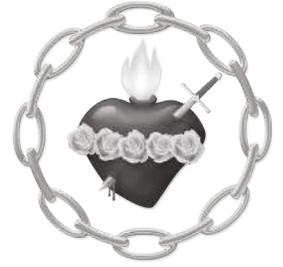


# MANCIPIA

THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER

September/October 2022



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Br. André Marie,  
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## PRIOR'S COLUMN

### OPTIMISM AND PESSIMISM AS INADEQUATE CATEGORIES

“You’re so ‘glass half-empty!’” Have you ever heard that one? It usually comes up in a conversation after one party has made a particularly “negative” comment. At times, the accusation precipitates an argument on the merits

of optimism over pessimism and the advantages of being a “glass half-full” kind of person.

What merit to these categories have? Is this worldly wisdom something that we Catholics can “baptize” and incorporate into our interior lives and our world view?

In brief, I will argue here that the categories of optimism vs. pessimism — or glass half-full vs. glass half-empty — are categories that I believe we should reject as essentially inadequate. This is something I have long thought rather superficially, but, to be totally transparent, I had not previously given the issue any deep consideration. Reading, as I recently did, Dr. Josef Pieper’s brief but intense book, *The End of Time*, I have been forced to think through the issue more, and can say that I am now of the same opinion, but with deeper convictions on the matter.

Further down, I will quote that learned philosopher, but, before that, permit me some general comments. First, I do realize that the “glass half-full” figure of speech is metaphorical, and that even the best metaphors limp in making their point adequately. However, I find this one in particular need of crutches. It begs several questions: What is the fluid? Is it excellent scotch, water, or sulfuric acid? Is it a therapeutic concoction that would be salubrious if taken in the quantity of *just under* half a glass, but deadly if taken in the amount *just over* half a glass? Are we in the process of draining the glass, in which calling it “half-empty” makes sense from a procedural point of view, or are we in the process of filling it, in which calling it “half-full” would equally make sense? When I hear this comparison made, I think that there is an awful lot we simply do not know about that glass and what is actually in it!

The figure of speech aside, these categories are, generally speaking, labels that describe our subjective responses to the realities we perceive around us. Some people, perhaps owing to temperament, perhaps to their physical health, their emotional state, or a combination of all these, are inclined to take an “upbeat” outlook; others, just the opposite. The same person might, owing to his own personal vicissitudes, swing like a pendulum from being optimistic to being pessimistic. As a result, the optimism/pessimism or glass half-full/empty

dialectic is more a measure of the mood of the observer than it is of reality being observed.

What is of greater importance than this subjective measure is the reality that we actually face. Is this reality a good thing or an evil thing? Is that good or evil a physical or a moral one? What are the consequences of this good or evil development? How might a good be occasioned by this evil? The answers to these questions, some of which may not be entirely knowable, are important in assessing the reality before us. One’s subjective outlook — whether the glass is half-full or half-empty — is really of secondary import.

In chapter two of *The End of Time*, Dr. Pieper has two subsections that are respectively headed “The present’s sense of the future,” and “The inadequacy of the concepts optimism and pessimism.” In the first of these, he contrasts the disparate views of prominent thinkers on how good or bad the future looks. It should be mentioned that Pieper, writing within the decade after WWII (the first English edition is dated 1954), would be eye-witness to a grim post-war European landscape, along with the early phase of the Cold War, with its prospects of nuclear annihilation. The contemporary intellectual atmosphere was affected by these events.

The first person he cites speaking of “the present’s sense of the future,” is the then young German poet and philosopher, Friedrich Hölderlin, who, in 1790, was very sanguine about the prospects of the future:

I love the generation of centuries to come. For this is my most blessed hope, the faith, which keeps me strong and active, that our grandchildren will be better than we.... We live in a period of time in which everything is working toward better days. These seeds of Enlightenment, these mute desires and aspirations of individuals for the improvement of the human race, will spread and grow strong and bear glorious fruit.” [p. 73]

Pieper then cites a the more recent (1922) entry on “History” in Rudolf Eisler’s *Dictionary of Philosophy*:

As men, by their instinctive and volitional activity, actively remold the conditions of life, from which they increasingly emancipate themselves, they engender ever more, ever richer, finer, more harmonious culture (q.v.) and thereby educate themselves ever more actively, freely, and consciously in the direction of the cultural idea of mankind, of pure and complete ‘humanity’ (q.v.), and of the will to reason which realizes it. [p. 74]

Pieper assesses both of these utterances as being untenable in his own time. Of the latter, he writes,

This unification of technological, cultural, and moral progress, in which unity, moreover, the essential nature of

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history is supposed to consist — this opinion, seen from the experiences of the intervening decades, seems to us altogether contrary to the facts and almost touching in its naïveté. Who could still deem it worthy of discussion? [p. 75]

Against these, Dr. Pieper contrasts the words of Catholic historian Christopher Dawson (writing in 1937):

We have entered on a new phase of culture..., in which the most amazing perfection of scientific technique is being devoted to purely ephemeral objects.... It is obvious that a civilization of this kind holds no promise for the future save that of social disintegration. [p. 75]

He also marshals forth these few words of the “far-seeing” Spaniard, Donoso Cortes, writing in 1849:

Mankind is hastening with great strides toward the certain fate of despotism.... This despotism will evolve a power of destruction greater and mightier than anything we have heretofore experienced. [p. 75]

Other passages, cited from the works of Jacob Burckhardt, (Saint) John Henry Newman, Vladimir Solovyev, and Theodor Haecker, similarly paint a gloomier picture of the future than the “optimistic” ones sketched out by Hölderlin and Eisler.

In the next section of the same chapter, “The inadequacy of the concepts optimism and pessimism,” Dr. Pieper contends that the “pessimism” he sees reigning in Western society in his day is simply an inversion of the previous “optimism,” the change being attributable not to a different point of view, but to the bitter failures of progress and technology to bring about their promised “glorious fruits.” This he calls “the decay of the Enlightenment’s doctrine of progress.” [p. 79]

Josef Pieper begins to shed light on the inadequacy of the categories of optimism and pessimism when he considers the nature of the “End”:

In Latin the word for end — *finis* — also means goal. End and goal, however, are certainly not the same thing. There may be an end that is not simultaneously a goal. Something may “cease” without having reached its goal. [As a runner who collapses before reaching the finish line. His race has ended, but he has not reached the end.] There may be an end that is characterized precisely by the goal having been missed, and end that is synonymous with non-attainment of the goal. Nevertheless, goal and end inwardly cohere. I refuse — and in doing so know that my refusal is correct — I reject the idea that I ought to believe the world so constructed that it is leading to an end in which the goal is missed and that, in other words, the name of the course of the world is “futility.”

But how, in the Christian-Western tradition, is the notion of the end of history which characterizes it, is the correlation of *finis*-end and *finis*-goal conceived? This correlation is not easily grasped; it is complicated by the necessity of discriminating between an intra-historical and an extra-temporal end of history [i.e., ends “within history” and “outside of time”], segregated from one another by the act of transposition of the temporal into the extra-temporal. Thus the doctrine of the End that is rooted in tradition descries through the ultimate happening within history the act of transposition and the extra-temporal end of history effected by it. The end within history, so says, revelation, is catastrophic in character, which must mean that it is not identical with attainment of the goal and with realization of the intention. However, this cannot be stated without reservations. In no case, according to tradition, can this end within history, however much it has been foretold as a catastrophe, be construed as a definitive failure to fulfill the intention — since the authentic and ultimate end only follows upon the end-situation with history; and it is only this end “outside time” of which we can finally say whether *finis*-end and *finis*-goal coincide in it or not. [pp. 80-81]

In summary, what the good Doctor is saying is that the End to be achieved — according to divine revelation — stands outside of time, but that there is, within time, an intervening catastrophe that is also revealed. This would be the three-and-a-half year reign of Anti-Christ, which is prophesied, certain, and therefore unavoidable. Moreover, there is a Hell, and not all will have as their own personal “end” that End for which we were created: heavenly beatitude. (Some runners will, as it were, *collapse* before the finish line, and have a very different end than those who reach it.) For the blessed in Heaven, the *finis*-end and *finis*-goal exactly coincide.

But because there is a Hell, there is not an absolute or universal coinciding of *finis*-end with the *finis*-goal:

But how is this question to be answered? [The question is, “Do the *finis*-end and *finis*-goal coincide?”] With a simultaneous “Yes” and “No.” But why not simply with Yes or simply with No? Because, according to the pronouncement of theology, after the final end of history there will, on the one hand, undoubtedly be the reality of irrevocable separation from the ultimate ground of being, the reality of disavowal, of damnation, or whatever name may be given to this state of having missed the goal; because, according to this, there is an end which is not simultaneously attainment of the goal. But now for the “on the other hand”! The theological interpretation states: Even in the reality of disavowal, damnation, separation, the goal of the *creatio* [creation] will not, in the ultimate,

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most profound, and inapprehensible sense, really have been missed. ...

Can it now be said, after this attempt to clarify the preliminary field of the concept, whether the answer given by a Christian-Western philosophy of history, vis-à-vis the conflict between the optimistic belief in progress and the pessimistic anticipation of disaster, tends toward the one or the other side? **Will such a philosophy of history, insofar as it treats specifically of history, give an optimistic or a pessimistic forecast?** It reckons with a catastrophic end-situation of history; it makes ready for the foundering of what may be called the “will to culture,” a foundering on a scale both so extensive and so intensive that salvage within history seems impossible. **Pessimism, then? No! For the end-situation within history is, firstly, not construed as the ultimately valid end.** ... Precisely in this apparent failure to attain the intended goal, in this futility which alone is visible to finite cognition, authentic realization may be achieved under cover — just as per se paradigmatic, in the highest, indeed, absolute sense, “successful” even of history wore, within history, the disguise of utter futility. **The designation “pessimistic” is also inapt for the further reason that an extra-temporal end is hoped for, in which it will become manifest that there is no missing-of-the-goal in an absolute sense and that, despite the reality of the extra-temporal end-situation of rejection, the true name of the ultimately valid End, of course in an entirely incomprehensible manner, is: New Heaven and New Earth.** [pp. 81-83; emphasis mine]

After going on for two more pages citing various Catholic theories of the progress of history, all of which more-or-less confirm what he has already said, the good Doctor concludes:

The many layers of this attitude to history cannot be apprehended with the simplifying concepts, “optimistic-pessimistic.”

In the ultimate analysis, in spite of the catastrophic “end” within time, and in spite of the reality that there will be those whose “end” is not the happy “End” of beatitude, the divine purpose in creation will be realized in that happy End that takes place outside of time, outside of history. That End is supernaturally revealed, and supernaturally attained. After the oath of the angel of Apocalypse 10:6 is fulfilled — that “time shall be no longer” — the ultimate triumph will abide. We who are yet alive have the hope of realizing it, a hope that is protected from despair by the divine promises, and from presumption by the certain knowledge that we may possibly fail to persevere (Matt. 24:13), and become ourselves “castaways” (I Cor. 9:27), falling into the ultimate non-fulfillment of our goal.

Those goods that we believe in, hope for, and love by the infused theological virtues entirely transcend the superficial categories “optimism vs. pessimism” and “glass half-full vs. glass half-empty.” ▪

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## CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS



Some of the Fathers of the Church called the treatises that they wrote in defense of the Catholic Faith “apologies.” Brother Francis explains in this course that there is more to apologetics than having enough knowledge to defend the Faith, and that is the art of presentation, which comes from logical thinking. Apologetics is not polemics, the latter art being the employment of authority, such as the Bible, in winning an argument. As you will see in listening to these lectures apologetics is the art of presenting sound arguments that demonstrate the reasonableness of our holy religion and the goodness of God in revealing Himself to man through the patriarchs and prophets and, finally, through His Son. ...

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

## CONVENT CORNER

### REJOICING LIKE A GIANT

**T**ittering and snickering are...cheap imitations of joy. The unwholesome laughter that emanates from certain establishments on Friday evenings proclaims a failed attempt at imbibing joy.

There is so much anger, fear and sadness in the at-

mosphere these days! The unhappy trio forms a quicksand which threatens to smother all joy... . Hence, the joylessness around us.

Causes? Brother Francis used to invite people to stand outside the prominent universities and observe the faces of those emerging. What is it you see on those faces? "Lack of purpose," he answered ... a predisposition for suicide. Certainly not joy!

If we try to dodge the challenge as the gauntlet is thrown down before us by enemies of Truth, we repel joy and summon anger, fear and sadness.

Living as a good Catholic is a daily challenge. "Take up your cross daily." "The penance God wants from us is the performance of our daily duty."

"Keep your joy!" trumpeted our own Brother Hugh when times got tough. This joy added to our daily duty is "holy joy." "Rejoice always! Again I say, rejoice!" enjoined Saint Paul. So, my dear Reader, I want to encourage you to keep your joy. This is, truly, a program for holiness in the context of the Faith. If you keep your joy on a daily, hourly basis, it will become holy joy. How?

Rejoicing when things go easily is not particularly virtuous. But, there is real virtue behind rejoicing when it is coupled with painful contradictions and trials.

As the trials increase with our daily duties — perhaps ending in a bloody martyrdom for being faithful to the Truth — the intensity and holiness of our joy increases as well. Like great athletes or warriors, difficulty ceases to be a problem and becomes instead a challenge. When one of these great men comes upon a really difficult challenge (such as the Triathlon or being very outnumbered in battle) he doesn't run from it. He regards it with prudence and then hurls himself at it, eager to meet the challenge...with rejoicing! "He rejoiced like a giant to run the race."

And, this describes all of the saints! To be canonized, a saint must have lived a life "radiant with joy." And thus, Brother Francis said that there is no patron saint for the gloomy.

Trials are merely occasions of grace and opportunities to grow in virtue.

And so, dear Reader, most of you are likely saying to yourself, "Well, since I am not a giant, but only a mere human being, this article really doesn't apply to me. The world is not watching me. The insignificant and quite common things I do daily are not the stuff giants are made of." And, you would be somewhat right to say that...

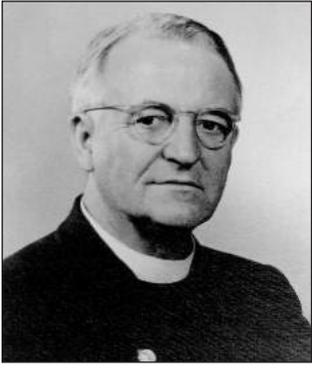
Except, dear Reader, that there are those "clouds of witnesses" we are told about in Holy Scripture! "And therefore we also having so great a cloud of witnesses over our head, laying aside every weight and sin which surrounds us, let us run by patience to the fight proposed to us." [Hebrews 12:1] Those clouds of witnesses are the saints, the angels, the great Saint Joseph, the Mother of God, and God Himself. We know that these Heavenly Witnesses are watching and cheering on our every good thought, desire, word and action! And why are they? Because, dear Reader, every Child of God has their rapt attention. As the spectators at an intense sports arena, so are these Witnesses to us who are in the world. "For I think that God hath set forth us apostles, the last, as it were men appointed to death: we are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men." [1 Corinthians 4:9]

Keep your joy, dear Reader! It will become holy joy. And eventually, by the grace of God, you will be rejoicing like that giant as you run the Race ... to Heaven!

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St. Paul by Peter Paul Rubens



Father Leonard Feeney,  
M.I.C.M.

## FOUNDER'S COLUMN

### STORIES FATHER TOLD: SAINT RITA

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I was on a train from Boston to New York. At one end of the car was a place where we could go for a smoke, that contained places for about five or six people. I sat down to have a smoke, and a fellow came in, about as (if I could use the word loosely) unspiritual looking a person

as I have ever seen. He had a flow-over chin and a large face, not even a sensitive expression. He was well-dressed — that is, he wore good clothes.

He sat down and said, “Will you have a cigar?” I sleuthily assumed he was not a Catholic by the omission of the word “Father.” Usually they say, “How do you do, Father. Will you have a cigar?”

I always think it is very bad, almost bordering on venial sinfulness to refuse a cigar. It is wrong to deprive that man of the 50 cents worth of reward he is going to get in Heaven for his generosity. To cigarettes you can say, “no.” But it is awful for a man to have taken out a cigar and have to put it back.

It looks as if he should not have been so generous. Instead, say, “Thanks.” You don’t have to smoke it, but can put it in your pocket. He is almost more flattered to see it on your heart than in your mouth.

So I took it and put it in my pocket. “Thank you very much.” By way of showing how touched I was at his generosity, I said — and this is a brilliant opener-- “How is business?”

“Terrible.”

“Is it?”

“Yes, awful. I am in the trucking business. We are quite a big trucking company — pretty big in Philadelphia. Transportation we call it. Well, business has been simply awful. We were in the red last year, and I think we’re going to be in the red this year. (It was around 1933 and 1934 when the story took place.) I called my wife last night and I said, ‘Margaret, you had better pray to Saint Rita. If not, we’re going to be in the red for two years — and two years in the red in the transportation business isn’t good.’ My wife, Margaret, has a great devotion to Saint Rita, the saint of the impossible. Have you heard of her? She is one of my devotions, too.

“When I was a kid in school, I was very, very stupid. I might as well tell you. I wasn’t a bright student. I not only wasn’t at the head of the class, I was always in danger of being demoted. A nun said to me, “The only way you can get out of this grade is to get Saint Rita, the saint of the impossible, to get you out. You’re a desperate case.’ She gave

me this little medal of Saint Rita, the saint of the impossible. I carry it every place with me. First thing, I make sure it is there. If not, I couldn’t start the day. So, I spent two years in the fourth grade and two in the fifth, but I got through, and she was the one who helped me each time.

“So, I said to my wife, ‘Margaret, you’d better pray to Saint Rita or we’ll never get through.’ She sometimes delays. You might have to wait a long time, suffer a lot, but when she does it, it is completely worth waiting for.

“You know, Margaret is my second wife. My first wife was named Margaret, too. And when I was in school, I was sweet on a girl named Margaret.

“My first wife was very sickly...”

(I didn’t put in a word. That kind of person just talks, and talks, and talks. Just imagine keeping *me* silent! But, the little slumbering authority — the eagle and the lion — the nice little wisdom that I just loved... So I just listened. I didn’t say anything. I just sat there.)

“My first wife was very sickly. Just terrible...”

(You’ve got to let him talk his own way; and you’re only going to get what he is driving at at the end, and not at the beginning.)

“When I think of the amount of money I spent on that woman! My goodness! I guess I spent \$27,000. I figured it out one night. I used to have three nurses a day. I even sent her out to Arizona. That cost a lot of money. Finally, she came home. We had to segregate her from the children. The doctor let the children see her, but they could never give her a kiss. He never stopped me on that. Let him try!

“So that is the way it was with TB. You’re sick a long time. She was sick a long time. She was sick about three years. She had three children and then she got it and got sick. I had three children by my first wife and three by my second wife. So she got sick and after a while she got TB. Coughing all the time. It was sort of tiresome and uninteresting. Even her folks didn’t come to see her — her sister and her mother. They were uninterested. So I had her all to myself and I was glad of that.

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‘Margaret, you’d better pray to Saint Rita or we’ll never get through.’

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“I said one night, ‘Listen, Margaret, I know a lot of people have said this before, but I say it and mean it. No man in the history of the world ever loved a woman the way I love you.’ She was just simply not of this world, and she was so much not of this world that I never even asked Saint Rita to cure her. I didn’t want this world to touch her.

“We had twin beds, and she was coughing and coughing in the middle of the night. I’d say, ‘Still coughing, sweetheart?’ She would say, ‘Joe, you know what I’d like?’

“What?”

“I’d like some hot cakes.”

“So, I’d run down and make the hot cakes. She no more wanted to eat them than smoke a cigar. She’d just look at them and leave them.

“The priest in our parish would even come and tell her his spiritual problems. He used to open his soul to her, and he had the greatest respect for her.

“The wife I am married to now — she knows my heart is with her. You can’t explain it, but that is the fact. I told her — my present wife — I loved her, and we are very happy, and she is devoted to Saint Rita; but my heart is in a grave with my TB kid. The kids don’t miss her at all the way I do.

“So I meet a nice priest and I pour out my soul to him. Am I boring you? (I didn’t praise him, because I didn’t want him to stop.)

“Yes sirreeee! She was so much of a kid, Father, you know what she wanted me to do? She said, ‘No fellow has to have a wife like me just coughing, coughing, coughing... . Why don’t you go out and take another girl to the movies?’ She wanted me to go out to dances. So I said, ‘No. I just like to sit with you and listen to whatever you have to say.’ Sometimes I had to go on the road, but when home I was always there.

“We used to pray to Saint Rita. The only thing I said to Saint Rita was this: ‘I’ve never given you up since a kid. You came when I needed you, and I have stuck to you.’

“See that medal, Father? First thing I do is put my hand in my pocket to be sure it’s there. I may lose my money, but not that medal.

“So I said, ‘There is one thing I do ask of you — one favor — and that is, I don’t want her to die without saying Goodbye. I don’t want to come up and see she is dead. I want her to say Goodbye.’

“So that is the way it was. So I remember one night I was in the kitchen with my feet up on the stove reading the newspaper. There was a nurse upstairs with her. The nurse came down and said, ‘Your wife is dead!’ ‘Nuts’, I said. She said, ‘I assure you, she is. Come upstairs and see.’

“Well, I knew it wasn’t so. There was only one thing I asked Saint Rita. I mentioned her name and loved her and blessed her for two little words — ‘good bye.’

“So, I went up and put my hand on her pulse...

(You’ve got to let a person explain everything to you. That is simple, clear, and human.)

“I put my finger on her pulse and put a mirror before her mouth. If they’re still living you see a little moisture.

“She is really gone,’ the nurse said. ‘Yes.’ So, I went over to the window and I ceremoniously opened the window. God forgive me, and I said, ‘Saint Rita, this is the end of you and me. No man living could have loved you more. No man could have asked for less than that. If you can’t give me that much, you’re not the saint of the impossible. You’re just impossible.’

“So help me God, Father, with the window open, she took a deep breath and I rushed back and she said, ‘I almost died, but I forgot to say Goodbye.’

“So we closed her little eyes and buried her. Father was weeping at the funeral. We put her away and I went back to the transportation business, but with the little medal of Saint Rita. ■

From *Not Made For This World*



Basilica of Santa Rita in Cascia, Author: LigaDue

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Mr. Brian Kelly

# KELLY FORUM

## FIRE AND ICE

**A**nd the hail and fire mixed with it drove on together: and it was of so great big-ness, as never before was seen in the whole land of Egypt since that nation was founded. (Exodus 9:24)

*But snow and ice endured the force of fire, and melted not: that they might know that fire burning in the hail and flashing in the rain destroyed the fruits of the enemies.* (Wisdom 16:22)

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There were ten plagues that God sent by means of His angels upon the Egyptians through the hand of Moses and the rod of Aaron in order to move Pharaoh (Thutmose III, the scholars say) to let the Hebrews go free out of the land of their captivity. We all know the story and how Pharaoh refused to allow the Israelites to leave despite increasingly severe signs and chastisements.

The first was the turning of the rivers and streams, lakes and ponds, into blood and the consequent destruction of all the fish therein. This was done through the instrumentality of the rod of Aaron the priest. It was not permanent and, seven days later, the rivers returned to normal. This was the same rod that days before Aaron had turned into a snake before Pharaoh and his magicians. The magicians, however, by the power of demons, did the same. But Moses' snake devoured those of the magicians. Now that is a problem, or shall I say a mystery. Problems, Brother Francis would say, are to be solved, mysteries to be contemplated. No, this is a problem not a mystery. Traditional teaching is that, except for the human soul, God does not create anything since He "rested" on the seventh day. Even the loaves and fishes in Our Lord's two miracles were not "created." They were *multi-located* from the original loaves and fishes. Now that is a mystery. So, where did these snakes come from? How did the angels (and demons) make (not create) snakes? I don't know. And I won't waste the readers' time giving a Brian Kelly "explanation." If you want to know what I think email me with the address at the end of this article.

The second was the plague of the frogs that came up out of the rivers covering the land of Egypt and devouring the fields and animals and infesting all their homes, even their beds. The magicians did likewise in this joust between the devil and the angels of the true God. It ended when Pharaoh agreed to allow the Hebrews to leave and worship their God in the desert. Nevertheless, however, he reneged on his word and would not let the people go.

Third came the plague of the sciniphs, which were stinging insects. The New American Bible calls them gnats. These were a lot worse than gnats. They were roused by the rod of

Aaron out of the dust of the earth. And they tormented both men and beasts. The magicians of Pharaoh, on the other hand, could not duplicate this sign. (The devil, after all, can only do so many tricks.) So they admitted the defeat of their gods to the God of the Hebrews. Pharaoh begged Moses to stop the plague and he would let them go. The insects disappeared, but the king's heart was hardened again and he would not let Moses take the people into the wilderness for worship.

Fourth came the flies. Egads! And the land was corrupted by the swarms of flies, except for where the Hebrews lived in Gessen. And the flies were everywhere in all the houses including that of Pharaoh. These may have been horse flies, or those deer flies that stick themselves to the skin and suck blood, or they may have been some type of beetle. The Egyptians did worship a humanoid idol, the god Khepri, which had the head of a dung beetle and the beetle god was believed to roll the sun across the sky. The dung beetle rolls turd before eating it. Well, that's what it does. Good symbol, no, for a demon god? The Latin Vulgate translation uses the word "musca," which could mean "fly, gadfly, or insect." At the command of Moses, after Pharaoh asked him to spare the land and please take his men out into the wilderness to worship, every fly (or whatever the insect was) disappeared. (The Philistines worshiped the demon Ba'al, from which they derived Beelzebub, mentioned in the Book of Kings, translated "lord of the flies." Beelzebub was invoked by them to get rid of flies. There were gods for everything apparently.) Again Pharaoh stiffened his heart and refused to let the Israelites go.

Did the Egyptians actually believe in this god Khepri? I doubt it. But, then again, the fall of man led to some very perverse myths among the pagans. But, a man with a turd-beetle head pushing the sun east to west!!!

The fifth chastisement was a pestilence among the domestic animals: sheep, horses, and cattle. It killed almost all of them, but none of those belonging to the Hebrews. Pharaoh, seeing this, still would not let the Hebrews go.

The sixth plague was that of festering boils that attacked men and beasts. So bad was the affliction that neither Pharaoh nor the magicians could stand straight before Moses. Even still the heart of Pharaoh grew harder as the chastisements grew more severe and he would not let the people go.

The seventh chastisement was my favorite, fire and hail. Did I say "my favorite"? Forgive me. It was the most spectacular, I think, because it defied the natures of fire and ice. You see, it wasn't hail and fire separately that fell but hail on fire. As it was retold in the Book of Wisdom, snow and ice endured the force of fire, and melted not. This bizarre storm killed all men and animals that were not under shelter as Moses beforehand had warned it would do. Most crops were destroyed. But the thunder and hail did not fall upon Gessen. This time Pharaoh said to Moses: "I have sinned this time also;

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the Lord is just: I and my people are wicked. Pray ye to the Lord, that the thunders of God and the hail may cease: that I may let you go, and that you may stay here no longer” (Exodus 9:28).

Now the scoffing scientist would say that this is impossible. For that matter, so are sticks turning into snakes. But with God nothing is impossible. He is the Almighty Creator. He can make His own laws at will and have His angels execute them. He will perform greater wonders than this for His people in the desert.

Pharao’s heart was like fire and ice. Fire, because it was unsteady, flaring up and dying with the wind or lack of air. Like ice, because it was cold and hard as stone. Once again, he reneged after Moses called off the hail.

The eighth sign was the locusts. Summoning Moses and Aaron, Pharao said that only the men could go and sacrifice in the wilderness, but not the women and children, as God had commanded. Moses warned him that his God would send the locusts unless all the people were allowed to go with their sheep and oxen. So, with Pharao’s refusal, Moses called forth a strong wind and it blew hot for a day. After that the locusts came forth and they devoured all the vegetation and the trees that were left and the land was completely wasted. In panic, Pharao called Moses and Aaron in again and confessed his sin as before and Moses brought forth another wind from the west and the locusts were all driven into the Red Sea.

Scripture says that God “hardened the heart of Pharao” in order to demonstrate that He was the only God and those the idolaters worshiped were nothing but the made-up images of lying demons. What this “hardening” means is that God took away actual grace from the stone-hearted Pharao, by which grace he may have truly repented if he had any good will. Even his servants by this time were begging him to let the Hebrews all go. But he would not.

The ninth sign was the three days of darkness. There was no light at all, except in the camps of the Israelites. The darkness was so thick, scripture says, that “it could be felt.” No one moved from where they were for they could see nothing. After three days and more promises from Pharao, Moses brought back the sunlight. Yet, Pharao lied again, and calling for Moses he said to him: “Get thee from me, and beware thou see not my face any more: in what day soever thou shalt come in my sight, thou shalt die. Moses answered: So shall it be as thou hast spoken, I will not see thy face any more” (Exodus 10:28-29).

Lastly, the tenth sign was the slaying of

the first-born sons throughout all of Egypt. The account takes up two chapters in Exodus, eleven and twelve. The avenging angel came at midnight and there was crying and lamentation throughout the land. Every house had one dead, the first-born son. Even the first-born of the animals were slain. The Israelites were commanded by God to kill an unblemished lamb that evening and eat it before midnight with unleavened bread. They were to sprinkle the blood of the lamb of their doorposts on the traverse beam and on the sides, cruciform. Seeing the blood of the lamb the angel would “pass over” the house. Not a bone was to be broken of the paschal lamb. All of this ritual was a figure of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, Our Lord.

This was the last sign God worked in His judgment upon the Egyptians who had enslaved the Hebrews for 430 years. 600,000 men left Egypt with Moses, not counting women and children, and servants. And the population grew larger in the desert. Can you imagine so many people marching together and passing through the Red Sea? What a sight it must have been!

Many more signs would accompany the Israelites in their forty-year desert sojourn: the parting of the Red Sea, the quail sent to feed them with flesh-meat, the miraculous manna, the flowing pure water from the rock, the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. More wonders would follow when the people reached the promised land.

With all of this, is it not an inexplicable mystery of iniquity that, under Aaron, when Moses tarried forty days with God on Mount Sinai, these blessed people would worship a false god, a golden calf that they had made, and dare to murmur a longing for the good old days and the garlic they had in their captivity?

Is the golden calf being worshiped in the Church today? Have we fancied other gods and dethroned the King of kings from our hearts by our indifference? There is a reason why this is the First Commandment: “I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.”

Are we hot? Or are we cold? Or, are we like the Laodiceans? “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold, nor hot. I would thou wert cold, or hot. But because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold, nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth” (Apoc.3: 15-16).

Ice and fire. One or the other. You cannot have both. And you do not want to wallow aimlessly in between, like ice on fire.

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Moses with the Tables of the Law

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

## PREFECT'S COLUMN

### THE WAR AGAINST THE BABIES

In the last *Mancipia*, I wrote about the recent SCOTUS opinion, *Dobbs vs. Jackson* which overruled the poorly reasoned *Roe vs. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood vs. Casey*, both baby-killing cases that engendered almost 50 years and 63 million baby murders in the U.S.A.

So now what will this new case do for the babies? Let us not put blindfolds on: it will not save all the babies. A new phase of the War Against the Babies has begun.

Our position is based on the Fifth Commandment: Thou shalt not kill. "Kill" was understood by the Israelites as murder. They were familiar with God commanding the killing of many enemies of the then-One True Faith. The killings of the babies of our generation will still be allowed in every state of the United States that wishes to do so.

*Dobbs* did not recognize the babies as "persons" under the Constitution. Does it not shock you to think the issue of whether a baby, born or preborn – any baby for that matter – is not a person, according to the document which recognized inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? The Court did not address the Natural Law. Yes, a helpful opinion, but not enough, when we speak of these little innocents.

It is sad that all those babies, who were not baptized, are not in Heaven, but in Limbo where there is natural happiness, but the loss of seeing the Face of God.

The battle for the babies has really just begun. Our goal should be to save all the babies from this demonic, very painful plight. To do that we must enter the arena of thoughts and actions to support these little ones.

How do we do this? We should pray, as Saint Paul says, "unceasingly." We should offer our little and great pains as a sacrifice to save those lives. We should give to the good causes that lead the fight in the courts, in the public opinion. If we do not know the issues, we should instruct ourselves to better present our position. We can offer our Communion to help open the eyes of those who really do not know what they are doing in killing their own children.

Due to the numerous articles in this issue of the *Mancipia*, I was asked to truncate mine to accommodate the articles of others. I am pleased to do so. Let me leave you with a few thoughts that I hope to expand on in our next column.

This country is divided on the question of abortion, although I think the majority is against it. We have opportunities to press our cause. Will we only support candidates that take no compromise positions? Will we wait without acting? Will we excuse ourselves from this momentous issue? ■

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

## GUEST COLUMN

### MY BATTLE WITH CANCER AND THE POWER OF PRAYER...

Let me say right up front, that I am not dying of cancer, but I am dying – we all are. There is no way to escape that eventual end to our individual worlds. But as Catholics, we have an assurance of a better life after this veil of tears ends — that is, if we do what we are supposed to

do and fulfill the two great Commandments to love God and our neighbor. We read in the gospel that that was the response to the lawyer when he questioned Our Lord as to what he must do to attain eternal life.

That response encapsulates all that we must do including worthily receiving the Holy Eucharist: His body and blood, soul and divinity, without which we have no life in us (St.

John, Chapter Six), as well as performing spiritual and corporal works of mercy to the best of our abilities...

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I never thought it would happen to me!

But it did.

And now, after a major operation, on September 3, 2020, and after 30 consecutive radiation treatments, I am continually being monitored for any return of the dreaded disease...

A little background is in order here...

I served in Vietnam from December 1967 to December 1968. During that time, I and some of my fellow Air Force police were exposed to the chemical Agent Orange that was used to defoliate the jungles to expose the Viet Cong's bases and caches of weapons and supplies and create landing zones for our choppers.

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Our troops didn't know it then, but we know it now, A.O. was, and is, deadly! With that witch's brew of chemicals causing many forms of cancer that didn't show up for many years after troops came home from Vietnam...

The Veteran's Administration vehemently denied any relationship between A. O. and cancer, thwarting the claims of many G.I.s to the contrary. That, however, changed over the years as more evidence surfaced relating to cancer, birth defects in their children, etc., and compensation claims were finally awarded...

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When I was first diagnosed with having a cancerous tumor, in July of 2020, I wasn't afraid, but I was concerned as to what would be the next step. What was growing on the outside, and just under my left breast, was, in fact, a very aggressive form of cancer, called spindle cell sarcoma. The tumor was huge, about the size of a large grapefruit!

Was it attached to my ribs? Would the plastic surgeon have to replace those ribs with a prosthesis of some sort? Would I have to undergo rehabilitation? Would I be able to live a somewhat normal life after the operation? Lots of questions, but only a few answers came until the surgeons actually performed the operation...

On top of all of that, I am also being checked/monitored periodically for prostate problems, also attributed to Agent Orange.

I pray that I will be able to face whatever God demands of me. Sometimes it is difficult for me to accept His will and I must admit, I fail miserably a good deal of the time, but I am trying...

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The doctors at the V.A., had recommended that I have the operation performed at the University of Kansas Medical Center, known for their expertise with this type of cancer...

And now, here is some of the good that came from all this...

The day of the operation, as I lay on the gurney, I was literally surrounded and prepped by at least five great nurses! One even held my hand; that provided a great comfort. But it also gave me the first chance of displaying my Faith and doing some evangelizing even if in a very minor way...

I explained that I was on a prayer list and that potentially hundreds of folks were praying for me! I also had a few minutes, before they "knocked me out," to explain about the Brown Scapular that I was wearing and what it meant. I explained to the nurses that my Scapular had to stay on my body somewhere at all times, even if it had to be secured to my ankle, or any other place that wouldn't interfere with the business of the surgeons.

And now the "miracle"!

Aforehand, the surgeon who was to remove the tumor, and the plastic surgeon, explained to my wife (Kathy) and me, that the operation would take between two to four hours, depending what they found and what they had to replace...

As Kathy was anxiously waiting and praying in the waiting room, the surgeon who removed the tumor came out – about 45 minutes later, and stated that the operation was successful!

About 25 minutes after that, the plastic surgeon came out and told Kathy that he didn't have to replace any of my ribs!

So, in just over an hour, it was all over!

The next day I was discharged just 27 hours after the surgery!

I mentioned earlier that I had 30 consecutive radiation treatments, in addition to periodic scans, bloodwork, etc...

That gave me more opportunities to talk about the Faith – including the Scapular!

For instance, when I was being readied for the full body scan, I was given the option of wearing head phones to listen to music, as the machine is quite noisy... I told the technician that I didn't want to listen to any music because I would be praying. I bet he never heard that one before!

After the scan, I pulled out my Scapular and explained that the Miraculous Medal was inside the Scapular, and that it depicted the Mother of Christ...

I don't know if any of my explanations made even one iota of a difference to any of those folks, but what I do know is that I had to at least try!

Please continue to pray for me...

Gene DeLalla ■



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

## GUEST COLUMN

### A GOOD SHEPHERD WITH THE HEART OF A LION

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On May 21, 2022, amidst the din of all the other (seemingly bad) news, the world was notified of an unexpected blow being struck on behalf of the City of God. The article in the National Catholic Register was headlined, “BREAKING: Archbishop Cordileone Bars Nancy

Pelosi From Communion until She Ends Abortion Support” and went on to state that Representative Pelosi, the speaker of the United States House of Representatives, a professed Catholic, and an outspoken proponent of the murder of innocent unborn children, “should not be admitted to Holy Communion in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, nor should she present herself to receive the Eucharist, until she publicly repudiates her support for abortion.”

Of course, in a post Christian society where heresy and apostasy seem to be the order of the day, the archbishop’s decree is meeting with opposition, and can be expected to continue to do so. He is predictably being accused of “weaponizing the Eucharist,” even by some ersatz Catholic clergy and purported theologians. Even prior to the announcement, pro-abortion protests had begun to occur at Catholic Churches nationwide, since a leaked possible overturn of *Roe v. Wade*. In an apostate culture, where most people seem to feel that right and wrong can be determined by majority vote, that is to be expected. But did Archbishop Cordileone really have any choice in his decision?

Of course, he could have followed the lead of so many other clergy and kept silent, but that was not the road he chose to take. It should be noted here that his name, Cordileone, in Italian, means “Heart of the Lion” or, to put it another way, “Lion-Heart,” like King Richard I of England, the famed twelfth century crusader. And, given today’s political climate, it is to his credit that he showed the heart of a lion in standing up and doing his job.

While the public announcement was optional, withholding the Eucharist from Pelosi was something that he had to do, if he were to remain true to his duties as a shepherd of souls. Abortion is murder, pure and simple, and, as such it is one of the four sins that cry out to heaven for vengeance, along with homosexual acts (Genesis 18:20-21, and Jude 1:7), oppressing the widow and orphan (Exodus 21-23) and defrauding a laborer of his wages (Deut. 24:14-15). Regarding murder, we learn this from Genesis 4:10, where God says to Cain, “What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth to me from the earth.”

And further, to withhold Communion from Speaker Pelosi is

for the good of speaker Pelosi herself. As the Catholic Church, founded by Jesus Christ Himself, and outside of which there is no salvation at all, has always taught, the Holy Eucharist is the Body, Blood, Soul And Divinity of Our Lord Himself. We learn this from Our Lord’s own words, when he tells the murmuring Jews, “I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven; that if any man eat of it, he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world ... Amen, amen, I say unto you: Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you” (John 6:48-54).

As a follow up, we must note that Jesus did not back down from His statement; we are told in John 6:67 that, “After this many of His disciples went back; and walked no more with Him.” Did Jesus try to stop them? Did he back off or water down his claims? No, He did not. He let them go, to their eternal detriment, if they did not repent and believe.

But did the apostles and the early Church follow Jesus in His teaching about the Eucharist? Did they in fact believe that the Eucharist is, indeed, the body of Christ? They most certainly did, and they were quite outspoken about it, no matter what heretics may claim. In fact, Saint Paul tells us, “The chalice of benediction, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread, which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?” (1 Corinthians 10:16). And he takes this so seriously that he goes on to tell us, in 1 Corinthians 11:27-29, “Therefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, SHALL BE GUILTY OF THE BODY AND OF THE BLOOD OF THE LORD (emphasis added). . . . But let a man prove himself; and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that chalice, FOR HE THAT EATETH AND DRINKETH UNWORTHILY, EATETH AND DRINKETH JUDGMENT TO HIMSELF, NOT DISCERNING THE BODY OF THE LORD” (emphasis added). There is nothing charitable about allowing someone in obstinate serious sin to take Communion. A person’s immortal soul is at stake, not some sort of admission to a club.

And that is what needs to be understood in light of Archbishop Cordileone’s actions. He did not order her to be denied Communion merely to punish someone with whom he disagrees. Not at all. Speaker Pelosi, like President Biden and other supposedly Catholic politicians, has based much of her political career on the promotion of serious, deadly, mortal sin; not merely abortion, but at least one of the other sins that cries out to Heaven for vengeance-sodomy. And she will eventually pay a serious price for this if she does not repent and confess her sins. Archbishop Cordileone is not only aware of this, but, being a good shepherd, he has, in a very forthright manner,

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stated that, in making his decision, he has the well being of Speaker Pelosi's soul in mind.

The archbishop specifically stated that his decision was "purely pastoral, not political," and that he issued the instruction in accordance with Canon 915 of the Code of Canon Law, which states as follows, "Those obstinately persevering in manifest grave sin are not to be admitted to Holy Communion." He made it clear that his decision was not based solely on the scandal caused by the Speaker disingenuously touting her supposed Catholicism while promoting mortal sin, but specifically stated that, "After numerous attempts to speak with her to help her understand the grave evil she is perpetrating, the scandal she is causing, and the danger to her own soul that she is risking, I have determined that the time has come in which I must make a public declaration that she is not to be admitted to Holy Communion unless and until she publicly repudiates her support for abortion 'rights' and confess and receive absolution for her cooperation in this evil in the sacrament of Penance."

This is exactly the correct course of action for him to have taken, and one does not have to be a theologian to grasp the concept. One needs only to be a well catechized Catholic, something increasingly rare in the last fifty years. We have been faced with many clergy who boast that they have never denied communion to anyone; we have seen a hierarchy in many dioceses more interested in human respect than in the salvation of souls. We now have seen the archbishop of a major U.S. City—and an extremely liberal city at that—stand up and be willing to take it on the chin for the benefit of his flock. "As Jesus said in John 10:11-13, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. But the hireling, and he that is not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeing the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and flieth, and the wolf catcheth, and scattereth the sheep: and the hireling flieth, because he is a hireling: and he hath no care for the sheep."

Archbishop Cordileone, the good shepherd with the heart of a lion, has proven that he is not a mere hireling. We must pray for his success and that his courageous example encourages his fellow priests and bishops to do likewise. ■

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Blessed Father Seelos



Saint Joan of Arc

## EXTRA ECCLESIAM NULLA SALUS

*Ex Cathedra:* "There is but one universal Church of the faithful, outside of 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).

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