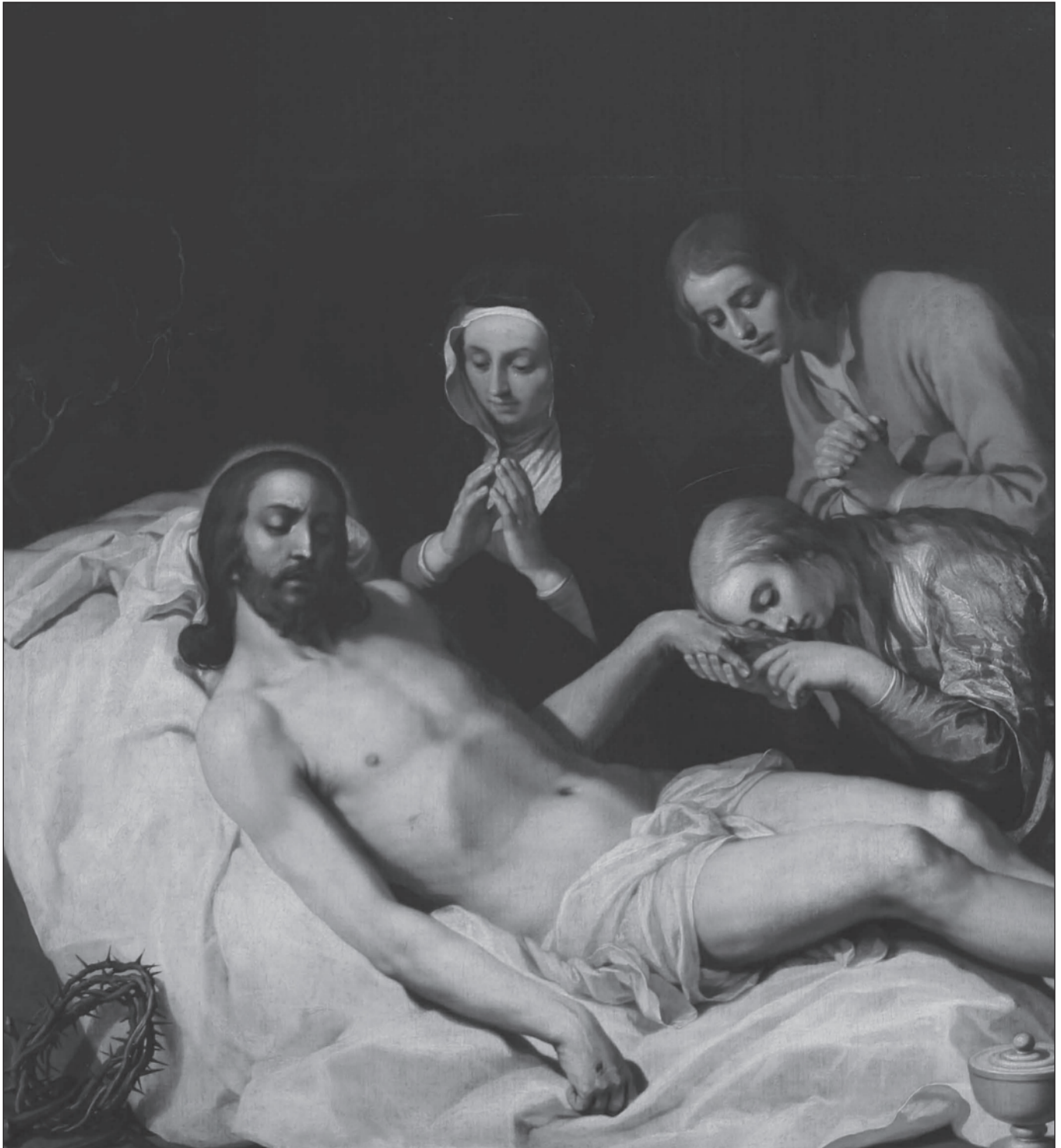
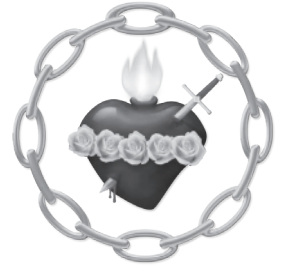


MANCIPIA

THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER

March/April 2025



Abraham Bloemaert: The lamentation over the dead Christ

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Br. André Marie,
M.I.C.M., Prior

PRIOR'S COLUMN

WHY DOES GOD THE FATHER HAVE NO SPOUSE?

The nuptial union of God the Son with His Church is a reality we know from Saints John and Paul, and from so many of our liturgical prayers.¹ God the Son, we know, has a Bride. And so does God the Holy Ghost, for He is

espoused to Our Lady, as is clear from Luke 1:35 and Our Lady's comely title in the Litany of Loreto, "Spouse of the Holy Ghost."

But why is God the Father, alone among the Trinitarian Persons, "single"?

Most of the arguments I will use here to answer that question will be based upon *fittingness*, precisely because the nature of the question is so speculative, there being no authoritative argument from the sources of revelation and the magisterium. That is alright, though; Saint Thomas and other greats used arguments from fittingness all the time. For my part, I will strive to keep my speculation on tight rails. Now, if you care to, strap yourself in and join me for the ride.

Because all our knowledge of God is analogical, when we speak of the espousal of a divine Person, we are not speaking in strictly univocal² terms with human marriage. Something is the same, something different; yet the use of the term, warranted by Holy Scripture and the Church's tradition, is not meaningless: we are truly talking about marriage, espousal, or nuptials, *but in a much higher sense*.

So we affirm it with no attenuation or compromise: God the Father joined Jesus to His Bride, the Catholic Church. God the Father also joined the Holy Ghost to His Bride, the Blessed Virgin Mary. "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." (Matt. 19:6). This is *terra firma* — good, firm ground from which to begin our speculations.

The "espoused" members of the Trinity are the Two who have temporal missions. More on the temporal missions later, but for now we can say that the Son and the Holy Ghost are *sent* by the Father, but the Father is not Himself sent. I think this is where our answer can be found. Elsewhere, we have touched upon the fittingness of God the Son being the One who became man, and this explanation helps us in our answer to the present question:

It would not be fitting that the Father become a child in time, for He is not from any other divine Person.

He is not a son. Nor would it be fitting for the Holy Ghost to be incarnate, since He is the breath of Love between the Father and the Son. He is not Himself a son.

It is fitting that if Mary would look at a Divine Person and say, "Thou art my son," it would be that One Person to whom those words are spoken in eternity by the Father. (This is from a piece I wrote called, "The Divine Infancy.")

The Church is fittingly given to the Son as His Spouse and His *mystical fullness* — in Ephesians 5:31-32, Saint Paul speaks of Christ and the Church in terms of the "one flesh" of marriage mentioned by Moses in Genesis 2:24, and Saint Augustine called the Church "the Whole Christ." God the Father willed that the Incarnate Logos should have brothers and sisters to share in His glory, augmenting it thereby.

The fecundity of the Son brings offspring to the Father. The Son does this through His espousals to the Church. Consider the words of the Father at the Baptism of Jesus — "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17); they are echoed each time a child of God is divinely adopted through that sacrament Jesus was then and there instituting.

Our Lady is fittingly given to the Holy Ghost as His Spouse for many reasons. One that I will not attempt to develop here is the beautiful doctrine of Saint Maximilian Maria Kolbe, who says that the Holy Ghost is the "Uncreated Immaculate Conception," while His Spouse is the "Created Immaculate Conception."

The Holy Ghost brings offspring to the Father through



His espousals to Our Lady, for the Sacred Humanity of Our Lord — “the Man, Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5) — is truly the Son of God through that union. Moreover, the Blessed Virgin is not only the Mother of Christ the Head, but also the Mother of “the Whole Christ,” which is His Mystical Body, the Church. Therefore, She is Mother of all of Christ’s mystical members.

It is fitting that the Holy Ghost and not the Father be the Bridegroom of Our Lady in order to avoid confusion between the Eternal and temporal births of Jesus. His first birth is from the bosom of the Father alone in eternity, while His temporal birth at Christmas was according to His sacred Humanity and is the result of God’s eternal plan to glorify the Trinity and save man by means of the economy of the Incarnation.

Saint Thomas Aquinas gives three reasons why the Incarnation is fittingly attributed to the Holy Ghost:

- First, because the Holy Ghost *is* the love of the Father for the Son in a Person and, “that the Son of God took to Himself flesh from the Virgin’s womb was due to the exceeding love of God: wherefore it is said (John 3:16): ‘God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son.’”
- Second, because the Sacred Humanity of Christ was predestined to have the “grace of union” — that is, the union of the divine nature with Christ’s Human Nature — prior to any preexisting merits on His part, and the sanctification of human nature is attributed to the Holy Ghost, who, for that reason, is called “the Sanctifier.” Saint Thomas cites Augustine on this: “The manner in which Christ was born of the Holy Ghost . . . suggests to us the grace of God, whereby man, without any merits going before, in the very beginning of his nature when he began to exist was joined to God the Word, into so great unity of Person, that He Himself should be the Son of God.”
- Third, “the term [purpose, or end] of the Incarnation was that that man, who was being conceived, should be the Holy One and the Son of God. Now, both of these are attributed to the Holy Ghost. For by Him men are made to be sons of God, according to Galatians 4:6: ‘Because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your [Vulgate: ‘our’] hearts, crying: *Abba, Father.*’” (*ST III Q 32, A. 1*; note that this does *not* mean that the Holy Ghost is properly said to be Our Lord’s “Father” in respect of His Humanity.)

These two spousal relationships fittingly correspond to the temporal missions of the Second and Third Persons, which have as their purpose to bring sons and daughters *to the Father*:

But go to my brethren, and say to them: I ascend to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God. — John 20:17

For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: *Abba* (Father). — Romans 8:15

And because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying: *Abba, Father.* — Galatians 4:6

While the begetting of children of God happens through the missions of the Second and Third Persons in cooperation with the secondary causality of the human agents involved — the sacred ministers of the Church and Our Lady — the children begotten are, like Jesus Himself, *children of the Eternal Father*; again, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt. 3:17) can be said by the Father of each of us at our Baptism. Also, I cannot refrain from citing Saint John here: “Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and should be the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth not us, because it knew not him” (1 John 3:1).

The Father has no mission in time. He sends the other Persons on Their temporal missions, but is not Himself sent by anyone. This is a temporal reflection of the reality of the eternal processions: in the Trinity, the Father is the Origin without origin, the principle of the other Persons, who has Himself no principle (as I use it here, a principle is “that from which something in some way proceeds”). The Father created the world through the Son and in the Holy Ghost; He subsequently saved the world through the Son and in the Holy Ghost (John 1:3, John 1:12-13; Col. 1:12-20). Since the processions in the Trinity have their origin in the Father, there would be no fittingness to His mystically perpetuating Himself (as Our Lord does in His Church); this is already accomplished by His eternal begetting of His Only-Begotten Son. Nor would it be fitting that He have a created compliment to His Eternal Person as does the Holy Ghost in Our Lady. Both of these Persons proceed from Him and, through Them, all things return to the Father by a process of “emanation and return” (a Platonic concept that was “baptized” by Catholic Fathers and Doctors).

The words of Isaias the Prophet can be applied to these

missions, at least to that of the Son (the Incarnate Word):

And as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return no more thither, but soak the earth, and water it, and make it to spring, and give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater. **So shall my word be, which shall go forth from my mouth: it shall not return to me void**, but it shall do whatsoever I please, and shall prosper in the things for which I sent it. —*Is.* 55:10-11

It is far more fitting that He who is eternally fruitful in begetting the Son and spirating the Holy Ghost remains temporally “unspoused.”

Else what? Else, we might end up with Mormonism’s strange doctrine of the “Heavenly Mother,” a spouse for God the Father in their strange, pseudo-Christian Olympus.

No, thank you. I’ll take Our Blessed Lady instead.

Our train of speculative theology has now arrived safely in the station. I hope nobody was worse off for the ride. ■

Email Brother André Marie at bam@catholicism.org.

1. Apoc. 21:2-9, 2 Cor. 11:2, Eph. 5:22-33; cf. also, Cant. 6:8 and the way this passage is employed by Pope Boniface VIII in *Unam Sanctam*; *Benedictus* antiphon for the Epiphany.

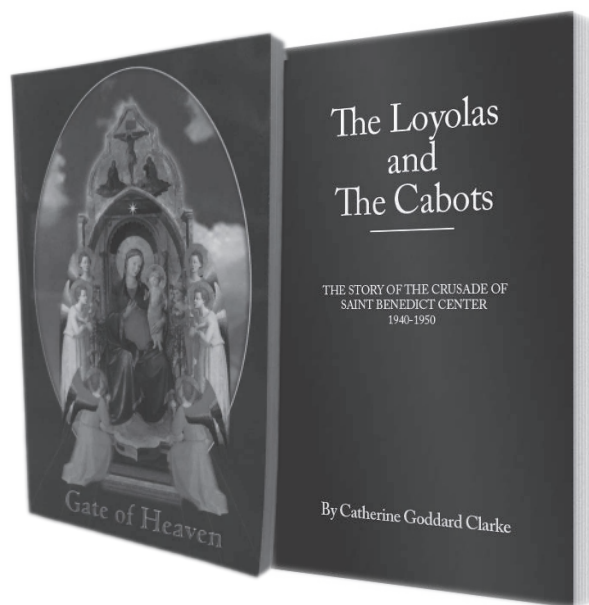
2. In Logic, we study the three modes of signification: univocity, equivococity, and analogy. In univocal signification, I apply a word to two things in exactly the same way. In equivococal signification, I apply the word to two things in a completely different way. In analogical signification, I apply the word in partly the same and partly a different manner.

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The author exudes both her own joy in living the sacramental life within the Catholic Church, the one ark of salvation, and her holy indignation over the fact that liberal Catholic clergymen in the United States were teaching that one’s personal sincerity of conscience was an acceptable substitute for the one and only means of salvation given in, through, with and by Christ. Strong in her defense of Father Leonard Feeney, who championed the Catholic doctrine of “no salvation outside the Church.” Anyone who truly loves the Faith and has Catholic zeal for souls would do well to give serious attention to this timely work, alarming as it is devotional.

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

CONVENT CORNER

ONE SPARK AT A TIME

Some How-To Tips for Would-Be Spiritual Pyromaniacs

There are many analogies that can be used to describe an apostle. An apostle can be likened to a farmer who sows the seeds of the Faith. Or a fisherman. A hunter. A soldier. One analogy that is not so common, but which I love very much is this one — a spiritual pyromaniac. An apostle is out to set souls on fire with the love of God. And if this sounds like a daunting task, I assure you that it need not actually be one. Take it from a native of California: great conflagrations often start very small.

As apostles, we are not looking to set off thermonuclear explosions in people's lives. What we want are sparks. Sparks everywhere. But how do we go about getting the holy sparks of interest or curiosity about the Faith lit up in people's lives? Here are a few ideas.

Catholic and Proud of It

The first thing to know is that your external appearance and actions say a lot all by themselves. Obviously wearing a religious habit is a big help in this department. Whenever the Sisters are out in public, we regularly have people coming up to us out of nowhere with, "Oh, you must be so hot in that thing;" or, "It's been ages since I've seen a nun in a habit! What Order are you from, Sister?" I remember one time I was standing on the corner waiting to cross the street, and a teenage boy came up behind me, very gangster-esque and said, "I like your church outfit."

Now, lay people may not have the advantage of habits or cassocks, but you have plenty of other options. Wearing a Miraculous Medal, wearing a scapular or rosary, making the Sign of the Cross when you hear an ambulance drive by, or when you pass a church or a cemetery; making a point of saying grace when you go out to eat; leaving your ashes on after morning Mass on Ash Wednesday. Ladies, with your long, lovely skirts; gentlemen, with your belts on, shirts tucked in. Parents, with your four, five, six, seven, eight, nine plus beautiful Catholic children traipsing after you around town. People notice these things. Sparks fly when you just live your Faith!

Conversation Sparking

But certainly words are very powerful, too. In terms of starting — or sparking — a conversation with somebody, one strategy that we have found very easy and very effective is to notice your surroundings: pay attention to what you are

seeing right in front of you so that you can connect it with something in the Faith. For example, if you are at the barber shop, you might say, "Oh, your name is Tony! You know, I once read the story of how St. Anthony came to be patron saint of finding things. Have you heard it?" For them, it is neat Catholic trivia — for you, it is your apostolic mission. Or if you are at the bank, you might strike up a conversation with, "Your last name is Brocelli — that's Italian, isn't it? Have you ever heard of Padre Pio? What an amazing man!" Or if you are writing a check out for the cashier at the grocery store, and you happen to notice the date is October 12. Why not mention to the cashier, "I guess it's some big feast day over in Spain. Have you ever heard of Our Lady of the Pillar? It's a neat story!" Tell them!

The examples could go on forever. You are out flower shopping and you tell people about St. Thérèse. You are out shoe shopping and you mention Saints Crispin and Crispinian. The connections to the Faith are everywhere, if we but have eyes to see. And just knowing the lives of the saints gives you a virtually inexhaustible fund of anecdotes that are easy to tell but almost impossible to forget. Very convenient for an apostle.

Besides the lives of the saints, knowing your history can also come in handy. I once met a young man who told me, "I'm not really religious. I'm really into aliens. No, really! There have been so many sightings, so many people claiming to have seen things or been abducted — how could they all be lying?" I said, "Did you hear about the sighting they had in Portugal in 1917? It was unbelievable! There were 70,000 witnesses; there were reporters from all the major newspapers who wrote up the story with pictures and everything. There were crazy atmospheric disturbances." His eyes were enormous. And his response was, "Oh, my — really?? I'm going to look that up! I'm so glad I met you!"

A Crash Course on Drag Racing

What if it is too impractical or awkward to start the conversation with a reference to the Faith? By all means, start with something completely unrelated and wait for an opening. I remember striking up a conversation with a fellow who worked in an auto parts supply store. I pointed to the drag racing car cabled to the ceiling of his business, and I said, "That must be a pretty special car." He said, "Yeah, drag racing used to be pretty big around this town. So I asked him (and not completely disingenuously), "What is drag racing exactly?" He then explained to me all about how this 8,000 horsepower engine gets a dragster going from zero to 300 miles per hour in four seconds flat, burning in those four seconds approximately forty-four gallons of nitromethane fuel, which happens to be the exact fuel burning rate as a fully loaded 747 jet engine, only the jet produces 25% less energy. I asked him,

“Did you race?” He said, “No. I like fishing.” That was the opening I had been waiting for. I told him, “I just finished this great book. The priest who wrote it said that trying to help people get to Heaven is kind of like fishing. He said you bait them with the Truth. Isn’t that interesting? Nothing less than Truth will satisfy the human heart.” I said, “Are you Catholic?” He was Catholic. “Are you going to Mass?” He was not going to Mass.

So you see, it was not that I particularly cared about drag racing. (I didn’t.) I cared about him. I cared about him enough to give him two minutes of my time, just listening to him, building up in that time something of a rapport so that when it was my turn to talk, to offer him a Miraculous Medal, to offer him an exhortation to take his Faith seriously as the most precious thing he has on this planet, he would be in a disposition to hear me out. Which he did, very gratefully.

Learn to Be Likable

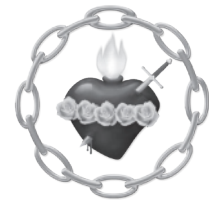
That is the final thought I will leave you with: As apostles, we can’t appreciate too much how much our effectiveness

boils down to simple likability. Is it the be-all-end-all of our missionary efforts? No. Is it a valuable tool? Yes. And in some cases, vital. If we make a point of remembering people’s names, if we take the trouble to keep track of birthdays and anniversaries; if we take the time to talk to people and especially to listen to them; if we smile extra, if we tip extra, if we bend over backwards to help people out when they need it; they will like us more. And if they like us, then they will listen to us. And if they are listening to us, then they can learn from us. And when they are learning...well, then we have a fire going.

That is what being an apostle is all about. It is about striking the flint of our enthusiasm against the steel of their ignorance or their indifference or their prejudice — and hoping that some kindling of good will will catch. “Be who God intends you to be,” says St. Catherine of Siena, spiritual pyromaniac par excellence, “and you will — you will — set the world on fire.”


One soul at a time. One spark at a time. ■

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FOUNDER'S COLUMN

THE FAILURE OF INTERFAITH

Many Catholics are beginning to wonder if inter-faith meetings are good things. Once upon a time we were prepared to believe they were.

Catherine Goddard Clarke* For years a great many Catholics have had the well-meaning but mistaken notion that they helped the Church and made her better known when they were liked by, and were socially sought by, Protestants, particularly Protestants who felt there “was no difference” between themselves and Catholics.

Association of Catholics with Protestants as people, has unquestionably made for pleasant intercourse among the participants. But it is not of this I speak. I speak, rather, of those religious common-denominator meetings in which Protestants and Catholics, and even Jews, take part, by way, so they hope, of letting their religious agreements dissolve their differences. The habit of vague religious values engendered by such gatherings has been a hardship for the Church. Out of such practice has come altogether too much compromise — compromise of a Revelation once so zealously guarded by the Church, and so precious preserved by the deaths of her martyrs and sufferings of her saints.

There is a difference between Catholics and Protestants. There is most certainly a doctrinal difference, and this cannot long escape manifesting itself in any except the most superficial intercourse between the two groups. And if there is not an intransigent difference manifested at a religious group-meeting, then somebody is giving ground — a transaction in which a Protestant has nothing, and a Catholic everything to lose.

It would undoubtedly seem that inter-faith meetings imply a dishonesty. People who know they have fundamental differences in religion agree to get on a platform and make believe that these differences do not exist irreconcilably. It was distressing to hear, recently, a graduate student from a nearby college define an inter-faith meeting as: “A place where a Jewish Rabbi, who does not believe in the Divinity of Christ, and a Protestant Minister, who doubts it, get together with a Catholic Priest, who agrees to forget it for the evening.”

If there is not a vast difference between the Catholic who receives the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion and the Protestant who does not, why did Christ institute

* Later known as Sister Catherine, Mrs. Clarke was the foundress of Saint Benedict Center, which began as a lay apostolate in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

the Blessed Sacrament at the Last Supper at all? Why did He say to His followers, “Unless you eat My flesh and drink My blood you shall not have life in you?” And when they said, “It is a hard saying, Lord, and we cannot take it,” why did He permit them to go, and why did he walk with them no more? Is there not all the difference in the world between those who have LIFE in them, and those who have not?

One of the purposes of inter-faith meetings is that people may come to know what other people believe. Why, one asks? So that such knowledge may help them to decide which is the one, true Faith? No, one is told, but rather that possessing this knowledge they may live in more perfect harmony with each other.

That platform alone is enough to make the Twelve Apostles, and the early Fathers, and the Doctors of the Church, and all the Saints and Martyrs turn in their graves. One vainly endeavors to picture the Apostles after the coming of the Holy Spirit rushing from the Upper Room and crying to the people: “Please tell us what you believe so that we may better understand you, so that we may all live more pleasantly together!” One tries to visualize that as the cause of their cruel martyrdom later, or that as the reason why the first twenty-eight Popes of the Church were also martyred, one after the other.

However, is it not the hope of inter-faith meetings, that as a result of them, people might live together more happily? And is this not a false hope? Christ said, “Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, whom Thou hast given Me; that they may be one, as We also are.” The Catholic knows there can be but one Truth. He knows that real love of his neighbor must therefore consist not in making him comfortable in the half or the quarter of the truth which he possesses, but in giving to his neighbor the full truth. A house divided against itself cannot stand. Lasting peace in the world, can come only from the possession of the whole Truth of Christ, which is contained in the teaching of the Holy Roman Catholic Church alone. That is the one hope the Catholic can hold out to his neighbor.

Grave as the foregoing considerations are, they are but the surface difficulties we find with the idea of inter-faith meetings. There is a much more fundamental difficulty than either of these, amounting to a danger-sign that inter-faith meetings may not be pleasing to God. A very important credential is missing, the first credential a Catholic looks for in any work which purports to be of God. Or is that the trouble? Maybe inter-faith meetings are not meant to be of God, but only of Man, like everything else in this Humanitarian Age. If the worship of God by the Jew, the Protestant, and the Catholic has been found to be a source of strife in the community, and men are getting together merely to decide how to tolerate one another in spite of this

God who demands to be worshipped three ways, then the principle of inter-faith meetings is decidedly a bad one, and no further reflection is necessary.

There are many inter-faith advocates, however, who have supported inter-faith gatherings in the belief that they were advancing the cause of God first and man second, and for them I would offer the following thought. There has never been any question about the sovereignty of Our Lady at inter-faith meetings. Both in spirit and in name, the Queen of Heaven has been disregarded by these conclaves.

Catholicism is not a religion that teaches simply that God exists. All religions do that. Catholicism teaches that God exists AND that He became man. Catholicism is an Incarnational Religion. Its uncompromising doctrine stands on that central mystery: God became man.

One of our creatures was elevated to the august privilege of providing flesh and blood for God. Mary, a little Jewish girl, the daughter of Joachim and Anna, was chosen by God to be the mother of His Son. In the hearts of Catholics from the first century to the present day, devotion to Jesus has gone hand in hand with devotion to Mary. A Catholic knows that where Jesus is, there Mary is also. This is the doctrinal order. The devotional order is likely to be the other way. For where Mary is, there is Jesus also. One seeks the mother so as to find the child.

It is the great credential of the Christian, the presence of Mary. Without Mary, there would be no Christmas.

Without Christmas, there would be no Jesus. Without Jesus, there would be no Christianity. Every Catholic child knows that. Every Catholic man continues all his life to be a little Catholic child, spiritually.

The Catholic “man-in-the-street” is not found at inter-faith gatherings. Intellectuals or semi-intellectuals make up inter-faith groups. To the Catholic “man-in-the-street” they do not make “sense.” They do not make sense to him because he is simple of heart, and the simple of heart often arrive at the truth of things more directly than their academic brothers, who depend upon their own discursive powers for their conclusions. The simple man knows that it would be impossible to get all the members of an inter-faith gathering to say together one “Hail Mary.” That alone is enough for him.

Christianity began with the Angelic Salutation:

“Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.” (Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death, Amen.)

The refusal of the Jews to acknowledge Mary is consistent with their refusal to accept Christ. Both refusals are the tragedy of the Christian era. The Protestants, on the other hand, believe they have rejected Mary, whereas the opposite is true. Our Lady has withdrawn from them. She is where her Son is, and Jesus is not present on the altars of the Protestant churches. The Protestants do not believe in the

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Blessed Sacrament. They do not believe in or offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass — indeed they do not have a sacrificing priesthood. The Christ they have given to their people for almost four hundred years is not the full Christ.

Mention of Mary, warm recourse to Mary, hymns and litanies to Mary, all are absent from Protestant services. The Protestant looks upon the Catholic's deep devotion to the Mother of God as "Mariolatry." The Catholic knows that love for Our Lady is a gift, a pure gift from her, who is the gateway to Jesus.

"Nothing is as it seems." The world is full of those who having eyes to see, see not, and ears to hear, hear not, and to them it seems that Christianity is failing. They do not see the blaze of light around the world as candles are lighted for the Masses said every minute of the day and night, from pole to pole. They do not see God offered to God on the altars by His people every minute of time, in perfect adoration and praise and thanksgiving and petition. They do not hear the song that is constantly rising to God from the lips of men and women consecrated to Him in religion. Nor do they hear the countless millions upon millions of Hail Marys said to the Mother of God, nor see the burning devotion for her of the saints and martyrs, of priests and nuns, of

Catholic men and women and children.

Mary, the Queen of Angels and of Men, of the Church Triumphant and Militant and Suffering, in whose name cathedrals have been built, brave armies have marched, great ships have been launched, to whom noble men and women have dedicated their lives, has chosen to answer heresy by withdrawal from it.

If Catholics withdrew from inter-faith meetings, what might happen? If Catholics again spoke with the fire of the First Apostles and the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, for the love of God and of their fellow man, what might they expect?

They might be driven to the catacombs. The blood of martyrs might again flow in the streets. And when the persecution was over, the pure word of God would again be preached. The world would be saved from its own destruction. Peace would come. Mary would come. She would celestially rule our land, America, which is hers under the title of the Immaculate Conception. The road to Christ would again be sure.

We are bound to be certain that there is no other way. ■

(Read an intro to this article by Br. André Marie on our site.)



Please pray for our new novice, Sister Maria Jeremia (left), who entered the novitiate on January 17.



Charles Colombe

TWO BATTLES IN APRIL

Come listen to another song,
 Should make your heart beat high,
 Bring crimson to your forehead,
 And the lustre to your eye;—
 It is a song of olden time,
 Of days long since gone by,
 And of a Baron stout and bold
 As e'er wore sword on thigh!
 Like a brave old Scottish cavalier,
 All of the olden time!

— *William Edmondstone Aytoun, "The Old Scottish Cavalier"*

Listen, my children, and you shall hear
 Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
 On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-Five:
 Hardly a man is now alive
 Who remembers that famous day and year.

— *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "Paul Revere's Ride"*

The month of April, according to some accounts, is dedicated to the Holy Eucharist, and to others, the Holy Ghost. Either way, it is an extremely beautiful month, with the spring flowers blooming in full assurance that winter is over. The month often (although not this year) plays host to Holy Week and Easter, and so the holiest time of the year is often arguably the most beautiful.

But there is another side to the month of April, a darker side. It also carries the anniversaries of two battles that in many ways determined the course of our present. On April 16 we find the anniversary of the Battle of Culloden in 1746, and on April 19, the linked Battles of Lexington and Concord 29 years later. Both are annually commemorated in most solemn manner. At Culloden, after a procession a service organised by the Gaelic Society of Inverness is held every year at the Memorial Cairn on the Battlefield; the dead on both sides of the conflict are commemorated. Prayers and recitations are said in English and in Scots Gaelic, after which representatives of many different groups lay wreaths. Various Clansmen lay flowers on the day at the individual memorial stones where their ancestors fell.

Given that the actions at Lexington and Concord were a bit more drawn out in time and space, so are the ceremonies honouring them. The Weekend closest to April 19 and the week preceding are filled with such activities in Boston and all the communities between the Hub City and Concord. They include one at Boston's Old North Church, one of the major stops on the Freedom Trail, with its "lantern service," which is said in remembrance of the signalling of Paul Revere by the church's sexton, alerting him that "the Regulars" were

crossing by water to the mainland, rather than marching all the way along the Boston Neck. Members of the Governor of Massachusetts' mounted guard, the National Lancers, will reenact the ride of Revere and his two or three associates, warning the countryside between Boston and Concord that "the Regulars are out!" and summoning the militia. All along the so-called "Battle Road," in Minuteman National Park, there are re-enactments and living history lesson at various historic structures, and numerous parades — the one in Boston itself being the biggest. At the end of it all geographically (if not always chronologically, depending upon the year and the weather) is the Old North Bridge at Concord itself, where "once the embattled farmers stood, and fired the shot heard 'round the world," in Emerson's once-famous words (famous when school children were still taught things).

Culloden was the end and Lexington-Concord the beginning of two myth-filled struggles. The first named ended the Jacobite Wars, which started in 1688 with the overthrow of Servant of God James II in the so-called "Glorious Revolution," continuing with the Scottish Campaign of 1689 and the death of Bonnie Dundee, and the Williamite Wars in Ireland (1689-92). They featured abortive risings in England and Scotland in 1715, 1719, and 1745-46, culminating in the tragedy at Culloden. Although they failed of their immediate objective, thanks to such as Robert Burns and Sir Walter Scott, they have cast a very long shadow. Various affecting figures such as St. John Henry Newman, Lionel Johnson, Isabella Stewart Gardner, and Ralph Adams Cram, they also played a strong role in the formation of Scots, Irish, Welsh, Cornish, and even a certain kind of English (as symbolised by Belloc and Chesterton) nationalism.

Lexington and Concord, on the other hand, were the opening skirmishes of a conflict that would eventually engulf all thirteen colonies and eventually escalate into a world war — fought in Europe, the West Indies, Asia, Africa, and on the High Seas. When it ended, a new nation was created that would double in size two decades later, go on to extend from coast to coast, and eventually become the dominant superpower of the planet — at least for a while. While Culloden is a wistful glance back at what might have been, Patriots' Day is a joyous — sometimes raucous — celebration of what is seen in retrospect as a great victory.

But in truth, the two commemorations, although seemingly so different, are actually closely connected. It is not just that the revolutionaries used the arguments of 1688 to justify their actions in 1776. It is that the forces unleashed in the Three Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland by the Protestant Revolt worked out their logical conclusions in a whole series of conflicts, of which the Jacobite Wars and the American Revolution — or First Civil War — were separate but linked chapters. This thesis, presented rather convincingly by Kevin Phillips in *The Cousins' Wars*, seems quite accurate.

When Henry VIII suppressed the monasteries and distributed their lands to his followers, he unwittingly laid the foundations for a landed oligarchy that would in time control Parliament, murder King Charles I, and seize control of all three countries in the British Isles. Oliver Cromwell, the dictator who would spearhead this effort, was the great nephew of Thomas Cromwell, Henry's chief tool in destroying the abbeys. Although the Restoration of 1660 brought Charles II back to the throne, the Oligarchy was left intact, deposed James in 1688 and replaced him with William and Mary, and successfully fended off all the attempts to put the



Servant of God James II

Stuarts back on their thrones. When George III attempted to regain from the oligarchs some of the powers of the Crown, he was resisted by them and the thirteen little American oligarchies in each colony. Not only did their victory at home render toothless the British Monarchy from that day to this — and so leave them and their far less able successors entirely in charge — it also created a country where Whig principles would be supreme. Even that country, however, would still retain some few of the old principles, over which — in addition to states' rights and slavery — the Second Civil War would be fought. That ended with the complete political defeat of the South's Aristocracy, who had — rightly or wrongly — seen themselves as inheritors of the old Cavalier tradition. Beyond all of that, as Phillips points out, the opposition in the British Isles to each of these revolutionary struggles was centred in roughly the same places: the North and South of England, and the "Celtic Fringe" areas of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Cornwall. That same pattern showed up in British attitudes toward the two American conflicts.

Of course, the American Revolution had effects beyond the Anglosphere: Louis XVI's intervention in the war both ended George III's support for Catholic Emancipation and bankrupted France. That bankruptcy in turn led to the French Revolution, Louis' murder in 1793, and the horrors that would drown Europe in blood until 1815. These, in turn, led to the Carlist and Miguelist Wars in Spain and Portugal, the 1848 Revolutions across Europe, German and Italian Unification, and arguably World War I, the Russian Revolution, and World War II — and so the American supremacy earlier noted.

It is also interesting to note that Charles I of England, Scotland, and Ireland was a direct ancestor of Louis XVI, and of both Blessed Karl (whose death date, though not his feast, is April 1) and Servant of God Zita. Through his sister Elizabeth, Charles was uncle several times removed of both the hapless George III and the likewise-murdered Nicholas II of Russia — being himself the grandson of the murdered Servant of God Mary Queen of Scots. It might be said in a real sense that Blessed Karl and SG Zita were fighting for all the best of old Christian Europe — and were defeated by the forces of modernity as headed by our own Woodrow Wilson.

So this April, whether you find yourself in Scotland, Massachusetts, or any other area fought over during either the Jacobite Wars or the American Revolution — or even if you are just in a country affected by either, which is to say, all on this planet — think of those who fought and died on both sides. In a very real sense, they were our fathers, and often enough as confused as we are now about the issues involved in the conflicts presented to them. Let us pray to Bl. Karl and Zita for wisdom with which to understand what we are confronted with, courage with which to do what we must, and aid for our own Salvation, without which victory is impossible, and with which defeat cannot happen. ■

ON THE SECULARIZATION OF A SAINT



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

Unquestionably, everyone reading this article is, or at least should be, aware that our modern media cannot be trusted to promote Christian values, but rather can be trusted, if not to attempt to destroy such values, at the very least to ignore them. Such was the case with a movie I recently watched, “Cabrini.” When the

opportunity to watch this film arose, I found it irresistible, knowing that St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, known to most as Mother Cabrini, the founder of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, was known for her work among the poor and immigrants in the United States and, in 1938 only twenty one years after her death, was beatified by Pope Pius XI. She was subsequently canonized by the same pope in 1946 (the first American citizen to attain canonization) and was declared the Patron Saint of Missionaries by the Church in 1950.

Unfortunately, to my disappointment, the film’s treatment of this holy woman was deplorable. Instead of a devout saint giving glory to God through the Corporal and Spiritual works of mercy, we were treated to a hard nosed feminist who relentlessly pushed her agenda in the face of obnoxious male chauvinist Church bureaucrats who were intent on pushing her around because she was a woman.

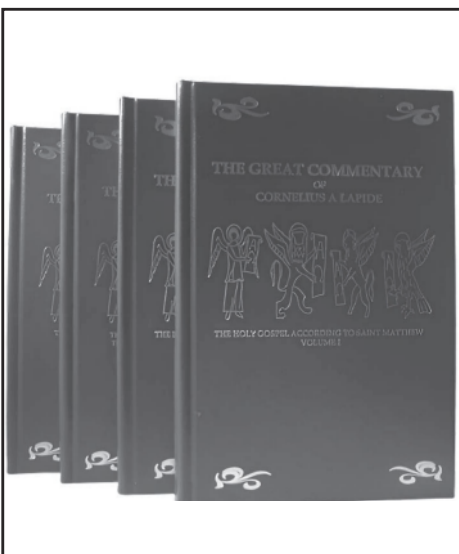
While our saint did face some such contradictions, that was all the movie was about. Any Catholic spirituality was deleted from the film to turn Mother Cabrini into a “girl boss,” who

would conform to modernity and appeal to women raised in our godless culture that has been sickened by feminism.

Apparently the producer of this film looked upon it as a money-making enterprise or propaganda tool and nothing more. Despite any good points the film might have, (and there were some), as a biographical work, it did not capture the essence of the character and thus was a failure. If one really wishes to capture the Catholicism and spirituality of this great and holy woman, rather than view a Hollywood product using the Church for a prop, I would recommend reading her journals. They were grouped together, translated into English and published under the title, *To the Ends of the Earth: The Missionary Travels of Frances X. Cabrini*, and contain examples of her profound and very Catholic spirituality on every page. As an example, here is an excerpt from her journal entitled, “From Havre to New York, April 1890” wherein, after visiting the Shrine of Our Lady of Victories in Paris, she wrote this little gem to the Sisters in her Order: “It seemed to me that the Blessed Virgin, our loving Mother, had invited me there so that I could place the Institute and each of you under her loving protection in a special way and through her, in the Heart of Jesus. So you can imagine my prayers and my petitions in the name of each of you. I ask you from now on to pray three Hail Marys daily to Our Lady of Victories and a Gloria to the Heart of the Child Jesus. You will see how many rich graces will descend upon all of us for the Institute and for the good of souls.”

Her writings are replete with similar passages, and they represent the true Mother Cabrini. The film totally missed (or perhaps did not want to find) the very essence of what her life

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was about. Her life was not about a drive for power or her need to rebuke men and show them she was boss. This is something the modern media cannot understand.

Did Mother Cabrini ever pray? Of course, we know she did; but that was apparently not relevant to the people that produced this movie, who portrayed her best qualities as those of an interested party in ecclesiastical power politics. To show how different reality was from this inadequate and inaccurate portrayal, here are lengthy passages from her journals (available on cabinileters.com). In addition to her profound spirituality, we see her deep human sympathy, as we do in all her letters:

Today is the feast of the patronage of Saint Joseph. If there were a priest on board, we could at least attend Mass. Instead, this is already the second Sunday we and 1,300 others are deprived of it. There are 900 poor immigrants in third class, 700 are Italian, 200, Swiss. Poor people! If only they will end up in cities where there will be someone to break open for them the bread of the Word of God! But who knows where the majority of them are destined? It is certain that they will join our other poor brothers who in the New World are called barbarians, exactly because they seem unmindful of their noble origins, the religion which nurtured them.

To compound the misfortune, there is among them an ardent republican [i.e., in the idiom of the day, a liberal, anti-clerical revolutionary] who often assembles them. Like a wild beast, he incites them against all order, in such a way that the leaders are hard pressed to watch over and correct them. This is like a small town, floating on the waves, threatening revolution in every sense of the word. It is an image of our poor Italy, whose children have lost sight of

their goals and incite civil strife among themselves, which will lead them to final ruination at breakneck speed. It is God's just punishment which has chosen to forget that Catholicism has been the predominant religion in that country of the true Italian and distinguished Italy from all other nations.

Ah, pray daughters, pray with all your hearts for your poor brothers, blinded in this fashion, and see in it a good lesson for us: that of being very faithful in the observance of our Holy Rule so as to console the afflicted Heart of Jesus and to obtain from Him abundance, and unwillingly yield to this or that one. Let each one make it her duty, or even more, feel a powerful need to be subject to all. The religious who feels this way will be the true jewel of our institute, will be pleasing the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and will move Him to shower upon us the greatest treasure. Are you humble, my daughters? Do you like the last place? Do you like being despised, forgotten and unnoticed by all? I ask the one who feels this way to pray for me please! She is a truly precious gem, a gift given to me by my beloved Jesus, through her I shall obtain everything. Last evening the purser gave me three lottery tickets, and another gentleman six; now we have sixteen. Today is the drawing; we shall see what happens.

While those final paragraphs probably wouldn't sell in Hollywood, (other than perhaps the last sentence as an amusing talking point), in them we find the real Mother Cabrini, a wonderful, zealous, and holy consecrated woman worthy of our emulation, about whom we can learn much through her own writings and good Catholic biographies, but never through a twisted, secularized version provided by Hollywood. ■

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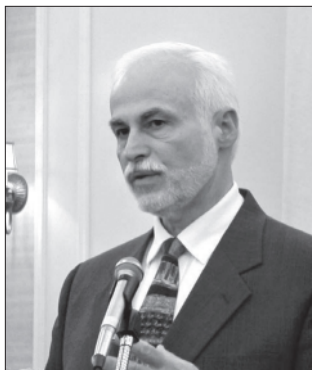
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THE FLOODLIGHT OF PHILOSOPHY — PART II



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

In the last installment about the Floodlight of Philosophy, I discussed how philosophy is not supposed to be “useful” in the normal sense of the word, meaning good to be able to do something else. Utility is certainly a good. Usefulness is one of the main traits we in the modern age admire the most.

Yet, if we study philosophy innocently and contemplatively, it can provide a means of looking at everything else in a new light, one that provides insights, even wisdom, that can be gained like nothing else in the natural world. We’ve seen that it helps us to understand the reasons behind news articles, what is taught in classes, and what ideas are behind suggestions and arguments, which in turn gives us greater confidence when we encounter new ideas.

In the last article, we looked at how philosophy illuminates the world around us, including helping to clarify ideas we encounter in print, in the media, and on the Internet. Philosophy as *Wisdom* also helps us to properly and accurately consider ideas that we encounter in articles about religion, philosophy and theology.

For this article, I checked the Catholic News Agency website, and immediately found something that was amusing, even though it did not require much philosophy to enjoy it. Headline: “Skull of St. Thomas Aquinas to visit Washington, DC, on international tour.” Somehow, one can see the skull of St. Thomas, with its little bag packed, arriving by plane at Dulles Airport, hailing a cab to get to the church on time! In the article, the author also informs us that this is one of two skulls thought to belong to Saint Thomas. Evidently, this particular skull took the initiative to travel on its own. The revelation that there are two skulls may explain why St. Thomas was such a genius — two heads being better than one, of course.

Looking further at Catholic news on the Internet, I find that a theologian, Cyril O’Regan, from Notre Dame University, has won the “coveted” Ratzinger Prize. The article explains, “O’Regan is a systematic theologian who specializes in the thought of 19th- and 20th-century Catholics like St. John Henry Newman, Henri de Lubac, and Hans Urs von Balthasar.” Our floodlight doesn’t have to be too bright nor dwell too long



on the article to see what is going on here. Immediately, we can ask ourselves: Considering that he has wasted a good portion of his academic life studying two progressivist theologians tinged with Neo-Modernism, should we waste any of our time reading something written by O’Regan? Probably not.

On the same website is another article announcing: “Pope Francis calls for study of Church history free from ideologies.” At first, it seems to be a worthy recommendation. As Brother Francis always taught us: history is the laboratory of philosophy and theology. What is worrisome, are some liberal code words used in the exhortation: “The pope thus points out that ‘we cannot come to grips with the past by hasty interpretations disconnected from their consequences’ and that reality ‘is never a simple phenomenon reducible to naive and dangerous simplifications.’” The article ends with:

“he encourages the Church ‘to initiate — and help initiate in society — sincere and effective paths of reconciliation and social peace.’” My floodlight, which over the years has been expanded to include theological propositions, causes phrases like the ones I have chosen here to stand in sharp relief against what I know to be Catholic orthodoxy.

Believe-it-or-not, as if that were not enough heterodoxy in one place, the same website features the following headline: “Chinese bishop focused on adapting faith to Communist Party ideals Shanghai Catholics say.” In the article it says, “Bishop Joseph Shen Bin of Shanghai, who was illicitly installed as bishop by Chinese authorities in 2023 and brought into communion with the Church by Pope Francis a year later under the Vatican-China deal, was featured as a speaker at a Vatican conference in May, where he promoted a “Chinese-style modernization” of the Church in line with socialist ideals.” Shen goes on to say “The policy of religious freedom implemented by the Chinese government has no interest in changing the Catholic faith but only hopes that the Catholic clergy and faithful will defend the interests of the Chinese people and free themselves from the control of foreign powers...” Of course, he has the approval of the Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin whom he was with at the time of his talk. The floodlight does not need to be very exacting when there is something as radically anti-Catholic as this statement by a man who claims to be a Catholic bishop, yet who remains unapologetically a Communist. It is telling that he says he supports a “policy of religious freedom,” an idea that is decidedly not Catholic. This same error of religious freedom was used by politicians inside the Church as a means to make peace with the Bolshevik government under Lenin and Stalin. In part, because of this acceptance of an error, it was necessary for Liberals and Modernists to bury the defined dogma, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, to avoid offending the Russians because it would conflict with the stated desire to foster “religious freedom.”

One thing to note in the above examples is that the floodlight of philosophy saves time. It cuts right through all of the trappings and gets to the heart of an essay or article. Also, it helps us to make sense of it all. Without the floodlight, I might struggle

to figure out what is the problem with the pope's comments on history or why I should avoid reading the works of O'Regan.

Another advantage of the floodlight is knowing when an argument is pointless or involves a secondary matter. Recently someone tried to engage me in a discussion over how much scripture was known by a famous Catholic writer. Someone said that the writer knew less than this person believed was true. Arguing about the degree of biblical knowledge of a deceased author is

"History is the laboratory of philosophy and theology"

literally pointless. There is no exam to which we can subject the author that will provide us with his level of expertise on the topic. The floodlight helps us to avoid such pointless arguments. If two people want to engage in a discussion on such a topic, knowing it's pointless, just for entertainment, then I guess it's better than watching TV.

With the use of our floodlight, we also grow as persons. We increase in the three qualities which were prized by good phi-

losophers, starting with the Greeks: *Ataraxia*, *Autarkeia*, and *Euteleia*. *Ataraxia* is the state of being unperturbed, by which a philosopher subjects his emotions and passions to reason and achieves calmness and composure. *Autarkeia* is the ideal of complete independence, by which a philosopher relies on nothing and no one but himself. (Catholics have interpreted this value in a non-pagan way by transforming it into reliance on God's providence and the contentment in the "unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. 3:8). *Euteleia* is a mindset of simplicity and frugality, where a philosopher finds contentment in living without unnecessary possessions and becomes detached. Brother Francis noted that these three (pagan) Greek philosophical ideals can be "baptized" and roughly correlated to the counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The perfect Christian transformation of these ideals is ultimately found in the Beatitudes.

Just these three qualities, without considering any further benefits, would make it worthwhile to learn philosophy from a teacher such as Brother Francis, who had obtained true wisdom, and who had the ability to convey it effectively to others. ■

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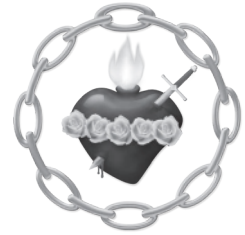
Ex Cathedra: “We declare, say, define, and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary for the salvation of every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff” (Pope Boniface VIII, the Bull *Unam Sanctam*, 1302).

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

NOTES:

- Save the date, our 2025 SBC Conference will be October 10 and 11.

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