

MANCIPIA

December, 2005



THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER

TO FRIENDS OF THE CRUSADE:



Br. André Marie, M.I.C.M. Prior

CHRISTMAS AND THE CATHOLIC THING

The Roman statesman Cato the Elder (234 - 149 BC) gave us the pithy Latin proverb *rem tene verba sequentur*, “grasp the thing and the words will follow.” The lesson is this: once you sufficiently grasp the concept you wish to speak about (the thing), the words will flow with greater ease. This word *res* (from which we get

rem in the quote) means more than just “thing.” The little monosyllable is pregnant with a whole host of concepts. From it we get *ad rem*, meaning “to the point”; *res sacramenti* meaning “the grace of the sacrament”; *res publica*, which gives us the word republic (“the public thing”). We even get the words “real” and “reality” from it.

Hilaire Belloc often used the word “thing” with that same Latin flare, a little oddity that makes for some powerful writing. He wrote about “the Catholic thing,” which means something like “the phenomenon of catholicity,” but in starker, more economically Roman prose.

What does any of this have to do with Christmas?

I’ll quickly get *ad rem*. It’s all about “dialog” and “relevance” as they relate to our little infant God and His great work on earth: The Catholic Thing.

Too much oxygen and ink are wasted on meaningless dialog with false religions (and with the world) in the effort to give Catholicism “relevance” to modern man. The fact of the matter is that the Catholic encounter with the world and with other religions was always one of two opposing sides. It was essentially antagonistic. But it was never purposeless. Today it is not antagonistic, but it is purposeless. As for “relevance,” sinful men of all ages have had some difficulty with the notion that God would be born of a Jewish Virgin, executed by a Roman Governor’s death sentence, come back to life three days later, and change the world by the preaching of twelve fishermen. When told that these things not only happened, but have direct bearing on daily life, ethics, and how everyone will spend eternity, some people reacted violently, giving the Church many martyrs.

It takes grace to see the relevance of that Baby and His Thing. It never made sense without grace, and it never will.

Herod seeks to murder the same Babe the Magi travel over sea and land to adore. Shepherds respond to the angelic call, but there’s no room in the inn. This is just as it would be later in Jesus’ public life, when “The Jews” reject Him and “Israelites without guile” accept Him. In his childlike simplicity, St. John boils it down to two factions: the children of light and the children of darkness. The former receive and freely respond to grace, the latter turn away from it.

This is not to say that dialog has no place. If dialog simply means speaking to the adherents of other religions (or of no religion) in order to bring them to the truth of our religion, it is a good thing. With those who have good will, the dialog can even be very pleasant. However, let’s not forget certain divinely revealed truths that are *ad rem*:

“He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God” (John 1:11-12).

“For, seeing that in the wisdom of God, the world, by wisdom, knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of our preaching, to save them that believe. For both the Jews require signs: and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we

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Christmas Play, Immaculate Heart of Mary School



Fr. Leonard Feeny, M.I.C.M.

DO NOT GO TO BETHLEHEM TO FIND THE OBVIOUS

FROM: *THE LEONARD FEENEY OMNIBUS*

Christianity is not the religion which holds that God exists. Every religion holds this dogma, whether it conceives God to be one or many. Christianity is the religion which holds that God became man, that He entered our ranks, assumed our nature, translated Himself into our idiom, "sifted Himself to suit our light," and was born in Bethlehem in a temporal generation, Who was born in eternity in an eternal generation.

When we betake ourselves to the crib on Christmas morning, it is not to see just another baby, nor even to see just another mother. This is the most different child and the most different mother who have ever existed. Nobody like them ever was before, or ever will be again. Take the mother.

Her child was born of the love of the Holy Ghost; sheer Love made her fruitful. She is the fulfillment of a thousand prophecies uttered in the Old Testament. As a special preparation for this most holy prerogative, she was herself conceived free from Original Sin, never tainted by the evil that beset our nature when Adam spoiled us all in Paradise. . . .

To restore human nature to the Divine excellence it once possessed, God became man. He wanted to redeem us and adopt us back again into our original state of Divine childhood. Nineteen hundred years ago He came to fulfill this task. He took possession of a human nature and made it his own; He came to pay the price of our ransom and be our Savior.

Please do not think I am attempting to exaggerate this mission of Our Lord in coming into our world. About Baptism, the normal means by which a Christian is restored to

the state of Sanctifying Grace, Our Lord has said: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven." And of Sanctifying Grace, the "living water" of which He spoke to the woman of Samaria, He said: "If thou didst know the gift of God." Sanctifying Grace is no catchword. It is the fundamental benefit Christianity has to offer the world through the Incarnation. Its realization and fulfillment in the souls of men is the only reason for the existence of the Catholic Church. A sanctifying Jesus Christ has been the Catholic Church's Messiah from the beginning. God did not become man to make us contented with this world; He came to make us discontented with this world. He came to amaze us with a revelation about a world to come. He came to talk about a pearl of great price, a wedding garment of incomparable beauty which humanity could put on

and thus enter the wedding feast of Eternal Life.

Listen to the way Christ prayed for us to His Heavenly Father on the night before He died:

"Sanctify them in truth . . . that they all may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee; . . . that they may be one as we also are one: I in them, and thou in me; . . . and the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast also loved me. Father, I will that where I am, they also whom thou hast given me may be with me; that they may see my

glory which thou hast given me, because thou hast loved me before the creation of the world. . . . And I have made known thy name to them, and will make it known; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them."

What is the meaning of this constant repetition of one . . . one . . . on Our Savior's lips? With whom are we to be made one? With God? "Yes," said Saint Augustine, "God became

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St. Joseph's Christmas

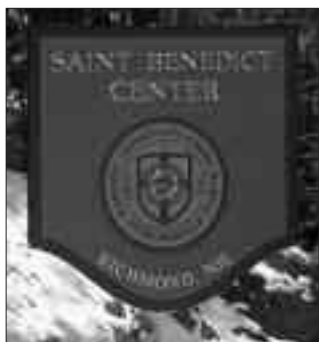
BY: FR. LEONARD FEENEY



Not envied, not desired,
Only admired:
A girl on this will thrive
As on no thing alive.
And such was God's rare plan
For Mary's man.
He watched his loved one flower
Hour after hour,
With footstep caused no fear
In angel-anxious ear,
Gave her his husband's praise
In nought but gaze:
The exquisite adulation
Of contemplation
That lets a fact reveal

Itself as real,
And, in our Lady's case,
As full of grace.
He must have marveled most
When of the Holy Ghost
Her little Son who shivered,
At dawn was delivered.
He must have feared and feared
And hid behind his beard
When what was not his life
He welcomed from his wife
And his bride's Babe and Lord
Adored and adored.
At Christ's Nativity,
St. Joseph, I love thee.

SAINT BENEDICT CENTER NEWS



PILGRIMAGE NOTES – JOIN US NEXT YEAR!

Our three brigades of Crusaders joined another spiritually and socially rewarding Pilgrimage for Restoration on September 28 to October 1. Most of our religious brothers and sisters were there, joined by many Third Order members, friends, and supporters from near and far. With banners and spirits held high, we journeyed from the beautiful Lake of the Blessed Sacrament (now “Lake George,” thanks to the English Protestants) to the Shrine of the North American Martyrs in Auriesville, New York.

The word “pilgrim” comes from the Latin *peregrinus*, meaning “foreigner” or “stranger,” and this is what Catholics are: “strangers and pilgrims [who must] refrain yourselves from carnal desires which war against the soul” (1 Pet 2:11). We are journeying through this world as pilgrims to the Heavenly Jerusalem. Smaller journeys or “pilgrimages” are made to sacred places for the purpose of venerating the saints, to petition our Lord, to give thanks for graces received, to fulfill a vow, or to do penance. A pilgrimage is much like a spiritual retreat and can become a yearly commitment for spiritual growth and a renewal of friendships with like-minded traditional Catholics.



This pilgrimage, in particular, is a great opportunity for the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and for those who support our Crusade, to resolve to continue the Church’s glorious work of evangelization on this continent in that same spirit that animated the North American Martyrs. As you know, our Crusade includes conversion of America to the one, true Church. This is what the North American Martyrs sacrificed to achieve, and it’s why this pilgrimage is of such great interest for our Congregation and for our supporters.

Please make plans now to attend next year’s Pilgrimage. To find out more about this event, visit the website of its principle organizers, the National Coalition of Clergy & Laity, at www.national-coalition.org. Special thanks go to Mr. Gregory Lloyd, who does a wonderful job organizing this event.

All Third Order members and supporters of our Crusade are encouraged to join one of our Congregation’s brigades. This year we had three: the St. Joseph Brigade (for men and boys), the Immaculate Heart of Mary Brigade (for women and girls), and, for those taking the shortened Saturday pilgrimage, the St. Benedict Brigade. Next year we hope to double that number. If you would like to join one of our brigades, you can register for the pilgrimage through us. Call us at (603) 239-6485 now to get on our Pilgrimage contact list for our future organizing effort. Please plan ahead, and stay tuned to future issues of MANCIPIA for further details.

ALL SAINTS EVE PARTY

A TIME FOR FUN, FRIVOLITY, AND SAINTLY LORE

Let us all rejoice in the Lord, celebrating a feast in honor of all the saints, in whose solemnity the angels rejoice and join in praising the Son of God.

(Ps. 32: 1 – Introit for the Feast of All Saints)

The Eve of All Saints was celebrated with glorious costumes and plenty of sweets (to be eaten the next day!) at St. Benedict Center in Richmond. Families of the Center gathered for merriment and saintly lore. We’ve heard from many “Crusader Families” abroad who celebrated in like manner, in remembrance of saints, known and unknown. A happy and thankful remembrance, indeed!



PREFECT'S MESSAGE



Br. Anthony Mary, M.I.C.M., Tert.

THE COMING OF CHRIST EVERY DAY

The Church is preparing now for the *coming, or Advent*, of God in flesh. This feast of Christmas that we are so looking forward to is the first of the three *comings* of Jesus spoken of by the holy writers throughout the ages. God's "weakness in flesh" is how His first *advent* manifests

itself to us. This gift of His coming fills us with that special joy which is so characteristic of the liturgical season of Christmas. His final *coming* is that which will be in power and majesty at the end of the world. His middle *coming*, which I would like to highlight, is a continual and personal coming to us in the Church's sacred liturgy, its perennial teaching, and its constant works of mercy and charity. The greatest and most profound manner of God's continual *coming* is to be found in the Eucharist, the Sacrament of His love. It is in this personal advent that He comes to us as the "tenderest of friends" (St. Bernard).

Now all three comings of Jesus are on our mind and present to us during the Christmas season. We should always be mindful that this tender Babe will one day offer the sacrifice of His passion for us. Even on Christmas Day the Crucifix will be on the Altar, and the unbloody renewal of Calvary will take place. We should not forget the innumerable graces that continue to flow to us from Our Lord's Sacrifice. Neither should we be unmindful of our last end and the final coming of Jesus as our Judge. But in this season of the liturgical year, we should especially recall the *joy* of Christmas because this is the preeminent characteristic that Holy Mother Church presents us. This joy should fill us and overflow into every facet of our lives in this vale of tears.

Our love of Jesus and of His Blessed Mother and of Saint Joseph must, in order to fulfill the command to "love thy neighbor as thyself," find special means of expression at this time of great joy. Christ's love must be communicated through us to others. We all know that gift-giving is one means of expressing love and devotion. But the giving of gifts is often tainted with avarice in the giddy, materialistic culture we are immersed in today. As Christians, and as counter-cultural crusaders, we must direct the act of gift-giving back to its Christian purpose, which is to express tangibly the love of Christ for all of us.

Mary Magdalen was the one of whom Jesus said "she has loved much." Let us think how her love for Jesus was expressed. I would venture to say that it was made manifest primarily in two ways. These were in the gift of her time (just being with Jesus was a delight to her and to Him) and in the

attention she paid to the person of Jesus as a most devoted disciple. Along with her devotion, she gave Him her tears and her hair, to wash His feet, and a very costly, fragrant spikenard to anoint His head. Consider this year that the giving of your time, that precious commodity of which we all have so little, may be the most precious gift you can offer to the ones whom you love. Give the gift of your time to Jesus and the Holy Family first, and then, of course, to the family in which God has placed you in this life, and, finally, to your friends and neighbors – especially those who are the loneliest and therefore have most need of your friendship.

As Crusaders and Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, we should be particularly joyful this Christmas season. My prayer for all our beloved Tertiaries is that, through the intercession of Our Lady, the Holy Ghost — the eternal Gift of the Father and the Son — will inspire us with a mighty gift of fervent prayer, so that all Third Order members can give back to God this most sweet frankincense of the soul, and that we all may meet merrily in heaven, having had some foretaste of that joy here on earth.

You are always in my prayers, and may you remain close to the Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

2006 Saint Benedict Center Conference

Catholic Friends and Family: Christening Society



Our next Saint Benedict Center Conference will be Friday, August 18 to Sunday, August 20, 2006. It will be held at the Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel in Fitchburg, Massachusetts.

Speakers will include:

Br. Andre Marie; Br. Anthony Mary, M.I.C.M., Tert.; Mr. Gary Potter; Dr. Robert Hickson; Mr. John Sharpe; Mr. C. Joseph Doyle; Dr. Duncan Bonnell; Mr. Joseph Kung; Fr. Nicholas Gruner; Fr. Laurence Smith

For more information, please visit:
www.catholicism.org/conference-update

CHRISTMAS AND THE CATHOLIC THING

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preach Christ crucified: unto the Jews indeed a stumbling-block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness: But unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:21-24).

And lastly, having "disputed" with Jews, Stoics, and Epicureans, St. Paul had these spirited words for the Athenians: "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are too superstitious. . . . What therefore you worship without knowing it, that I preach to you. . . . And God indeed. . . . now declareth unto men, that all should everywhere do penance" (Acts 17: 22 - 23, 30).

The saints of subsequent Christian ages engaged in similar "dialog." When St. Augustine discussed religion with the pagans of his day (in *The City of God* and in person), he aggressively dismantled their arguments. All the Fathers used reason — even as refined and articulated by pagan philosophers — as a foundation for their argumentation, without allowing the dogmatic foundations of the faith to be undermined by whatever was dangerous in the philosophical systems they employed. They were "reasonable"; yet they plainly argued against the errors of their opponents, be they Jews, pagans, or Christian heretics.

There is a prevalent idea today in putatively conservative Catholic circles (the "right-wing liberals"), as well as those professedly liberal, that modern philosophical thought (Kant, Whitehead, Hume, etc.) can serve as a "handmaid" to theology just as the Greek thought of Plato and Aristotle served the Fathers and medieval scholastics. This notion is wrong. We can apply to it that basic axiom of computer programming: garbage in, garbage out. Put theology on a Kantian foundation and you get Rahner and his "anonymous Christian" heresy. Put theology on a Marxist foundation and you get Boff, the apostle of "liberation theology." Wed it to modern historicism and literary criticism and you get Raymond Brown, a Catholic priest and Scripture scholar who outright denied the historicity of the Infancy narratives in St. Matthew's and St. Luke's Gospels and thus gave a theological application to the term "throwing out the baby with the bathwater."

I once asked a bishop and a priest who were very active in ecumenical dialog what the purpose of ecumenism was. "Unity" was the answer. I asked if this meant unity in the traditional sense — in the one, true, Church via the conversion of non-Catholics. Both definitively answered in the negative. When I asked them to explain the unity they were striving to achieve, neither could identify it, but the priest said we would know it when it happened. I pointed out that, by strict definition, they had essentially purposeless ecclesiastical careers, as they were working for a completely undefined end.

What is the alternative? Dialog the old fashioned way: Present the faith zealously, with conviction, and with excitement by "the foolishness of our preaching," and "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). To this must be

united an intense interior life of prayer and sacramental union with the Trinity through Christ's Sacred Humanity, so that with our whole self, body and soul, we adore the same Truth we profess with our lips. This is to be like the great Dominicans of old whose primary motto, *Veritas* (Truth) was explained by their second motto: *Laudare Benedicere Predicare* ("To Praise, to Bless, to Preach"). Yet a third motto unites the two: *Contemplata aliis tradere* (loosely: "to hand on to others the fruit of our contemplation").

Does this mean that we are not rational in our presentation? No! With the great Apostles of all ages, we will use reason enlightened by faith, "being ready always to satisfy every one that asketh [us] a reason of that hope which is in [us]" (1 Pet. 3:15). Far from embracing Tertullian's "I believe because it is absurd," we profess our Faith so that the world will see that reason and faith do not contradict one another, since both have God as their first cause and last end.

This touches upon the important question of our role in the Church: what it is that the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary have to offer the Holy Father as our sovereign head on earth. Rather than merely bemoaning the sad state of affairs in the afflicted Mystical Body, we present to him the alternative: dialog based on truth, dialog (with "the world," with "science," and with other religions) carried out by those who have "grasped" and adored *the Catholic Thing* — who wholeheartedly believe and profess all the dogmas of the Faith, including the absolute necessity of the Church for salvation — and whose "words follow" from that. Knowing that grace is necessary to profess the Faith, we will never rely only on our own arguments. Like St. Paul, we are palpably aware that "neither he that planteth is any thing, nor he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase" (1 Cor. 3:7). Being totally consecrated to Mary, we know that all these graces come through her Immaculate Heart.

By her maternal intercession, we have grasped *The Catholic Thing* — a Thing and a Who at the same time. Having adored It, we will preach It, so that the good-willed might, like the Magi, find Him with Mary His Mother, and finding Him, fall down and adore Him.

What is the alternative? Dialog the old fashioned way: Present the faith zealously, with conviction, and with excitement by "the foolishness of our preaching," and "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

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DO NOT GO TO BETHLEHEM TO FIND THE OBVIOUS

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man that man might become God." He became man to adopt us into the sunlight of His everlasting beatitude, to make us participators of the life of God, to unite us to the perfection of His single nature and take us to live in eternal ecstasy with the Blessed Trinity.

To the young Mother who stands in silence and wonderment beside the manger-box in the cave of Bethlehem, this gift of Sanctifying Grace was bestowed in its fullness. . . .

And now about the Child Himself. One does not go down to Bethlehem to see an ordinary child, for the little Jesus is the wonder child of our earth, fashioned and structured in a way no child has ever been since the human race began. To begin with, He possesses two natures, the nature of God and the nature of man: He possesses the Divine Nature because it was such that the Eternal Father gave to Him in Its fullness when He generated Him in eternity. He is true man because He possesses a human body and a human soul. But there is only one person in Him, the person who coexists in beatitude with the Father and the Holy Ghost in Heaven. The same "I" who says, "I am the Father's only begotten Son," also says in truth, once Bethlehem has occurred,

"and I am also Mary's Child." The theological implication behind this great mystery should not be ignored simply because of the strangeness of our Emmanuel. To love Him we must know Him, and we must know Him as He is, and realize that there is no one in this world like Him. He has two minds, two wills, two spirits (one of them a human soul), one body. From the very first

"This is the most different child and the most different mother who have ever existed. Nobody like them ever was before, or ever will be again."

moment of His conception by the power of the Holy Ghost, He was in possession of the Beatific Vision, and saw with His human mind the eternal beauty of God face to face. He was also gifted with infused knowledge to enable Him to fulfill His role as Messiah and prophet; and lastly, there came through the medium of His little senses, through the windows of His eyes, and the door-

ways of His ears, human sights and sounds just as they come to any other child, and this we call His "experiential knowledge."

Having known the Eternal Beatitude in the bosom of His Father, it was most terrible that He should ever experience suffering in the temporal sphere into which He moved. This little Child should never have been cold, should never have been abandoned or neglected or forced to go into exile. No one should ever have been unkind to Him, or ungrateful. Never should His poor body have been scourged at the pillar, His beautiful head crowned with thorns, and nails impressed into His sacred hands and feet. He should never have been covered with mud and spittle, never been called a sinner and a fool: not even after His death should the Centurion, save for fulfilling the prophecy, have pierced His side with a spear.

But we will forget at Christmas time that such things are to happen in the course of His short life. We shall only be glad that a Child is born to us who is the salvation of the world, and we shall join our minds and hearts to some simple shepherds, adore Him, and be glad there is another Christmas.

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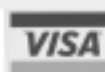


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EXTRA ECCLESIAM NULLA SALUS

Ex Cathedra: "There is but one universal Church of the faithful, outside which no one at all is saved." (Pope Innocent III, Fourth Lateran Council, 1215.)

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

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

Calendar Notes:

January 17-25: Novena – Chair of Unity Octave

(Novenas are found in the Third Order Manual.)

March 24-26: Midwest Catholic Conference – South Bend, Indiana

(For details call (574) 586-3647 or visit www.stjosephforum.org)

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MANCIPIA • The Report of the Crusade of Saint Benedict Center • December 2005

All Third Order members, friends, and benefactors are encouraged to add these prayers to their family or private Rosaries.

Prayers for the Holy Father
(to be said after the Rosary)

V. Let us pray for our Pontiff, Pope Benedict.

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, Benedict, 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).



Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

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