



SAINT BENEDICT CENTER
Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Post Office Box 627
Richmond, New Hampshire 03470

The Expectation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
December 18th, 2017

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Pax Christi. A brief survey of our contemporary landscape in Church and State reveals a grim picture. In the venerable tradition of Saint Benedict Center as taught me by Brother Francis, I will avoid a handwriting *have-you-heard-the-latest* report on all that's dark, miserable, and scandalous. (This is, after all, a Christmas letter!) Instead, after a five-paragraph glance at the darkness of what is wrong, I will turn to the light: good news and divine promises.

Christmas is, indeed, a mystery of light and darkness.

The news, plastered all over the headlines, that Hollywood and the progressive world of magazine publishing are full of predatory degenerates should come as no surprise to anyone, but it does serve as an object lesson illustrating the fact that the hedonistic pursuit of false freedom in the arena of carnal pleasure is not a victimless crime. These industries which, for decades, have been on the cutting edge of advancing the sexual revolution — and attacking the Church — are showing us by these recent public revelations just how enslaved, bound, and diseased their ostensibly “liberated” philosophy really is. Thus we learn that the reality of Original Sin and the disordered concupiscence of the flesh are truths tossed out only at our peril.

In the arena of politics and social relations, we as a nation are as divided and balkanized as ever. When, in late October, Justice Clarence Thomas stated in a rare interview that he doesn't know what we have in common anymore as countrymen, he pointed out that amid historical divisions in America's national life, we formerly held certain core values in common. That, he clearly implied, is now lost. Let nobody be fooled: there are many who thrive on this division, either for their own personal base gain, or else for advancing the increasing power of the Big Globalist Nanny State.

In the Church, there continues to be an almost cultivated confusion surrounding matters of faith and morals, and from the highest quarters. Professional theologians and academics who are speaking out against the manifold and scandalous betrayals of Catholic doctrine find themselves bullied, pressured, or fired by champions of the new and ever-evolving orthodoxy. An American example is the case of Father Thomas Weinandy, OFM, Cap., the former chief of staff for the USCCB's committee on doctrine who was recently “asked to retire” as a consultant to that same committee. In Europe, the Austrian Professor Josef Seifert was fired from his position at the International Academy of Philosophy by Archbishop Javier Martínez Fernández, of Granada, Spain. Both of these men were treated in this manner due to their public stances on the doctrinal, pastoral, and disciplinary problems surrounding Pope Francis' *Amoris Laetitia*. Their cases are symbolic of a larger phenomenon; they are not the only ones.

Regarding the recent accolades given to Martin Luther by representatives of the Holy See, what are these but so many betrayals of the Church's infallible teachings against the so-called “reformer” by the Council of Trent, a vicious man who was an agent of Satan in the sundering of Christendom?

Thankfully, there are cardinals and bishops standing up for the truth, but they are opposed by many of their fellows. This division seems a fulfillment of the prophecy of the Church-approved apparition of Our Lady of Akita: “The work of the devil will infiltrate even into the Church in such a way that one will see *cardinals opposing cardinals, and bishops against other bishops*. The priests who venerate me will be scorned and opposed by their confreres. The Church and altars will be vandalized. The Church will be full of those who accept compromises and the demon will press many priests and consecrated souls to leave the service of the Lord.”

In such times, surrounded by such a seeming wasteland, we have to remind ourselves that the Catholic Church is a supernatural organism that is divinely founded by Our Lord Himself. Moreover, it is the beneficiary of certain unassailable divine promises and protections. This is that kingdom foretold by Daniel the Prophet to the Babylonian King Nabuchodonosor when he said that “the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed... and itself shall stand for ever” (Dan. 2:44). This is that Church of which the Incarnate Wisdom says that “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18), for it is established upon the Rock of Peter.

And no matter how terrible things seem to be, the Church retains her four marks of unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity — and her spiritual fecundity — in every age. This fruitful Mother can still generate children.

We have learned recently from our friend Gary Potter, that some 3,000 conversions from Islam to Catholicism occur annually in France. As horrible as the situation is with the Eldest Daughter of the Church, this bright silver lining may be found in the dark cloud of profligate immigration from North Africa and other parts of the Muslim world.

While our part of the vineyard is a small one, we see conversions happening, too. Here in New England, a Jewish man who has been studying Brother Francis' philosophy with us, has begun to take instruction from a traditional priest, who is also catechizing his wife and daughter at the same time. More than one Southern Baptist has converted to Catholicism as a result (in part) of listening to my little radio show, "Reconquest," and the other very Catholic content of the Veritas Radio Network, which has also seen a series of reversions to the Catholic Church from those who had fallen away.

Let us not forget the glorious promises made to us by Our Lady of Fatima. The Immaculate Heart devotion, which Jesus Christ has willed to be set aside devotion to His Own Sacred Heart, carries with it the promise of salvation. The promise is worth quoting just it was given by the Blessed Virgin to Sister Lucia: "You at least try to console Me and announce in My name that I promise to assist at the moment of death, with all the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep Me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making Reparation to Me."

Add to that the new efficacy that Sister Lucia said has been given to the praying of the Rosary in our time.

Without being indifferent to the plight of those being led astray, we have to be convinced that, over and above all the scandals of the day, God is seated gloriously in His Heaven, and Jesus Christ is still now as ever the "Lover of Mankind," Who wants to see our divided race united in the unity of His Mystical Body.

And that is the answer to all the balkanization we earlier referenced. The Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of Truth, is the Soul of the Church. What the soul does in a body — namely, animate the diverse parts into a unified whole — that, the Holy Ghost does for mankind. Just as the Spirit of God hovered over the primordial chaos of Creation, putting divine order in the universe, so He can bring order out of the contemporary chaos. Only He can — and ultimately will — unite our fallen race into one Body, the Church. But He will unite it IN TRUTH. We must dispense with all the lies which equate divine truth with human error, Faith with its opposites, sound morals with a false liberty of conscience. We must also get out of our heads the preposterous notion that religious pluralism is somehow a good thing rather than a curse and a menace. If we really believe the defined dogma that there is no salvation outside the Church, reason forbids us to see it any other way.

As Brother Francis used to tell us often, God wills one religion and many nations; the Devil wants one nation and many religions. Christ the King desires the service of "many nations, and peoples, and tongues, and kings" (Apoc. 10:11), but, regarding the Church, "there are many members indeed, yet one body" (1 Cor. 12:20). In short, the Church is the work of God; globalism is the work of the Devil.

This vision of a Catholic America, of a Catholic world, must continue to grow and cut through all the nonsense of our lying pluralist age. Fidelity to the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ demands it.

Christmas, I wrote above, is a mystery of light and darkness. It would be hard to prove with absolute precision, but there is very good reason to believe that the original Christmas, which DID take place on December 25, witnessed the coincidence of two events: *Chanukkah*, that "Festival of Lights" celebrated by the Jews on 25 Kislev of their calendar in commemoration of the reconsecration of the Temple after its desecration at the hands of the Syrian conqueror Antiochus Epiphanes IV, and the Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year. It was the final victory of the Maccabees that allowed the former to take place, while the latter was something built into the planetary movements from the beginning. Jesus Christ is the light of the world born at the Festival of Lights during the longest night of the year. In both cases, the triumph of light over darkness is dramatically portrayed, first for the Jews, then for the Gentiles.

May His blessed light triumph over the darkness attempting to overshadow you and your families. God bless you and Mary keep you this Advent and Christmastide.

In the Immaculate Heart of Mary



Brother André Marie, M.I.C.M., Prior