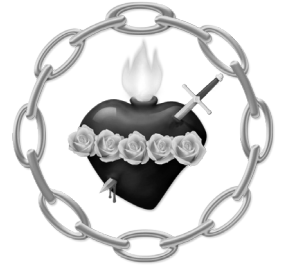


MANCIPIA

THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER



November/December 2025





Br. André Marie,
M.I.C.M., Prior

PRIOR'S COLUMN

THE JEWISH MYSTERY AND THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

There was an informative exchange on Catholicism.org when Charles Coulombe's article, "Which Christian Nation Are We Defending?," provoked a reply from the redoubtable Catholic historian, Henry Sire, "The Kingdom of God in Human

History." The exchange was a friendly one between two Catholic gentlemen who have known each other for three decades. It concluded with a brief note from Coulombe, accepting Sire's points and reemphasizing the main argument of his original piece: "Race Is a False God: Your True Inheritance Is Not in Your Blood." (The chief argument Coulombe made — which was directed to Catholic so-called "Groyppers"¹ — was not a point of contention with Sire.)

At issue in this exchange were the rejection of Jesus Christ by the leadership and greater part of the Old Israel, and the subsequent emergence of the Universal Church as a Graeco-Roman, primarily Gentile institution — the New Israel — whose terrestrial center was the very capital of the Roman Empire.

The exchange got me thinking about God's providential designs for the New Israel (the Mystical Body of Christ, the Catholic Church), and whether the transfer of the center of the true religion from Jerusalem to Rome was an exclusive effect of the tragic rejection of the Messiah by His own people, or whether it would have happened even if the Jews had accepted the Savior *en masse*. Regardless of what would have happened — a strictly unanswerable hypothetical, to be sure — the main claim I would like to offer is this: **The Christian Church is and always was intended to be "Roman" because this best reveals the transition from the national "Church" of the Old Testament (more commonly called "the Synagogue") into the Universal Church of the New Dispensation — the Catholic Church.**

Romanitas and 'the Plan'

Let me point out early on that the word *Roman* has a variety of uses in the Catholic lexicon. It may refer to the Roman Rite of the Liturgy (the largest Latin ceremonial in the Universal Church) or to the Holy See itself, in other words, the "particular church" of the City of Rome, whose bishop is also the pope. But there is a distinct use of the word, *Roman*, and that is as a "note" (the fifth note) of the Universal Church, so that we say that the true Church *in its entirety* is One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, and *Roman*. It is in this most expansive use of the term that I am speaking of the Church's *Romanitas* ("Roman-ness") in the present article.

Here is Mr. Sire in his own words:

Much more glaring oversight is expressed in Charles Coulombe's sentence: "God became Man in Palestine,

Judaism was fulfilled, and that fulfilment, explained via Greek philosophy and organised with Roman law." Yes, it is true that Judaism was fulfilled by the Incarnation, but the statement misses the way in which God's plan was staggeringly frustrated. Let us be clear: God the Son was not incarnated to be rejected by the Jews; he was incarnated to become their King. The prophecy of Gabriel to Mary was in intention literally true: "the Lord shall give unto him the throne of David his father." The kingdom of God in the world was supposed to be a Jewish kingdom. Yet, when Christ rode into Jerusalem to claim it, the Jewish people, gathered together before the great feast of Passover, replied: "No, thanks. We prefer to be ruled by a foreign pagan despot. We prefer to have no king but Caesar." This was no providential fulfilment of history — it was a monstrous frustration of it. That monstrosity led to God's promise to the Jews being transferred to the heirs of the Roman Empire, but let us not lose sight of the monster and treat it as part of a pre-arranged plan.

Mr. Sire took Charles' presentation of events as a slight on Our Lady because it was Her fiat that determined the moment of the Incarnation:

It is preposterously untrue to think that in the first century AD God decided to substitute the Roman Empire for the Jews as the vessel of His promise, that he chose Joseph and Mary for His purpose, and that they simply carried out His plan. It raises the question, why did other pre-elected actors, the renegade kings of Judea, or Annas and Caiaphas, not simply carry out God's plan? In reality, there is only one reason why God became incarnate in the reign of Augustus and not in the Bronze Age or the twenty-first century: it is that a young girl in Galilee said the words: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to thy word." If she had not done so, we might still be waiting now. *Salve porta, ex qua mundo lux est orta!* This was the door at which God had been knocking in vain for thousands of years, and only Mary opened it to Him. Perish the thought that God was delayed in pouring out His grace by anything except human sluggishness, or that He was engaged in something so trivial as a game of empires.

'The Jewish Mystery'

What some people call, "the Jewish Problem," and others call, "the Jewish Question" is something I prefer to call "the Jewish Mystery," not to negate either the problem or the question, but to affirm that we are faced here with a mystery of divine grace and election, of human obstinacy and rejection, and of the "loss" and subsequent "receiving" back (cf. Rom 11:15) of a unique people that yet bears a peculiar relationship with the true religion — so much so that Saint Paul calls them both "enemies" and "most dear" in the same verse! (Rom. 11:28) — and whose corporate return to God will be one of the great

signs of the End Times. As Brother Francis said of the Jewish people in *The Challenge of Faith*, “They are a unique type of collectivity — a matter for history, not for sociology.” And by history, he clearly meant, “*sacred history*.”

The Ingrafting

For Mr. Sire to speak of “God’s promise to the Jews being transferred to the heirs of the Roman Empire,” while not strictly erroneous, misses the point of the great mystery revealed in Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Romans. What took place was not a “transfer” or a “replacement” (a word commonly used disparagingly nowadays, as in “replacement theology”), but an “ingrafting,” whereby the Gentiles who enter into the true religion — which stands in a perfect continuity back to our father, Adam — have joined that “remnant” of Jews who continued in it because they believed in Christ: Our Lady, Saint Joseph, the Apostles, the Disciples, the 3,000 baptized on Pentecost (Acts 2:41), the five thousand later added (Acts 4:4), etc.

In that Epistle — and I focus here exclusively on Romans, chapter 11 — the Jewish “Apostle of the Gentiles” (v. 13) says that God has not “cast away his people” (vs. 1-2), of whom “there is a remnant saved according to the election of grace” (v. 4). The Old Israel sought righteousness or justice but did not find it in the Mosaic Law, whereas the “election” (v. 7) — those Jews who became Christian — obtained justice by faith, while the rest of the nation became “blinded” by their own “unbelief” (v. 7, 19). They stumbled, but “their fall is not irreparable,” as the *Haydock Catholic Bible Commentary* notes, and that fall providentially occasioned the conversion of the Gentiles, of whom some of the Jews will become “emulous” and thus convert (v. 11). The Old Israel is the “good olive tree” (v. 24), which lost some of its “branches” (v. 17-18), while the Gentile believers in Christ were “cut out of the wild olive tree” of their heathenism to be grafted into it (v. 24), but they — *we* — must not “boast against the [Jewish] branches,” because that Abrahamic “root” bears us, and we partake of “the fatness of the olive tree” (v. 17-18). The Church stands in perfect continuity with the Synagogue, and we Catholics, the new Israel, must not boast against the Old Israel. But the Jews — or many of them, at least — will be converted to Christ, will turn away from their present “ungodliness” and “blindness,” and thus be “grafted in again” to the root of the true religion (v. 23-26).

While those Jews who rejected Jesus Christ were themselves rejected by God — as we will be if we turn traitor (Rom. 11:21-22) — Our Lady’s prophesy has been strictly and literally fulfilled, namely, that, God “hath received Israel, his servant, being mindful of his mercy. As he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed, forever” (Luke 1:55). Those Jews I mentioned earlier, who formed the nascent Church in Jerusalem, are the *Israel* that was received, and so are all those Jews after Apostolic times who have “obtained mercy” (cf. Rom. 11:31) and become Catholics. This thin stream of Jewish converts will become an

ocean with the preaching of Elias and the collective conversion of the Jews toward the end of time, when *God will gather together the congregation of the people, and receive them to mercy* (cf. 2 Macc. 2:7, which the great Cornelius a Lapide says refers to the conversion of the Jews according to the “more common and convincing” opinion of Catholic commentators.)

The prophecies of the Old Testament foretold that, in the Messianic era, the Gentiles would come to the God of Israel. Isaias prophesied that the Lord’s house “shall be called the house of prayer, for all nations” (Is. 56:7), and that God’s Servant would be “the light of the Gentiles” (Is. 49:6). God’s plan was for Israel to be the priestly nation that would draw all other nations to the true God, which it did through that faithful remnant of which Saint Paul speaks. These Jewish Christians ventured into the Graeco-Roman world as missionaries — most spectacularly in the person of Saint Paul, the greatest missionary of all time, who was martyred in Rome.

I am aware that the Apostles went beyond the Roman world, treading pathways *not* built by the Caesars. Saint Matthew went to Ethiopia and Saint Thomas (if we are to believe an Ethiopian hagiography) went even as far as China. But it is important that all the ancient patriarchal sees — at first three (Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch), then five (those three plus Constantinople and Jerusalem) — were all within the borders of the Empire.

The preparations for this slow transformation of the Empire into Christendom begun roughly five hundred years after the time of Isaias and a bit more than a century and a half before Our Lord’s birth, when Judas Maccabeus made a league with the Romans — which led, ultimately, through a Hasmonean dynastic dispute, to the Roman presence in the Holy Land beginning roughly sixty years before Our Lord’s time.

Jesus Christ: The Predestined Son of God

And speaking of time, Jesus Christ is at the very center of it; not only that, He is its very point. Time and history would not exist without Him, for, as an indulgenced prayer says to Christ the King, “all that hath been made is created for Thee.” He was “predestinated the Son of God in power” (Rom. 1:4), and is the “the firstborn of every creature” (Col. 1:15) and the “firstborn from the dead” (Col. 1:18). That much is true of the Head of the Mystical Body. As concerns *His members*, those whom God foreknew, “he also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of his Son; that he might be the firstborn amongst many brethren” (Rom. 8:29). These predestined, He also, “called,” “justified,” and “glorified” (Rom. 8:30). God the Father “hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children through Jesus Christ unto himself” (Eph. 1:5), and He did so, “In the dispensation of the fulness of times, to re-establish all things in Christ, that are in heaven and on earth, in him” (Eph. 1:10).

Continued on page 14



Sr. Marie Gabrielle, M.I.C.M.

CONVENT CORNER

QUEEN, GENERAL, AND MOTHER: A MARIAN APPROACH TO THE QUESTION OF AUTHORITY

ones on top, and prompt obedience is necessary from those underneath, or the campaign is doomed to failure.

As Catholics, we know very well that this structure does not just apply in the natural order. Authority is the right to command for the sake of the common good, yes; but we know that all true authority is from God. The chain of command starts with Him. What did Our Lord say to Pilate: “You would have no power over Me if it were not given you from above” (cf. Jn. 19:11). It is because God chooses to use our superiors — whether secular or ecclesiastical, or, in my case, Religious — that obedience becomes for us Catholics a *holy* thing. An act of faith even. It is the act by which we see a command *of God* coming through a human agent, and we obey for *God’s* sake. Because we trust *Him*. We acknowledge *His right* as Creator to rule over us by whatever means He pleases. Whether this is your husband telling you, “Honey, we’re moving;” or your boss telling you, “Hey, step up your game;” or the police officer who pulled you over telling you, “*Slow down.*” (Not that Catholics ever speed.) Holy obedience — the kind all the saints and spiritual writers talk about — is actually more of a right than a duty. It is our *right* to obey a command for the sake of the common good. And *no one* can take away our right to obey God.

No one. Is it not a joy, Catholics, to know that?

Because, the sad truth is that people in authority can *and do* issue commands that ought not be issued. And, yes, that makes life a bit messy for us little folk on the bottom of the totem pole. Whether that command is, “Here’s some incense — now go burn it in front of that nice idol over there;” or, “Round up these people into this chamber, and use this switch to turn the gas on;” or, “Get into this airplane, fly over this teeming civilian city, and

“Only God’s authority is absolute.
Everyone else’s is limited”

drop this atomic bomb on it.” Or — how about something a bit closer to home — “Take your two-year-old to your local drug store so that we can inject her with no-one-really-knows-what so she won’t get Covid.”

It would be really nice, would it not, if we *could* trust the experts in the scientific field, the pharmaceutical field, the political field? It would be so much easier and simpler if we could just

trust and obey the legitimate authorities God has allowed be in charge of us? But — *that is not our world right now*, is it? In far too many cases *in our world* what looks like a properly ordered obedience and a laudably docile compliance with those in authority would be not just stupid but *wrong*.

And not just in the world, but, alas, in Church.

Now, Catholics who know Church history should not be particularly scandalized that I would say that. We know that the Church has been through periods when her own leaders were not trustworthy. Think of the vast number of Catholic bishops who went Arian in the 4th century. How about Henry VIII’s England in the 16th century? It is frightening how few English bishops resisted that “Catholic” king’s supremely *un-Catholic* oath of supremacy. We know that communism likes to set up parallel churches in the countries it infiltrates: taking real priests and bishops, reorienting their loyalty to the government instead of to God, and *keeping them in their positions* of authority, thereby making them convenient extensions of that government, ideal tools for the brainwashing of the flock in the name of — you guessed it — obedience. This is why the True Church *always* goes underground in such places.

Now here we are in 21st century, living in midst of that “diabolical disorientation” Sr. Lucia spoke of, suffering under the cross of men with *real authority* in the Church who *really* do not seem to understand the purpose of that authority. Which is what?

To protect the Truth.

Bottom line: it is because discerning God’s will in today’s world and today’s Church — when so many of our shepherds have gone wolf on us — is *so difficult* that we need *Mary* more than ever. She Herself has authority, does She not? She is our Queen. She is our General. She is our Mother. Who better than Our Lady to clarify our thinking on these critical questions? Because we need clarity. Badly.

We also need strength.

It is one thing to know theoretically that if a command coming from a lower authority contradicts a command coming from a higher authority, we obey the higher authority. But are we willing to be labeled as rebels for acting on that principle when push comes to shove?

When the thirteen-year-old Grecian princess Philomena was told by her parents, “You *will* marry Emperor Diocletian. You must.” Her answer was a very respectful, “I’m sorry, Mom and Dad — I can’t.” When the priest, St. John Nepomucene, was ordered by King Wenceslaus (the bad King Wenceslaus, not the good one) to reveal what his wife, the queen had told him in confession, the saint’s answer was a very respectful, “I’m sorry, your Majesty, I can’t.” When the bishops of the world were told by Pope Francis in 2021 to put certain limitations on the ex-

istence or growth of the Latin Mass in their dioceses, many of them answered with a respectful, albeit sometimes very subtle, “I’m sorry, Your Holiness, *I can’t*.”

Were they being rebellious?

Or were they being *heroically loyal* to a higher authority?

Consider. The individuals in the examples I just gave were *respectful* because no Catholic is a rebel at heart. They were apologetic because it truly hurt them to cause grief to their legitimate superiors. But they were also definite — because there *is a hierarchy* to Catholic obedience, and God’s commands trump *all*.

We are people *not sheeple* that often need to discern the difference between an imprudent command, an unjust command, and an evil command. St. Thomas says that we should obey an imprudent command. It might be painful, counter-intuitive,

whatever, but God’s grace will work with it. We can even obey an unjust command, although we are not obliged to. But we can never obey an evil command — even if death is the consequence.

Who better than Our Lady to unlock for us this immense secret of Catholic battle joy — *only* God’s authority is absolute. *Everyone else’s is limited*.

Thank God for that.

Read or listen to *anything* Dr. Peter Kwasniewski has said on this subject. The man is *spot on*. ■

[e.g. *Noble Beauty, Transcendent Holiness* by Dr. Peter Kwasniewski at store.catholicism.org]

2025 SBC Conference Set

Theme: “Reasons for the Hope That Is in Us” (cf. 1 Peter 3:15)

John Sharpe — **Our Metaphysical Dream: The Politics of Christendom as Vision and Remedy for National and International Ills**

Sister Marie Gabrielle, M.I.C.M. — **Blessed Are the Helpless: A Message of Hope for the Weak Ones of the World**

Br. André Marie, MICM — **A Modern Commonitory: St. Vincent of Lerins’ Certitude as a Remedy to Our Modern Confusion**

Charles Coulombe — **Romanticism: Seeing the World in a New Way**

Chris de Vos — **Abandoning Scientific Clichés**

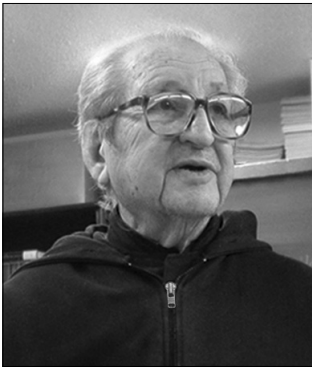
Sister Maria Philomena, MICM — **Inheriting the Earth: The Combined Strength of Meekness and Hope**

Mike Church — **Hope from the Bayou: Crescent City Catholic History and America’s (Possibly) Bright Future**

Charles Coulombe — **Gary Potter and His Milieu**

Panel Discussion (all speakers / moderated)

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Brother Francis, M.I.C.M.

FOUNDER'S COLUMN

PLATO AND LIBERAL EDUCATION

Originally published in
From the Housetops in 1946.

What is Liberal Education?

We are used to distinguishing between two kinds of education: liberal and vocational. But Plato, while recognizing the need of developing the

practical arts and professions, reserved the term “education,” at least in its absolute unrestricted sense, to what we would call liberal education. “This is the only training which, upon our view, would be characterized as education: that other sort of training which aims at the acquisition of wealth or bodily strength, or mere cleverness apart from intelligence and justice, is mean and illiberal, and it is not worthy to be called education at all.”

From following the thoughts of Plato, we get a hint as to the essence of liberal, or in his language, true education, which distinguishes it from all kinds of training for useful skill or for useless cleverness. Liberal or true education is education whose end is man himself. It is the education of man as man. When a man is trained for the perfection of what he makes, he receives vocational training, or, if we call it education, we are using the term in a forced sense; but when a man is trained and instructed for the perfection of what he is and what he does (immanently) within himself, then we may say that he is being educated in the most absolute sense of the term. We may teach a man to become a carpenter, a farmer, a physician, or an engineer. We may also teach a man to become a good man, good not only in the moral sense but primarily in the ontological sense, in the sense of perfected, developed, accomplished, in the sense that he can exercise and apply his faculties coordinately and for their natural purposes.

When men are trained vocationally we have every right to expect better products (potatoes, chairs, medical services, or efficient machines), but we have no right to expect better men unless somewhere in our educational plans and activities we aim at the proper perfections of a man. You are as likely to produce a well-constructed bridge by accident and without aiming at it, as you are to produce a well-educated man by a scheme of training thoroughly directed to other ends. It should go without saying and as part of nature's justice, that in a society where leaders receive specialized vocational training without liberal education, no sound norms can rightly be expected, and no human values are secure. When the present trend towards vocational training finally succeeds in overwhelming and washing away the last vestiges of liberal education, we can expect to live in a world of good things and bad men. We shall have, to give one

good example, unintelligent and confused leaders on the one hand, and excellent atomic bombs on the other!

What are, then, those human perfections which constitute the end of liberal education? Plato's answer to this question is in a way the major theme of all his writings. If one dares put it briefly and succinctly in one sentence, this is what it would be: man's proper perfection consists in the knowledge of the absolute good, and in response to beauty. The absolute good is the good-in-itself and the source of the goodness in all other things.

It is good, not mediately as being the cause of something else, but immediately, ultimately, as being the end to which all other things are means. Man seeks this end, not only by his senses but by his intellect, and can attain it only with his intellect. But man must begin with his sense experience, and gradually advance, through higher and higher aspects of the good, reflected in the world of contingent things, until he is finally ready to see the primal source of all goodness. On the way to this absolute good, beauty is the sign-post. Man, therefore, must begin by learning to respond to beauty as given to the senses and as found in the visible universe, but he must not dwell in it nor let it conceal that invisible beauty it is meant to proclaim.

Not all knowledge, therefore, is conducive to the perfection of man, and consequently, not all knowledge has value in liberal education. All the sciences of space and time, of experience and experiment, of statistics and measurements, such sciences as mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, history, economics, etc., must find their justification primarily in the practical order, in the order of what man makes outside of himself. Man's perfection consists in a growth from the fragmentary knowledge of sense experience to a unified vision of the mind; and hence all the above mentioned experimental sciences, can figure in the course of liberal education, only in so far as they lead the way to philosophic science; they must be treated as preludes to philosophy. Their end must be the understanding of the eternal truth, first as reflected in the visible world, but finally and consummately, as it is in itself. The climax of liberal education consists in philosophy and theology, and all its earlier stages must be ordered to this end, both in the selection of their subject matter and in the mode of their presentation.

It is especially remarkable that Plato, who is the greatest pioneer in the field of philosophy, should recognize the necessity of revealed truth, and admit the superiority of such truth over the highest truths of human reason working on its own. Although he was handicapped by an inadequate pagan religion, he still had the genius to see that those intimate truths of the inner life of God could only be known if God Himself were to reveal them, and that once known, such truths would unquestionably be the crown of all hu-

man knowledge, and the summit of wisdom in this life. Thus in the Republic, after making Socrates describe the building of a state by the guidance of reason, Plato makes one interrogator raise the question as to whether any thing is left out. "Nothing to us," replies Socrates, "But to Apollo, the god of Delphi, there remains the ordering of the greatest and noblest and chiefest things of all."

"Which are they?" asks again the interrogator.

"The institution of temples and sacrifices, and the entire service of the gods, demigods, and heroes. ... These are matters of which we are ignorant ourselves, and as founders of a city we should be unwise in trusting them to any interpreter but our ancestral deity. He is the god who sits in the center on the naval of the earth, and he is the interpreter of religion to all mankind."

The Epochs in Plato's Educational System

The key for Plato's system of education is the Greek word *μουσικη* (sounds like "musikay") which has survived in our modern languages in such words as "music" and "museum". To the Greeks the term had a wider signification, including within its comprehension all the liberal arts. Greek mythology personified the liberal arts, making each one of them a goddess, a Muse, who guides, inspires, and stands as a type and an ideal. Thus we have the Muses of history, poetry, astronomy, eloquence, music, dance, tragedy, comedy, and lyric poetry. The Greeks saw beauty everywhere; whenever reality is known, it reveals rhythm and harmony, and hence education must progressively direct the mind to higher and higher aspects of beauty. The mind rises from beauty in the plane of sheer sense experience, the rhythm and harmony of sounds, shapes, and movements, to the beauty of law and order manifested in the visible world, the music of the spheres; and finally to the source of all beauty, Beauty in itself, the eternal Logos, attained by the art of dialectics. Every one of the arts and sciences is called *μουσικη* in this sense; and it is in this sense that we must understand the passage in the Republic where Plato makes Socrates say: "When the modes of music change, the fundamental laws of the state change with them." Corresponding to the different planes of knowledge, we can distinguish four epochs in Plato's educational plan. Here is a brief description of each of these epochs in their sequence.

The first twenty years are concerned mainly with the body and with the organic faculties. The children, as early as the age of three are introduced to mythology; this is meant to train their imagination, and to cultivate love of valor and heroic deeds. The mythology must be purged of any references to the gods which might degrade the concept of divinity in the child. The fact that mythology does not give the factual or historic truth does not matter, but it must be censored and purified from anything that might give a

permanently false impression of reality. Factual truth is not so important at this stage, because it is an intellectual concern, and this stage of education is mainly concerned with the senses. After mythology, follow in sequence: gymnastics, reading and writing, poetry and music, and mathematics, until finally this epoch is rounded off in two years of military training, from the eighteenth to the twentieth year. Plato recognized the imitative tendencies of the soul, and thus he prescribes that the child must be surrounded from early childhood with beautiful objects which embody the truth he will come to understand later on in life. Hence the surroundings and environment are tremendously important in this formative period.

The second period, extending from the year twenty to the year thirty, is concerned with the sciences of measurement and understanding. Plato mentions plane geometry, solid geometry, astronomy, and harmonies. He conceives their role as a prelude to dialectics. Evidently, he envisaged a patient treatment of these topics, with sufficient time for creative reasoning on the part of the students, and meditations on fundamental truths and notions which prepare the way for philosophy. This is clear from the amount of time he allows for this kind of work, although the amount of facts, principles, experiments, in such a variety of sciences, and in such a short time, that we leave him no leisure for reflection, meditation, wonder, nor for any creative work on his own initiative. Furthermore, the language of these experimental physical sciences today, is so little related to the language and truths of philosophy, that instead of being a prelude to philosophy as Plato intended, these positive sciences stand in our day as a tremendous handicap to philosophic thought.

The third epoch, which occupies the years thirty to thirty-five, is concerned with the art of dialectics, "the art which elevates the mind to the contemplation of what is best in existence." This is the crowning mark of liberal education; the mind's eye, which so far had been trained only to recognize the reflections of Good, must now be exercised to see the Good itself, the ultimate source of truth and beauty in the universe. To Plato, philosophy was not an organized science, or a system of sciences. The task of organizing truths of philosophy was to be carried out by his disciple Aristotle. This is why Plato was mainly concerned with the art of attaining philosophical knowledge, and this art he called "dialectics". In our days, we possess not only the fruits of Plato's and Aristotle's efforts towards discovery and organization of philosophical truths. We have, in addition, the results of centuries of collective effort on the part of scholastic philosophers, ending in a body of logically related sciences, full of precise notions, clear definitions, and well established truths. This philosophic tradition was accomplished through gradual steps, beginning with sense experience and common-sense knowledge. ... ▪ Read the rest on catholicism.org

Convent Fundraising Update

Home Sweet Home...Almost

July, 2024

The Sisters evacuate Saint Philomena's Convent due to a serious mold infestation. In God's Providence, we had outgrown it already with the entrance of our newest Sister.

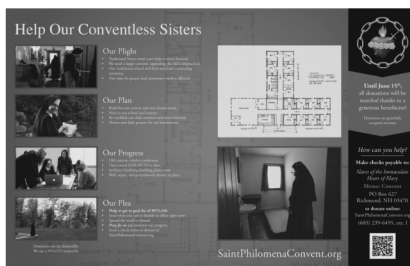


SBC Conference, 2024

We launch Operation Convent Rescue: volunteers begin phoning friends and relatives to request donations for the Sisters' housing crisis.

January/April, 2025

Sr. Marie Gabrielle is interviewed about the convent situation by Jesse Romero of Virgin Most Powerful Radio and Michael Hichborn of the Lepanto Institute.



Easter, 2025

A generous California benefactor and Doug Bersaw of Loreto Publications make possible an Eastertide Matching Gift Drive that raises more than \$200,000.

May–August, 2025

Teams of Sisters travel the country giving an inspirational talk called "When the Going Gets Tough—The Tough Get Mary?" We visit eighteen states from Florida to California, and meet hundreds of people.



Our Current Status

The old convent is fully remediated. We hope to put it on the market soon so as to help offset the cost of building a new convent. Many prayers are still needed!

Thank you & may Our Lady bless you!

\$637,006.13 Raised! Thank you and may God bless you! 65%



Charles Colombe

IN MEMORIAM: GARY POTTER

Our hopes for early glory fail,
The causes that we fought for die;
Still avidly His Cross we hail,
In silhouette against the sky.

— Charles A. Coulombe, “To Gary Potter.”

Gary Potter has died; these lines are among the hardest I have ever written. Amongst Traditional Catholics — certainly of that small number who are also interested in the Church’s social teachings — he was a patriarch. He was a mentor to me in many ways, and I hardly know where to begin in describing him. The bare facts of his obituary are impressive in themselves. Coming to consciousness during World War II as the son of Missourian parents relocated to California’s Bay Area, his whole life might be characterised as a search for Truth.

As a teenager in San Francisco, he fell in with the Beats — Jack Kerouac, Neal Cassady, Allen Ginsberg, and the rest. In fact, Kerouac immortalised him as a nameless teenager in *The Dharma Bums*. Now, Wikipedia, the endless source of truth, tells us that the Beat Generation was motivated thusly: “The central elements of Beat culture are the rejection of standard narrative values, making a spiritual quest, the exploration of American and Eastern religions, the rejection of economic materialism, explicit portrayals of the human condition, experimentation with psychedelic drugs, and sexual liberation and exploration.” While the last two had little attraction for young Potter, the others did — and in a sense were with him the rest of his life. Certainly, he would always retain a sympathy for the unconventional, the non-conformist, and the underdog. As the son of two 1940s Greenwich Village actor-Bohemians, this was a side of him I found most congenial.

Gary travelled South to Pasadena, California, to attend the Pasadena Playhouse. There he gained an undying love of the theatre and cinema and the lead in a performance of the *Alcestis* of Euripides. But he also met a fellow student named Virginia Ruger, from Mason City, Iowa. Their extended lunches at Ernie Junior’s Taco House became a passionate romance, and Gary would not forget her. But the quest for reality led him to desire something more “authentic” than the life of an actor.

Gary joined the Merchant Marine, which brought him a great many adventures. But one day, on a tropical beach, he read a passage of Hemingway’s — “If you are lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man, then wherever you go for the rest of your life it stays with you, for Paris is a moveable feast.” As he was fast feeling his youth pass by him, he left the Merchant Marine and moved to the City of Lights.

There he reunited with some of his old Beat friends, and soon frequented various literary circles. But France was still in the throes of reaction to the Algerian defeat, and it was the circles

of the French Catholic and Royalist Right whose membership attracted him. Henri Massis, Louis Salleron, Jacques Hérissay, Gilbert Tournier, Pierre Masquelier, Marshal Weygand, Marshal Alphonse Juin, Colonel Rémy, Gustave Thibon, Michel de Saint-Pierre, Gilbert Tournier, and many more such figures. He came to know men who had known Charles Maurras and became himself a man of the Right. But his conversion to the French throne began his conversion to the Catholic altar — and it was here, in Paris, that he would first dip his finger into the holy water font.

He returned to the United States, and in 1966 became a founding editor of the fledgling journal *Triumph*. Wedding the enchanting Iowan he had met in Pasadena, he and Virginia settled briefly in New York, and then moved to Washington, DC. The magazine was and is unique in American Catholic history, although possibly closest to the 1950s journal, *Integrity*. It was an all-star cast of American Catholic thought, and in the following decade challenged — albeit unsuccessfully — the directions in which American Church, State, and Culture were headed in an integrally Catholic manner, drawing upon Catholic Conservative writers from many nationalities and traditions. In a way, this experience internalized a sort of Catholic Cosmopolitanism in Gary himself.

After the magazine folded, Gary pursued a number of Catholic and Conservative political and literary efforts; by 1987, he had a regular column in the *Wanderer*. In that year, my first book, *Everyman Today Call Rome* was published. Gary gave it a glowing review, which in turn secured its success — at least in Catholic terms. Obviously I had to meet the man when next I would be in DC. I wrote him, and he extended an invitation to meet him at his office.

Fittingly, this turned out to be located at Confederate Memorial Hall, 1322 Vermont Avenue NW in Washington, D.C. Gary introduced me to John Edward Hurley, then president of the association that ran the Hall, and a redoubtable figure in his own right. From that time on, Gary would introduce me to an unforgettable cast of characters, some of whom became good friends in their own right: John Wisner, Fritz Wilhelmsen, Farley Clinton, William Marshner, Thomas Molnar, Terry Boyle, Solange Hertz, Pat Buchanan, Ann Sheridan, Robert Hickson, Stephen Kerr, Herb Porras, and a host of others.

But his many interesting connexions were far from the most interesting thing about Gary Potter. In himself, he seemingly

contained the Catholic world. He championed in Washington any number of relatively obscure and persecuted Catholic figures, from Equatorial Guinea's Archbishop Rafael Nze Abuy to Rwanda's King Kigeli V. French Legitimists, Spanish Carlists, Portuguese Miguelists and Integralists, British Neo-Jacobites and Distributists, Austrian Monarchists and Dollfussites, White Russians and on and on — all found a home in his heart and mind. He loved both Orestes Brownson and the Catholic Worker. In a word, in both thought and action he was quite simply the most pan-Catholic man I have ever known. His wealth of knowledge was incomparable.

But in addition to all of that, he was quite simply fun. In the earlier years of our friendship, he and his darling wife, Virginia, were amazing party givers. Any time I was in Washington until he left the City, there was no question of where I had to stay whenever I visited. For a while he was part of a group of Catholics that lunched weekly at the Supreme Court cafeteria; for many years, he was a leading light at Old St. Mary's Church when the Traditional Latin Mass was revived there.

In almost forty years of friendship, we had a great many adventures, and a book would be needed to chronicle them. One thinks of the time the son of a liquor store owner offered us then-illegal cigars simply on the basis of our conversation as we shopped; there was prowling Paris with him before and after the 1993 Chartres Pilgrimage, or the toast-filled conferences in Los Angeles, El Paso, and Chicago. Watching *The Last Emperor* with him, I remarked that the film's depiction of a 1930s formal party in Manchukuo might have been — save for the preponderance of Asians — reproduced in any major city on the planet in that decade. "Indeed," he said, "it was called Western Civilisation — and was really worthwhile!"

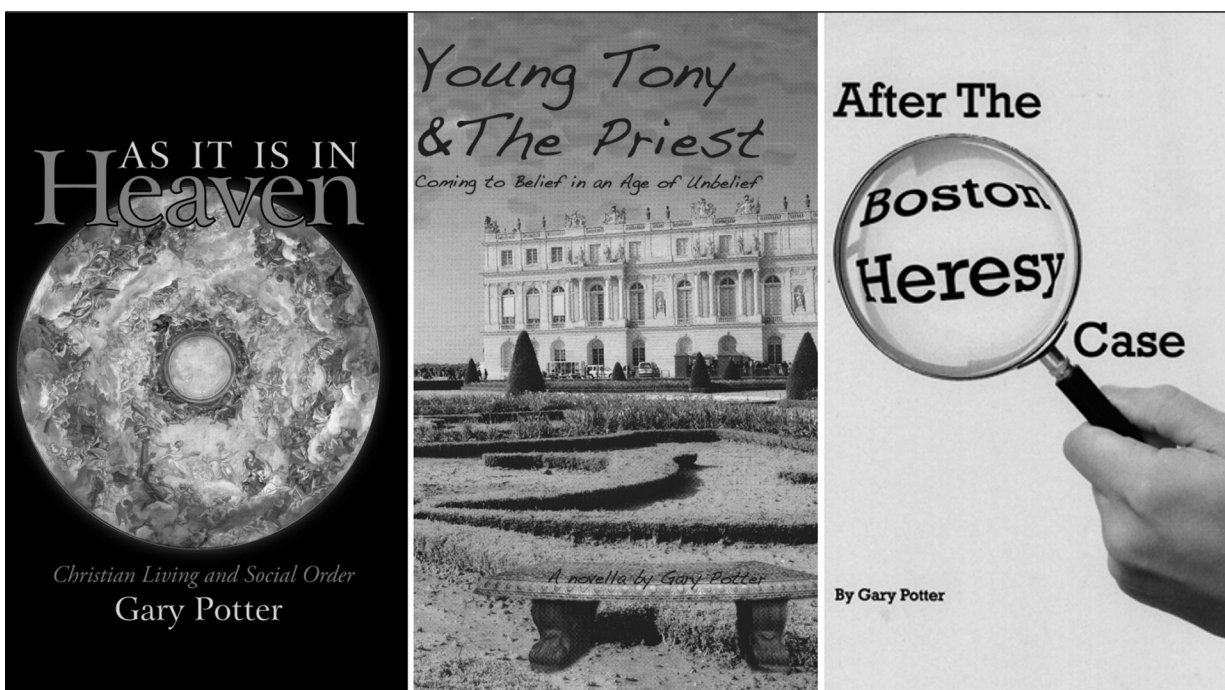
Despite the fact that so many efforts he had been involved with did not realise the hopes of those who started them, Gary never lost hope for the future. Deeply rooted in history and literature as he was, he knew that neither seeming victory nor defeat are the final word in this life, and that both are transitory. What mattered was to keep ever striving to be loyal and true to Him Who is Truth itself. Without a doubt, his many talents and gifts could have been employed in earthly gain, and I for one cannot doubt that he would have been marvellously successful in anything he put his mind to. But instead, he dedicated himself to proclaiming truths the world did not want to hear but God had long since declared to be so. This included, in his last decades, *Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus*.

As the years went by, after having been a fixture at the St. Benedict Center Conferences as emcee, he yielded that position to this writer, as he in turn has since yielded it to Mike Church. His last appearance would be in 2018, the same year this writer moved to Austria. Gary still lived in the old apartment on Mintwood Place in DC; there he would take care of Virginia until in March of 2020 COVID forced them out of their home to a new house in Frederick, Maryland next to their daughter Veronica, son-in-law, and grandsons. There Virginia died, surrounded by her family, and mourned deeply by all of us who knew her. In August of 2021, I was fortunate enough to spend a last overnight at his place in Maryland. It was an extremely valedictory visit, as we both knew there was a good chance it would be our last time. So it has proved to be. ■



Gary Potter at our Conference in 2018. May he rest in peace.

BOOKS BY GARY POTTER



Gary Kent Potter's Obituary

Gary Kent Potter, 86, of Washington, D.C., passed away on Tuesday, September 9, 2025, at home.

Born on June 8, 1939, in California, he was the son of the late Max Ardra Potter and Edna Atteberry Potter. He was the husband of the late Virginia Elizabeth Potter.

He was a dedicated apostle of Christ the King.

Gary grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area. He attended The Pasadena Playhouse, a professional theater academy and college; then spent two years sailing in the Merchant Marine and another four living in France, where he discovered the Catholic Faith and became a convert. Following baptism into the Church, he lived in New York. He relocated to the District of Columbia and married his wife, Virginia.

Gary began his career in Catholic journalism in 1966 as a founding editor of *Triumph* magazine. He also wrote for and edited *Truth & Justice* and *CCPA News & Views* (the publication of Catholics for Christian Political Action). Articles by Gary Potter have appeared in *National Review*, *Human Events*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *National Catholic Register*, *Faith & Reason*, *The Wanderer*, *The Remnant*, *The Angelus*, and numerous other places. He authored *In Reaction*, a series of Catholic essays. He wrote three books: *After the Boston Heresy Case*, *As it is in Heaven*, and *Young Tony & the Priest*. Gary was also a gifted speaker and enjoyed presenting at various Catholic conferences.

Surviving Gary are daughter Veronica Potter Kosch, son-in-law John Kosch, and three grandsons, Max, Jack, and Gavin Kosch.

A Requiem Mass will be offered for the repose of Mr. Potter's soul Saturday, November 29, 2025, at 11:00 am at St. Thomas the Apostle Church located at 2665 Woodley Rd. NW, Washington, DC 20008. Interment will be private.



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

As faithful Catholics, we are all called to evangelize. This duty is keenly felt by those who are aware of the Church's perennial teaching, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. Unfortunately, it seems that large swaths of our hierarchy have forgotten the necessity of saving souls, and what, precisely, this even entails. The Spiritual Works of Mercy, which

include admonishing the sinner, instructing the ignorant, and counseling the doubtful, get short shrift in our day.

When Pope Francis famously remarked, in regard to the mortal sin of sodomy, "Who am I to judge?", it certainly caused scandal among the faithful, but also among non-Catholics who are at least in agreement with us on this imperative of the natural law. These folks, including conservative evangelicals, argued that they could not follow a leader who did not seem to take seriously what Scripture and the natural law said on the subject.

After Pope Francis' death (God rest his soul), when he was replaced by then Cardinal Robert Prevost, O.S.A., now Pope Leo XIV, many of the faithful (including this one) were hoping that a pontificate would emerge that had a greater respect for tradition. There were very positive signs at first. Now, however, it seems apparent that the differences are mostly on the surface, and many of the novelties of the previous pontificate are being consolidated.

My purpose here, however, is not to sow the seeds of disrespect for Pope Leo XIV, but rather it is to show others that recent events are no reason to remain outside the Church and forfeit any chance for salvation. (Saint Benedict Center has never encouraged scandal mongering or hand-wringing.)

First, we must always keep in mind that the dogma, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, was not, despite the opinion of some misled Catholics, something dreamed up by Father Feeney, but is a defined dogma of the Church that cannot be changed. If anyone doubts what I say here, I will defer to Pope Eugene IV and the Council of Florence, which stated it unequivocally in the Bull, *Cantate Domino*, only a few years prior to the so-called Protestant Reformation, which actually was a revolt against Church authority:

It ["the sacrosanct Roman Church"] firmly believes, professes, and proclaims that those not living within the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics cannot become participants in eternal life, but will depart "into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels" [Matt. 25:41], unless before the end of life the same have been added to the flock; and that the unity of the ecclesiastical body is so strong that only to those remaining in it are the sacraments of the Church of benefit for salvation, and do fastings, almsgiving, and other functions

of piety and exercises of Christian service produce eternal reward, and that no one, whatever almsgiving he has practiced, even if he has shed blood for the name of Christ, can be saved, unless he has remained in the bosom and unity of the Catholic Church.

In other words, granting that scandal ensued when a "gay pride" event was allowed in the Vatican for the Jubilee Year, and even though the agendas of ecumenism and synodality seem to progress unabated, Pope Leo XIV is still the Pope, and the Church he heads is still the one true Church, outside which no one is saved.

First, to the anti-Catholic fundamentalist or evangelical who has no respect for the authority of the Church, I would point out some typology. In Jude 11, St. Jude referred to those who "perished in the contradiction of Core." While space does not permit a detailed explanation, in Numbers 16, the story is told of Core and his followers, and how they refused to acknowledge Moses' authority, asking "Why lift you up yourselves against the people of the Lord?" (Num. 16:3). After consulting God, Moses cleared the decks, so to speak, and then God caused the earth to open around Core and his followers, "and they went down alive into hell" (Num. 16:33).

Numbers Chapter 16 is not popularly known, but the story is a good one for our purposes. Many evangelicals do have a certain respect for typology. It should be pointed out that an outright rejection of the authority that God established in the Old Testament — even the authority of a frail, sinful man like Moses, who was not allowed into the Land of Promise because of his doubt (cf. Num. 20:7-12, Deut. 32:48-52) — brought about a horrible punishment upon those guilty of the crime. If the sacred character of the divinely appointed human hierarchy of the Law that was but "a shadow of the good things to come" (Heb. 10:1) was so inviolable, how much more ought we to regard the divinely appointed human hierarchy of the New Law, a "better testament which is established on better promises" (Heb. 8:6)?

However, typology alone will not likely convince the evangelical. Perhaps, however, the literal sense of the New Testament will. Christ's divinely appointed human hierarchy got off to an inglorious start. Scripture tells us that during Christ's Passion, one apostle betrayed Him, one (the first pope) denied Him, and the rest ran away in terror. Only St. John returned to the foot of the Cross. Yet (except for Judas) return they all did, eventually, and at Pentecost they became empowered to follow Christ's great commission and go out to convert the world.

After he had established the Church in Ephesus, Saint Paul admonished the flock in a very tender scene recorded in Acts 20:18-38. A discordant note is sounded in verses 28-30, where the Apostle warns,

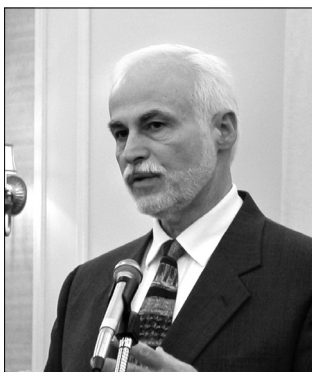
Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own

blood. I know that, after my departure, ravaging wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock. And of your own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

So the Holy Ghost established bishops, but some of them, Judas like, betrayed their charge. Such are not to be heeded. But, unless we wish to end up like Ananias and Saphira (cf. Acts 5:1-11), who dealt fraudulently with Christ's hierarchy, we had better see in the pope and bishops of the Catholic Church the authority

established by God.

Many of are aware that during the Arian crisis, numerous bishops betrayed the Faith and persecuted the orthodox faithful, yet the Church went on; and so it will again: this current crisis will pass, and no one should remain outside the Church because of the weakness of its leaders. As Brother André recently stated, the Church is not a personality cult. The important thing to consider is the religion itself, not the shortcomings of those currently in charge. ■



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

ANALOGY IN PHILOSOPHY

Everyone is familiar with analogies. They make it possible to convey ideas which would otherwise be difficult to understand, or they may employ a turn of phrase which causes us to stop and think or give us a laugh. Generally, in English class, students are told that analogies are sentences that

may contain “like” or “as,” in which case they are called *similes*. Or, if they are analogies that do not contain one of these words, they are called *metaphors*. In the *Merriam Webster Dictionary Online*, “analogy” is defined as “*a*: a comparison of two otherwise unlike things based on resemblance of a particular aspect; *b*: resemblance in some particulars between things otherwise unlike.”

Sometimes, we use analogies just to be silly, like the following short list of similes that supposedly came from high school students.

“She grew on him like she was a colony of E. Coli, and he was room-temperature Canadian beef.”

“He was as tall as a six-foot, three-inch tree.”

“He fell for her like his heart was a mob informant, and she was the East River.”

“Even in his last years, Granddad had a mind like a steel trap, only one that had been left out so long it had rusted shut.” (This last one is closer to reality than I would care to admit!)

For the sake of equal time, I should also present some amusing examples of metaphors:

“Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city.” (George Burns)

“She was a couch potato in the gravy boat of life, flopping dejectedly on the sofa.”

“The beautiful child was the center of attention, with his

golden curls and tuna fish complexion.”

“A bank is a place where they lend you an umbrella in fair weather and ask for it back when it begins to rain.” (Robert Frost)

All of the above considers analogy in literary or rhetorical terms. But, besides providing a few chuckles, and serving to enrich the language of good literature, analogy has a much deeper and more important use. In the branch of philosophy called *metaphysics* which includes the study *epistemology* (the study of knowledge) and *ontology* (the study of being), analogy has a higher use, and this use soars to its absolute height when put to the service of sound theology, as is done in the scholastic tradition. When we speak of being *as* being, we discover that everything is a being, whether it is a person, an angel, a dog, a thing, an idea, a word, or even God, Himself. This is true even of something that exists in the mind but not in reality: like a unicorn, which is called an *ens rationis sine fundamento in re* (a being of the mind without foundation in reality). *Everything* without exception is a being. Since everything and everyone is a being, how can we talk about God — the Omnipotent, the Omniscient, the all-Merciful, the all-Just, etc. — and any creature in the same breath without bringing God down to their level or artificially elevating a created being to the same level as God? Either we can say nothing about God and creatures at all, or whatever we say about any creature also applies to God in the same way. In the first instance, we become agnostics; in the second, we become pantheists.

On the other hand, what could Holy Scripture mean when it says, “Let us make man to our image and likeness” (Gen. 1:26) if there is no way to relate “Us” (God) and “man”? Obviously, no man is omnipotent or omniscient or omnipresent. The only words we have to refer to God must be analogous. (This is why theologians of most schools tell us “all our knowledge of God is analogical.”) Our concepts begin with the senses, so whatever we say about God is loosely related to what we can say about ourselves or any created being. Such concepts do not apply to God and man in the exact same way, but have enough similarities

to give us a peek into the Divine Substance and His attributes. This is very fine for speaking about God and creatures, but what about when we want to examine the real world — the study of real, material beings — and determine how they relate to God?

To bridge the apparently insurmountable gap between the Creator and His creatures, metaphysics proposes the “analogy of being.” God and created beings cannot be the same, but they are also not completely dissimilar. Their beings are analogous. Thus, when philosophers say that water is a substance, man is a substance, and that God is a substance, this is true analogously. They are similar, but not exactly the same, though also not completely different. Because God is infinite and the Creator of all things, theologians say He is “unknowable.” But, on the other hand, by analogy we *can* get a glimpse of the Divine Essence.

In metaphysics, we learn that there are two basic types of analogy — that of attribution and that of proportion. The classic example of analogy of attribution is that of health. A diet, a climate, or a medicine is called “healthy,” not because these non-living things are themselves possessed of bodily health, but because they cause health in man. An analogy of proportion is when we say that an aroma is “strong” and that a man is “strong.” Though a scent is not strong in the same way as a man is strong, it is similar. Many theologians maintain that the only type of analogy that can be used when discussing God and any created being is that of proportion. Since God and men are beings, and since God created men, whatever I say about men and God is proportionate. For example, man is merciful and God is merciful. An angel is a spirit and God is a Spirit. Creatures only reflect what God has created in them.

There is also another division of analogy called intrinsic or extrinsic. In the analogy of health, health could be intrinsically in a plant, meaning the plant itself is a healthy specimen, but that same plant could also cause health in a man, which would be extrinsic, meaning that the plant causes health in a man without itself necessarily being in good health. Theologians debate whether intrinsic or extrinsic can be applied in an analogy between God and creation. Some say, because God and creatures are both beings, that are similar but different, only intrinsic analogy ap-

plies, since they are both beings. Some say, because God is the Creator and creatures are created, only extrinsic analogy applies, since all creatures receive their being from God and anything that is similar must be in proportion. From my research, it seems that analogy has been one of the most extensively discussed and debated topics in theology, and the debate has been going on for nearly five hundred years without a clear resolution!

To give us some direction on the issue of intrinsic versus extrinsic analogy of being, I consulted the book used by Brother Francis in his course on Ontology, entitled *Ontology* by Peter Coffey and happened upon this passage:

Now on account of the various relations that exist between the different modes of being, relations of cause and effect, whole and part, means and end, ground and consequence, etc. — relations which constitute the *orders* of existing and possible things, the *physical* and the *metaphysical* orders — being is of course predicated of its modes by *analogy of attribution*; and in such predication infinite being is the primary analogue for finite beings, and the substance-mode of being for all accident-modes of being.

Inasmuch, however, as being is not merely attributed to these modes extrinsically, but belongs to all of them intrinsically, it is also predicated of them by *analogy of proportion*. This latter sort of analogy is based on similarity of relations. (Coffey, Peter, PhD, *Ontology or the Theory of Being*, 1926, Longmans, Green and Co., p. 37)

After reading a passage such as this, it’s pretty easy to see why students are intimidated by some books on philosophy! The important thing to remember is that the *analogy of being* is what allows us to talk about God and man, about spirits and material beings, about ideas and the real things to which ideas refer. They all share one thing in common: they are all *beings*, though not exactly in the same manner. If we didn’t have the wonderful tool of analogy, all such knowledge would be inaccessible to us. ■

¹ The Groyppers, are a group of Christian nationalist and white nationalist people loosely defined as followers, fans, or associates of Nick Fuentes. They are named after a variant of Pepe the Frog, an internet meme. See en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groyppers

Continued from page 3

Jesus Christ was predestined to be the Man-God, the supreme Glorifier of the Holy Trinity, but His humanity was not created *ex nihilo* for the purpose — which it could have been. Rather, He was born of a specific lineage: “the son of Mary” (Mark 6:3), “the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matt. 1:1), and, therefore, the son “of Adam, who was of God” (Luke 3:38).

Mary: The Predestined Mother of God

The divine plan included the Virgin Mary, that blessed “gate from whom into the world, a light has arisen.” She was, by Her Immaculate Conception, providentially prepared to

be the “worthy dwelling-place for [God’s] Son” (Collect for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception), for, as Blessed Pius IX tells us in *Ineffabilis Deus*,

From the very beginning, and before time began, the eternal Father chose and prepared for his only-begotten Son a Mother in whom the Son of God would become incarnate and from whom, in the blessed fullness of time, he would be born into this world.

Indeed, the Blessed Virgin’s arrival constituted that “blessed fullness of time” that Pio Nono speaks of, clearly referencing

the Apostle: “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law...” (Gal. 4:4) — which reminds me of the lovely liturgical hymn which begins, “Mary the dawn, Christ the perfect day.”

Later in that same encyclical, Blessed Pius IX writes,

And hence the very words with which the Sacred Scriptures speak of Uncreated Wisdom and set forth his eternal origin, the Church, both in its ecclesiastical offices and in its liturgy, has been wont to apply likewise to the origin of the Blessed Virgin, inasmuch as God, by one and the same decree, had established the origin of Mary and the Incarnation of Divine Wisdom.

That “one and the same decree” predestining the Man-God included the Blessed Virgin’s *fiat* at the Annunciation. It was determined “before time began,” yet this divine decree did not interfere with the Holy Virgin’s free will. Behold, an incomprehensible mystery of grace! Thus, I could not agree more with Henry Sire when he writes, “In reality, there is only one reason why God became incarnate in the reign of Augustus and not in the Bronze Age or the twenty-first century: it is that a young girl in Galilee said the words: ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to thy word.’”

Admittedly, I have reframed Mr. Sire’s statement in the context of my own understanding, which is that the Incarnation was indeed the fulfillment of a predestined divine plan that Our Lady’s free-willed *fiat* effected in time.

The Israel of God is *Roman*

Now, this is entirely speculative, but, had the Jewish leadership and most of the Old Israel not rejected their Messias, the natural branches would have remained on the tree, but the wild olive shoots (the Gentiles) would still have been grafted in, because God’s salvific will is universal (1 Tim. 2:4) — and this is the mission of the Church Catholic: to bring His salvation to “all nations” (Matt. 28:19). However, the Gentiles would have been grafted onto a tree that remained *whole and flourishing* with its original branches. The integration would likely have been more organic, proceeding *from* a believing Jerusalem and a converted Jewish people who would then fulfill their mission to be the light to the Gentiles. It would have had less the appearance of a “replacement” and more the appearance of a graceful expansion.

Yet — we continue our speculations — the decision of the Council of Jerusalem abandoning the kosher laws (Acts 15) would still have been made. Peter and Paul would have gone to Rome, where the Prince of the Apostles would have established his See. Had Jerusalem remained the center of the true religion, the transition from a national religion in the Old Covenant to a universal Church in the New would have been obscured. In other words, the New Testament would have been “New” under these circumstances — as was, in fact, prophesied in Jeremiah 31:31. The capital of the universal Church would still

have been established by Christ’s first Vicar in the center of the universal Empire, Rome.

As it is, the first Vicar of Christ, Saint Peter, was a Jew who wrote in Greek and established the Apostolic See in Rome, doing his part to accomplish exactly what Charles Coulombe described in “Which Christian Nation Are We Defending?”: “God became Man in Palestine, Judaism was fulfilled, and that fulfilment [was] explained via Greek philosophy and organised with Roman law.”

The mystical members of Christ form “the Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16), to whom Saint Paul declares, “And if you be Christ’s, then are you the seed of Abraham, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:29). Indeed, the Catholic Church is the true Israel; and, further, given what was said earlier about *Romanitas* being the fifth note of the Church, the Israel of God is Roman!

Considered from the perspective of our membership in Christ by faith and baptism, we Christian Gentiles are more truly Israelites than those who have the very blood of Jacob coursing through their veins, but who reject their own Messias. To drive this point home further, when we partake of the Holy Eucharist, we communicate with the Semitic Body and Blood of the Man-God, along with His Soul and Divinity. Pope Pius XI’s famous statement, “Spiritually, we are Semites,” is no sentimental metaphor but a simple statement of Catholic doctrine. But note: One key difference between the Old Israel and the New is that the New Israel transcends all national, ethnic, and racial boundaries; here, “there is neither Gentile nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free. But Christ is all, and in all” (Col. 3:11). As the four living creatures and the four and twenty ancients sing in the Apocalypse, “thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, in thy blood, *out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation*” (Apoc. 5:9). ■

Email Brother André Marie at bam@catholicism.org.

PRAYERS FOR THE HOLY FATHER

V. Let us pray for our pontiff, Pope Leo.

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.

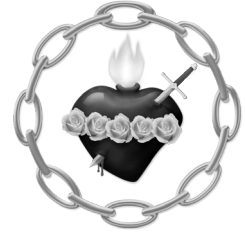
R. Almighty and everlasting God, have mercy upon Thy servant, Leo, our Supreme Pontiff, and direct him, according to Thy loving kindness, in the way of eternal salvation; that, of thy gift, he may ever desire that which is pleasing unto Thee and may accomplish it with all his might. Through Christ our Lord. Amen (Roman Ritual).

EXTRA ECCLESIAM NULLA SALUS

Ex 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).

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Without any cost to you, your real estate transaction will yield \$1,000 (on average) for Saint Benedict Center. They also handle commercial real estate.

Real Estate for Life was formed for the explicit purpose of giving donations to support pro-life organizations.

For more information call Real Estate for Life at (877) 543-3871, and tell them that you were referred by Saint Benedict Center, New Hampshire.

