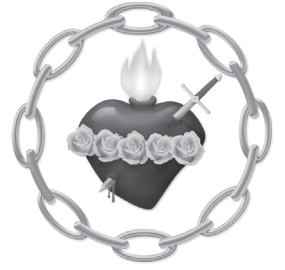


MANCIPIA

THE REPORT OF THE CRUSADE OF SAINT BENEDICT CENTER

November/December 2016





Br. André Marie,
M.I.C.M., Prior

PRIOR'S COLUMN FROM INDIFFERENTISM TO APOSTASY

Indifferentism is the condemned heresy that advances the possibility of salvation in any religion. Apostasy (according to Father John A. Hardon) is the “complete abandonment of the Christian religion and not merely a denial of some article of the creed.” There is a certain

inexorable logic — or at least a psychologically coherent dynamism — that facilitates the journey from indifferentism to apostasy. It may take some time — a few generations perhaps, which is a brief span in the life of the Church — but indifferentism will feed the beast of apostasy.

Do we live in a time of widespread apostasy?

In his 2003 post-synodal exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa* (No. 9), Pope John Paul II spoke of the spiritual condition of Catholicism’s heartland: “European culture gives the impression of ‘silent apostasy’ on the part of people who have all that they need and who live as if God does not exist.”

The wording of that last sentence may be somewhat dispassionate, but it is thereby no less utterly cataclysmic in its implications. If the *Révolution tranquille* in Canada was “quiet,” it was still a revolution against Christ the King. So, too, to speak of a “silent” apostasy of the former Christendom is to make a very loud denunciation of a people who once produced saints but have now forgotten God.

For decades, we here at Saint Benedict Center have warned that, to advance the possibility of salvation for non-Catholics who live *and die* in their various religions — without the benefits of baptism and without the divine and Catholic faith — will seriously harm the Church’s missionary zeal. We have further warned that it will confuse Catholics themselves, who will wonder why they have to live the strict moral code of the Catholic Church when the rest of humanity can apparently be saved without it.

Whatever the details of his own theology concerning these questions, “Pope Emeritus”

Benedict has agreed with us that such fears are not only warranted, but, indeed, have also been realized in our day as a “deep double crisis”:

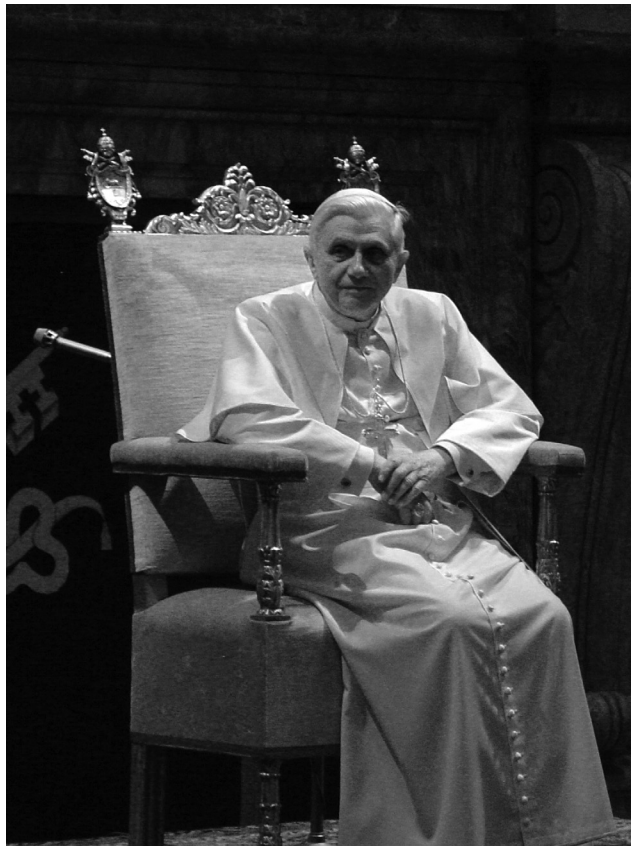
There is no doubt that on this point [of the salvation of “infidels,” i.e., unbelievers] we are faced with a *profound evolution of dogma*. While the fathers and theologians of the Middle Ages could still be of the opinion that, essentially, the whole human race had become Catholic and that paganism existed now only on the margins, the discovery of the New World at the beginning of the modern era radically changed perspectives. In the second half of the last century it has been fully affirmed that the understanding that God cannot let go to perdition all the unbaptized and that even a purely natural happiness for them does not represent a real answer to the question of human existence. If it is true that the great missionaries of the 16th century were still convinced that those who are not baptized are forever lost – and this explains their missionary commitment — *in the Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council that conviction was finally abandoned*.

From this came a deep double crisis. On the one hand this seems to remove any motivation for a future missionary commitment. Why should one try to

convince the people to accept the Christian faith when they can be saved even without it? But also for Christians an issue emerged: the obligatory nature of the Faith and its way of life began to seem uncertain and problematic. If there are those who can save themselves in other ways, it is not clear, in the final analysis, why the Christian himself is bound by the requirements of the Christian faith and its morals. If faith and salvation are no longer interdependent, faith itself becomes unmotivated.

(Italics mine. The full text of the interview from which this comes can be found at <http://bit.ly/1WyU6Se>.)

So, according to the Pope Emeritus, the abandonment of the conviction that infidels are lost led to a double crisis of the death of the missions and the



questioning, by the faithful, of the “obligatory nature of the faith and its way of life.”

It is the second half of this crisis that led to the “silent apostasy” mentioned by Benedict’s predecessor. It may be summarized in the following rhetorical questions: If Catholicism is not necessary for someone born into a Muslim, Hindu, or Buddhist family, why is it necessary for me? If natives of desert islands can be saved by living

“Do we live in a time of widespread apostasy?”

according to what they know of the law of nature, why do I have to believe something *supernatural*? If Jews do not need Jesus Christ, His teaching and His Church, why do I?

Ireland’s online newspaper, *Independent.ie*, recently ran an article entitled, “Bobby Kennedy: the parish priest of the clan.” It gives us some insight into how indifferentism and apostasy — at least in its beginnings — go hand-in-hand:

Back in his undergraduate days, [Bobby Kennedy] joined other Harvard Catholics at lectures by Father Leonard Feeney, an influential Jesuit priest who... preached that only Catholics could be saved. Bobby was embarrassed enough by those diatribes to discuss them with his brother Ted and his father, who arranged for him to meet Archbishop Cushing to convey his concern.

This same Bobby Kennedy, who, as I was told by Brother Francis, argued with Father Feeney that his Protestant friends were going to be saved as Protestants, was not exactly a stickler for the Catholic Faith on other points, as that same *Independent.ie* article witnesses: “He called it ‘an awful thing’ that the Church taught that babies, his or anyone’s, were born in sin.”

So this indifferentist rejected the doctrine of original sin? At least according to his biographer, Larry Tye, who penned that piece, which is an excerpt from his book, *Bobby Kennedy: The Making of a Liberal Icon*.

And that Archbishop to whom Bobby went “to convey his concern” about Father Feeney? He not only persecuted Father Feeney for teaching that there is no salvation outside the Church, but also helped to legalize the sale of contraceptives in Massachusetts, as is quite well documented.

It should be remembered that Bobby’s brother, John, thought Jesus Christ essentially had no business in politics.

I asked my friend Joe Doyle, frequent SBC conference speaker and Executive Director of the Catholic Action League of Massachusetts, whether there was ever a formal

apostasy in the political family. He could not think of one, but sent this informative reply:

Over the course of five generations, the Kennedys have transitioned from being nominal Catholics to being liberal, nominal Catholics, to being dissenting, liberal, nominal Catholics, to being non-practicing, dissenting, liberal, nominal Catholics. To use an accurate phrase disfavored by the post-conciliar church, they are all obstinate and notorious heretics.

Nor should we forget that, as has been said before, when it comes to morals, they not only refuse to impose Catholic teaching on others, they refuse to impose it on themselves.

I am not aware, however, of any formal apostasy, which, of course, will never occur while they continue to seek political power. Even the suicide, David Kennedy, received a Catholic funeral.

The current Kennedy incarnation, Congressman Joseph P. Kennedy III, was married to a Presbyterian NARAL (National Abortion Rights Action League) lobbyist in a Protestant ceremony in a Congregational church, conducted by his Presbyterian father-in-law minister, but he still identifies himself, in all the political almanacs, as a Catholic.

This is all part of a religious-cultural milieu in which, according to a study by the Pew Center, “The Christian share of the U.S. population is declining, while the number of U.S. adults who do not identify with any organized religion is growing.” The hardest-hit Christian body, according to that same study, is the Catholic Church, and, amazingly, “12.9% of American adults are former Catholics.”

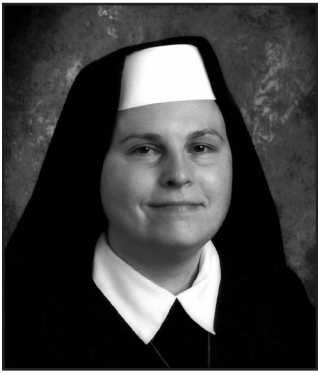
If current trends continue, it will soon not be in the least impolitic for a nominally Catholic politician like Joseph P. Kennedy III to repudiate whatever tenuous connections he has with the Church or with the Christian name.

Can we reverse this? Well, *God* can, but He will only do so if the salt of the earth, by cooperating with His grace, regains its savor. We must return to the fountains of authentic Catholic doctrine, worship, and living.

The Holy See’s Archbishop Guido Pozzo has recently affirmed, in connection with relations between the Holy See and the SSPX, that an immensely popular indifferentist interpretation of Vatican II is wrong. As far as this statement goes, it is wonderful: “For example, there exists today, unfortunately, the view — contrary to the Catholic Faith — that there is a salvific path independent of Christ and His Church.”

Hopefully, we will see much more of this in the months and years to come. Meanwhile, there is much work to be done. ■

Email Brother André Marie at bam@catholicism.org



Sr. Marie Thérèse, M.I.C.M.,
Prioress

CONVENT CORNER “UNFORESEEN ACCIDENTS”

Dear Reader, Have you ever been in a crisis in your life and found yourself driven to your knees in prayer? Without any warning, a life changing event shatters the order in your life. A serious sickness, death of a loved one, car accident or other misfortune can wreak

havoc in our lives.

Yes, indeed, some of the most trying of crises can be unforeseen events.

After the initial “explosion” and shock, we intensely reveal to God what the problem is with many tears, and we also tell Him what the solution is with great emotion. And it is a good thing, too, because, of course, if we neglected to relate our troubles to Him, He wouldn’t even know that we needed help. Right? And, if we didn’t provide Him with solutions, there might prove to be a situation that He couldn’t remedy. Right?

Just think, God, supremely happy in Heaven, has His attention distracted by our crying and banging on His heavenly door and is surprised when He finds His child outside, mangled by unforeseen circumstances. We can picture His face furrowed with concern and shock over the revelation. The circumstances that were unforeseen by you seem as though they were also unforeseen by God. The same

crisis that messed up your plans seems also to have messed up God’s divine plans. Crisis indeed when God has a crisis!

And now, Dear Reader, we should clear our throats (and minds) and reconsider our desperate outlook and petitions that we may have had during the crises in our lives. First of all, when anything truly (or apparently evil) comes upon us, do you think that God knew about it ahead of time? Do you think He could have prevented it? Do you think that He allowed it? Of course, He knew about it and allowed it! But, why did He allow it? Is He not the all-loving and all-wise God? Indeed, He is all-loving and all-wise and all-powerful, and lovingly allowed this for our good. It isn’t even difficult for God to have prevented it or to remedy it.

Dear Reader, we should take care to develop our spiritual life properly. If we don’t humbly surrender our minds and hearts to God, we may find ourselves trying to find solutions to all of “God’s problems.” In fact, we may even decide we can find substitutes for His Sacraments and His Church. After all, “unforeseen accidents” may prevent people from receiving the Sacraments or knowing about the One True Church. Our faith in God’s power, goodness and omniscience should gradually lead us to trust the Sacred Heart in all of His Divine Plans . . . whether we understand them or not. ■

Email Sister Marie Thérèse, at convent@catholicism.org



The Triumph of Divine Providence



Br. Francis, M.I.C.M.

FOUNDER'S COLUMN REFLECTIONS ON KNOWLEDGE, BEAUTY, AND WISDOM

[Taken from Brother Francis' lectures, with a minor amount of editing.]

Some things have to become part of our knowledge through acquaintance, so to speak. Knowledge becomes impossible if everything needs a definition.

knowledge. That should be evident. The greatest secret of the universe is its beauty.

Beauty is the one thing that does not need a recommendation. You don't have to have a certificate to say, "This picture is beautiful." You just look at it. You do not recommend beauty. If you do not see that the object is beautiful, no one is going to argue you into believing that it is.

One professor friend of mine wanted to educate me to the "beauty" of modern art. He spent a whole day trying to

If someone were to ask you a question and say, "What does this mean?" And you say, "It means this or that." And he asks, "And what does this or that mean?" You can see the possibility of these questions and answers going on forever.

We cannot fully know what knowledge is because that is probably one of the last things we will discover. The supreme end of man is a question of knowledge. The highest form of knowledge is vision, and the greatest thing that could be seen is God. And when we see God, we not only know what God is, but we know *what it is to know*.

While we cannot understand that fully this side of Heaven, when we study the Blessed Trinity we get plenty of insight as to why we are "knowing beings" and what knowing is all about. Saint Hilary of Poitiers, the very first Doctor of the Church to die, and one of the most exquisite thinkers the world has ever known, said: "Truth is declarative being."

Once a thing exists, it is somehow declaring itself to a possible knowing mind. You ask, "How strong is this impulse toward declaring itself?" There are some beautiful flowers in the woods. Nobody is looking at them! But do you know they are broadcasting their beauty every second of the day? They never stop! Even when nobody is looking, there is the hope that some eyes will finally come and look at them.

One of the most important principles that has been undermined by the positivist scientists is the concept of purpose or *teleology* [the study of ends, especially the final end of things]. Part of wisdom is to restore the teleological aspect of reality. The human mind does not fully grasp what things are, but it can understand why they are. We see that they have a purpose. There is a purpose for everything!

If there is a purpose, the purpose has to be intended and only a mind can intend. When you discover the purpose of things, you are led inevitably to the mind that has determined the purpose. *Things have purpose*. There must be a mind that puts them into existence and gives them purpose.

The bee can go through the forest and will avoid every harmful, distasteful substance until it discovers the tiniest little bit of nectar. We know that it is guided by some instinct given to it by an intelligence. But the intelligence is not in the bee; it is in the Creator that put the bee into existence.

Knowledge is also related to that thing called beauty. Nobody can perceive beauty who does not have the faculty of

"There is a purpose for everything!"

it. "Look at how this cubist picture captures the real beauty of the thinking mind," he said. "So all these distorted perversions of reality are supposed to be beautiful?" I thought. I had to pretend I was convinced because he had invited me out for a meal. As I said, beauty just manifests itself immediately to the normal eye.

The greatest secret of the universe is its beauty. There are beauties on all levels. The beauty most people talk about is the sense beauty that is purely in matter. Oh, the beauty of a sunset! But, who would want to spend a whole eternity on Prospect Hill, watching an eternal sunset? [Prospect Hill, in Harvard, Mass., has a famously beautiful view of Mt. Wachusett.] Now what is that eternal ecstasy that we will achieve by vision? It is the beauty of God! Saint Thomas defines beauty as *Id quod visum placet*. (That which pleases by its being seen.)

You see now that knowledge is connected with all the highest values. *Id quod visum*. *Visum* means "being seen." There are other ways of knowing that do not involve seeing, but they are far less perfect media for knowing. You may ask, "Do you know Mr. So and So?" And I say, "Well, I have heard about him. Maybe I called him on the phone once." I do not feel I know him until I have seen him. In seeing, the object seen has become part of you.

With all the thinking that men do, what is the highest purpose of the act? It is to bring us to the greatest knowledge that we could possibly have. And that is wisdom.

But how many people today are using that greatest power that God gave them in the way God intended them to use it? What percentage would you say? I wish I could say 1%. I wish I could say one in a million. You wonder why Holy Scripture says, "The number of fools is infinite"? The Bible does not say anywhere that the number of the wise is infinite.

If we are even aware of the value of wisdom and are dedicated to it, that is a tremendous grace. It is a very great grace to be interested in wisdom, which is the most excellent knowledge of the highest things. ■



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

PREFECT’S COLUMN FAITH COMETH THROUGH HEARING

(Address to Third Order
members, September 3, 2016)

You have all heard the old adage: Seeing is believing. Recall also “faith cometh by hearing; and hearing by the word of Christ” (Romans 10:17). Let us consider these two senses and the Faith.

Good Christian soldier, we know that Faith cometh through hearing, as Saint Paul tells us. But to hear what someone has taught us about the Faith requires us to listen, that is to be open to the Scriptures, tradition, the dogmas, the doctrines being taught, i.e., the lesson.

Hearing the Faith alone does not give us the Faith, and we’ve gained nothing if we do not practice the Faith by making it part of our daily life — by living it, in a sense breathing it every moment of our lives.

The Faith is a gift from God. When we say, “faith cometh by hearing; and hearing by the word of Christ,” we have the essential note that defines evangelization; it is to preach the Gospel by word and deed, that those who do not believe may hear the word of God and see our good deeds and believe. “Faith,” the Council of Trent teaches, “is the beginning of salvation.” It is, by its very nature, self-diffusive, as is “goodness.” **A gift received, it is meant to be given. Hearing it, learning about it and not employing it is like turning your back on God.**

To “hear” the Faith also includes, in a sense, reading about it. Good Christian Soldier, **do you listen and read about the Faith?** I think we have a unique apostolate here in that we are given ample opportunities to learn about the Faith – the one true Faith, outside of which no one at all is saved. We have our own bookstore, a library, evening classes on various

“Hearing the Faith alone does not
give us the Faith.”

Catholic subjects, the Saint Augustine Institute of Catholic Wisdom, a talk almost every Sunday, an incomparable website, not to mention a sermon every Sunday (and sometimes daily), and, last but not least, the *Mancipia*.

But to hear the Faith, either on a one-to-one basis or in a group, requires someone to speak it. Good Christian Soldier, **it is you I am speaking about!** And speaking is so important that I ask you to renew your efforts to speak of the Faith wherever and whenever possible. **Yes, and I mean that you speak to strangers too!**

I will give you three examples of seizing opportunities to do so that occurred this past week. While on a paid-for vacation, we were with our hosts, a couple close to us, but not practicing Catholics. Throughout the visit I sought a chance to bring up the Faith. I had little chance to do so until, literally, five minutes before we parted. There was no



deep theological discussion; that was not necessary. Keeping it simple, I think, worked much better. Somehow the issue of guardian angels came up. I asked if they believed they had a guardian angel. One slapped her shoulder saying, “yes, I tell him to help me find my glasses!” I pointed out that they should speak to their guardian angels, ask for their protection, guidance daily, recalling the angel’s charge: to light and guard, to rule and guide. For the first time, I saw some encouragement from both as they realized, at the ages of 80 and 90, that there is something spiritual in their lives that they should exercise.

One day we had dinner at a restaurant. Our waiter was Patrick, who wore the map of Ireland on his face. I asked him of the apparition of Our Lady of Knock, also called Our Lady of Silence. As *Saints to Remember* reminds us, “On August 21, 1879, in the little village of Knock in County Mayo, in Ireland, Our Lady appeared to a group of fifteen simple Irish peasants, grown-ups and children... [she] wanted to bring to the Irish people by this childlike approach a full appreciation of the mystery of her glorious Assumption and her Crowning as Queen of Heaven. She also wanted to renew in the Irish a great love for Saint Joseph, her virginal husband, and for Saint John the Evangelist, her virginal adopted son, who both appeared with her.” Patrick’s face lit up as he told us he had been to the shrine at Knock. He was very appreciative of the Miraculous Medal I gave him. We related an Irish Catholic joke to him and he smiled with what I call Catholic camaraderie.

Finally, on departing the area, the young lady desk clerk stood up, came closer to me and said, “Mr. Carbone, were you here a few years ago? I answered “yes,” and she immediately showed me what she was holding in her hand

— a **Miraculous Medal I had given to her at that time.**

She told me she kept it in her wallet and made sure it was with her if she changed wallets. Three years ago I told her to keep it with her always. Her mother said it brought her luck. A young gentleman, who also worked at the hotel, and I, quickly said, “**there is no such thing as luck or chance. But there is grace!**” I gave her a Miraculous Medal on a chain for her mother and gave the young man a Miraculous Medal. I also provided the little pamphlets to each.

Many of you have told me you were afraid to make such

“...the Holy Ghost will inspire you
and provide the words, if you
provide the mouth.”

overtures as you felt you did not know what to say. Don’t worry, **the Holy Ghost will inspire you and provide the words, if you provide the mouth.**

Faith cometh through hearing, but if no one is talking, no one will hear. Don’t worry about what you will say — rather worry if you say nothing!

As one of my favorite saints, Saint Alphonsus Maria de Liguori, said (I paraphrase): God placed you in front of that person at that time for His own reasons. You are His instrument. He wants you to act by speaking so that another soul may have a chance at salvation. **Faith cometh by hearing, but it requires a speaker. Will you speak for the Faith?•**

Email Brother John Marie Vianney, at toprefect@catholicism.org

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The Liturgical Year

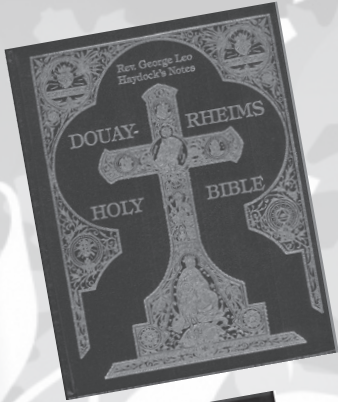
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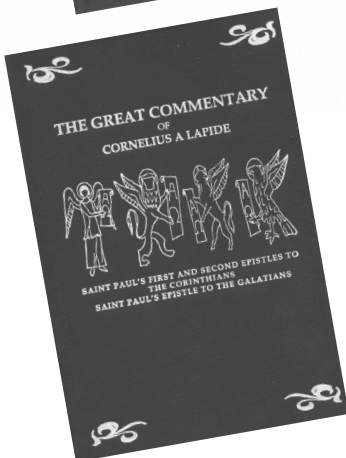


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KELLY FORUM PURGATORY

A Commentary On Father Schouppé's Purgatory Explained
“**A**las! We do not sufficiently remember our dear departed, their memory seems to perish with the sound of the funeral bells.” Saint Francis de Sales

Mr. Brian Kelly
Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my friends (Job 19:21).

Reading Jesuit Father F.X. Schouppé's (d. 1904) book, *Purgatory Explained by the Lives and Legends of the Saints* (translated from his original French), was a penitential exercise. I had started reading the book years ago, got discouraged, and put it aside. Last week I picked it up again and just finished it. I knew it was not going to be easy reading this book. Reading accounts, the most reliable accounts of worthy religious and saints, about holy souls having to endure the fires of purgatory for fifty years or more for some, on account of certain venial sins that were never put to flight is a heavy dose of reality. Such accounts, however, were not recorded to discourage those of us who have committed so many mortal sins, but rather they are meant to spur us on to take our state of soul more seriously and do real penance.

Lest we think that this book is merely a collection of sensational stories (yes, literally it is), be consoled, Dear Reader. The latter part of this book treats of the consolations of the holy souls and their inexpressible joy, greater than any joys that can be experienced in this life. The souls in Purgatory want to suffer for their sins; they want to be purified so as to appear spotless before God.

Father Schouppé draws heavily from the examples recorded in Father Rossignoli's *Merveilles Divine dans les Ames du Purgatoire* (Divine Wonders in the Souls of Purgatory), which the latter gleaned from the writings of many saints and holy religious who either were taken on a tour of Purgatory in a vision or were visited by holy souls pleading for prayers and Masses.

Purgatory is a Place

Saint Thomas bases his following opinion on the fathers and doctors before him who wrote about levels of the states of purgation in the Church Suffering. "Purgatory," he says, "has a double place for expiation. The first will be destined for the generality of souls, and is situated below, near to Hell; the second will be for particular cases, and it is from thence that so many apparitions occur." (Suppl., part 3, ques. ult.) The common opinion is that Purgatory is in the depths of the earth.

The Fires of Purgatory are the Same as the Fires of Hell

"Almost all theologians," Saint Robert Bellarmine writes, "teach that the reprobate and the souls in Purgatory suffer the action of the same fire." (*De Purgat.*, I, 2, cap. 6) Regarding

the pains, all the doctors who wrote on the subject state that the pain is worse than any pain we could experience in our bodies on earth. How is it possible for a separated spirit to feel pain? We do not know. All we know is what these souls have revealed. They have also revealed, however, that their consolations are indescribably wonderful. They cannot will but what God wills. Hence they desire to suffer purification so that they may be spotless, for this is worthy of God. Saint Francis de Sales writes, "Happy state, more desirable than appalling, since its flames are flames of love and charity." (*Spirit of St. Francis de Sales*, ch. 9, p. 16)

Pain of Loss

They do not, of course, have the same pain of loss as that of the souls of the damned, but they suffer the pain of *temporary separation* from the vision of God. Some souls in Purgatory testified to more than one saint that this is their worst pain, for in their secure state they know, more than we do on earth, what they are for a time deprived of. Saint Teresa of Avila, in her work, *Castle of the Soul*, wrote that the pain of loss, even though temporary, was excruciating beyond words to those souls who long to attain to heaven but are held back. (Part 6, ch. 11) This was revealed to her in a vision she had of Purgatory.

Duration

Suffice it to say that the saints all agree that unless there be special considerations due to exceptional cases of voluntary, vicarious victimhood (as with Saint Mariana of Jesus, the Lily of Quito, and Saint Catherine of Siena, for example) Purgatory for the generality of souls is of long duration. Saint Robert Bellarmine says that "the pains of Purgatory are not limited to ten or twenty years" but, in some cases, much longer. (*De Gemitu*, Book 2, c. 9) This, of course, depends on the gravity and number of mortal sins that, forgiven in confession, need satisfaction still. Our author provides scores of examples of this throughout the book and especially in his chapter on the Gregorian Thirty Masses privilege. (Part Two, Chapter 14) The "days" and "years" that are related in these accounts are our days and years. The duration in Purgatory itself is not so measured as there is no yesterday and tomorrow there, since these souls are not living in our earthly time, but there is a before and after.

Means of Relieving and Shortening the Sufferings of the Souls in Purgatory

The souls in Purgatory have passed their time of merit. Hence they rely on the prayers of the Church Militant and Triumphant to assist them. This is called suffrage. It includes prayers, and, for us wayfarers, penances, fasts, almsgiving, good works (provided that we are in the state of grace), and the offering of Holy Mass for their relief. In offering our prayers and those of the Church through the divine Victim offered at Mass, we also gain merit for ourselves, paying some of our own debt owed to God in

reparation for our sins. Saint Jerome, echoing the fathers and doctors before him, assures us that “[T]he relief which we procure for the departed obtains for us a like mercy.” (p 378, Schouppe)

Smallest Prayers and Sacrifices Help in a Big Way

Although any example would suffice to illustrate this, keep in mind that small things, as far as the world sees them, if offered with a big and generous heart, are great things in the eyes of God. In a certain convent there was a rule that permission from the superior must be granted for a glass of water between meals. A certain sister was so parched one afternoon that she asked her superior for permission to quench her thirst. She was denied. Her superior told her to think of Jesus thirsting on the Cross and of the thirst of the souls afire in Purgatory. She made this offering humbly. So pleased was God with this little sacrifice that He allowed a holy soul to appear to this sister and tell her how relieved she was for this refreshing bath which tempered the fires of her purgation.

The Holy Rosary

After Holy Mass, the Rosary is the most effective prayer to succour the holy souls in Purgatory. Father Schouppe relates the story of the saintly priest, Father Nieremberg, S.J., who practiced the most severe penances and prayed the Rosary daily for the poor souls. Once he lost his rosary, which had indulgenced medals on it, and he was inconsolable. That night in his cell, he saw hands extend from the ceiling holding his rosary and dropping it into his hands. Father Rossignoli relates the story of Venerable Mother Frances of the Blessed Sacrament who from her childhood was devoted to the holy souls. She used to be visited in her cell by the holy souls who would come to her as they were about to enter heaven and kiss her hands as she fingered the beads; they honored these beads as the instruments of their salvation.

Indulgences

Father Schouppe relates several accounts of souls that passed but a short time, sometimes only minutes, in Purgatory because someone offered indulgences for them. One account, given by Saint Magdalene de Pazzi, tells of a religious who was very exact in gaining all the indulgences that she could. She was ordinary



Virgin of Carmel Saving Souls in Purgatory

in every other way. The saint saw her ascend to heaven before her body was even buried. In our own time, in addition to the indulgences offered for observing the nine first Fridays, Our Lady has given us a most generous promise of assisting at death all those who reverently fulfill the conditions she requested in keeping the five first Saturdays. Father Schouppe died before this devotion was given to Sister Lucia of Fatima, however, he devotes two chapters, 58 and 59, in Part Two of his book, to the devotion of the Brown Scapular. More information regarding the scapular and the Sabbatine (Saturday) Privilege is detailed in Appendix II at the end of the book.

Praying for the Dead Includes All the Works of Mercy, Corporal and Spiritual

“To assist the souls in Purgatory,” says Saint Francis de Sales, “is to

perform the most excellent works of Mercy, or rather it is to practice in a most sublime manner all the works of Mercy together: it is to visit the sick; it is to give drink to those who thirst for the vision of God; it is to feed the hungry, to ransom prisoners, to clothe the naked... to procure for poor exiles the hospitality of the Heavenly Jerusalem; it is to comfort the afflicted, to instruct the ignorant — in fine, to practice all the works of Mercy in one.” (Schouppe, p. 279)

Judgment Without Mercy to Him That Hath Not Done Mercy (James 2:13).

To defraud the dead of our prayers while squandering the inheritance they left behind for us and neglecting to offer Masses for them (or worse, not doing so when it is in their will) is to merit hell. Not to pray for them will be requited of us at our own judgment when God may allow that no one prays for us when we are justly tormented in Purgatory.

Almsgiving, a Most Excellent Way to Relieve the Pain and Shorten the Duration of the Holy Souls in Purgatory

Saint Thomas Aquinas ranks almsgiving above other more popular means of succouring the souls in Purgatory. “Almsgiving,” he says, “possesses more completely the virtue of satisfaction than prayer, and prayer more completely than fasting.” (Schouppe, p. 258) Saint John of God, when he begged alms in Granada, used to cry out: “Alms, for yourselves, alms for the

love of yourselves,” (Schouppe, p. 314) rather than “alms for the love of God,” teaching thereby that those who give alms obtain abundant graces for themselves. The following from the Book of Daniel is apropos: “Redeem thou thy sins with alms, and thy iniquities with works of mercy” (4:24). Truly “charity covereth a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8).

The Souls in Purgatory Cannot Pray for Themselves, But They Can Pray for Those Who Pray for Them

Many saints, such as Saint Bridget in her *Revelations*, testify to this at length. Saint Peter Faber, one of the seven founders of the Jesuits, had a special devotion to the holy souls. He writes:

“Those souls have bowels of Charity, which are ever open to those who still walk amidst the dangers of this life; they are filled with gratitude towards those who assist them. They can pray for us, and offer up their torments to God in our behalf. It is a most excellent practice to invoke the souls in Purgatory, that we may

“We must, therefore, pray much for them, that they may pray much for us.”

obtain from God, through their intercession, a true knowledge of our sins and a perfect contrition for them, fervor in the exercise of good works, care to produce worthy fruits of penance and, in general, all virtues the absence of which has been the cause of their terrible chastisement.” (*Memorial of Bl. P. Faber. See Messenger of the Sacred Heart, Nov., 1873*)

Saint Robert Bellarmine taught the same, as did the eminent theologian of the Council of Trent, Francisco Suarez, S.J. “These souls are holy and dear to God,” Suarez writes, “Charity urges them to love us, and they know, at least in a general way, to what dangers we are exposed, and what need we have of the Divine assistance. Why, then, would they not pray for their benefactors?” (Schouppe, p. 337)

Finally, Saint John Marie Vianney told a certain ecclesiastic who consulted him on the subject: “Oh, if it were but known how great is the power of the good souls in Purgatory with the Heart of God, and if we knew all the graces we can obtain through their intercession, they would not be so much forgotten. We must, therefore, pray much for them, that they may pray much for us.” (Schouppe, p. 339)

Have Great Devotion to Our Lady and Trust Her to Give Relief to the Souls in Purgatory

In every Hail Mary we petition Our Lady to pray for us sinners NOW and at the hour of our death. This petition is in the plural. The souls in Purgatory are included with us as sinners, are they not? Our Lady is our Mother, the Refuge of Sinners and Consoler of the Afflicted. She wants us to have a salutary and filial fear of God but also a great confidence (supernatural hope) in her. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost culminating in holy wisdom. Fear of the Lord is also “the beginning of His love” (Ecclus. 25:16). “Have confidence my son,” Mary assured her servant Jerome Carvalho in a vision, “I am the Mother of Mercy for my dear children in Purgatory, as well as for those still living upon earth.” (Schouppe, p. 369)



Saint Lawrence Liberates Souls from Purgatory

Death and Extreme Unction

For those foolish souls who delayed their conversion, fortunate enough to receive His Mercy at the eleventh hour, the sacrament of the sick and dying will give strength to imitate Christ on the Cross. It is their last chance to unite with His Passion by offering Him their last agony and accepting death with holy resignation. The last sacrament and holy Viaticum, received with perfect contrition, will also chase away the demons of despair. Perhaps some holy person who loves such a one merited for him this inexpressible gift. Of this gift we ought not to presume, God forbid. Father Schouppe opines that, **for a pious soul, the sufferings patiently endured that accompany death can atone for all of one's temporal punishment in the next life.** However, short of a revelation of such a blessing, only God knows who has merited this favor. We ought never to assume this on our own.

It is our utmost duty in charity to inform the sick man that his illness is mortal. To hide this from him would be a grave sin. "We must," says Saint Augustine, "prudently impart to the sick person the knowledge of his danger." (Schouppe, p. 394) Nor must we wait until the last minute to do so. No one knows how fast a mortal sickness may deprive one of his faculties. True, if such a one is in mortal sin, he can still interiorly, with a special

grace, make an act of perfect contrition. That is why we should say the Act of Contrition loudly at a person's deathbed who is comatose and pray that he joins us in his heart. No, while the sick man is alert, it is then that we must summon the priest.

Finally, we must have a great and true devotion to Our Lady, especially if we are consecrated to her as Slaves of Her Immaculate Heart, if we hope to save our souls and even bypass Purgatory.

Longing for God

I conclude with the words of Saint Faustina Kowalska, who lived from 1905 to 1938. In her Diary, she writes:

"I saw my guardian angel, who ordered me to follow him. In a moment I was in a misty place full of fire in which there was a great crowd of suffering souls... I asked these souls what their greatest suffering was. They answered me in one voice that their greatest torment was longing for God.

"I saw Our Lady visiting the souls in purgatory. The souls call her 'The Star of the Sea.' She brings them refreshment. I wanted to talk with them some more, but my guardian angel beckoned me to leave. We went out of that prison of suffering. [I heard an interior voice, which said] 'My mercy does not want this, but justice demands it.'" (Sister Faustina Kowalska Diary: *Divine Mercy in My Soul*, p 20) ▪

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Eleonore Villarrubia

GUEST COLUMN WILL, YET NOT WILL

It has been called “the long good-bye.” At first we don’t notice it; it may take months — or even years — for us to realize that something is not quite right. The hard thing to explain to oneself, to family and to friends, is that it seems different for everyone who has it. O, well, maybe that fellow

over there has it, but not MY fellow! Is it just a memory slip? Or maybe a simple mispronunciation of words he has said all his life. So easy to ignore or try to brush off as a small sign of aging. “After all,” we tell ourselves, “we are all getting older, aren’t we? It’s just a natural sign of aging.” And we go about our everyday lives as before — only now things are becoming different, somehow. The unafflicted partner takes on more — more thinking, more worrying, more planning, more everyday small tasks because the other is losing interest, ability and initiative. “He was always interested in the higher thinking” you tell yourself or “what’s a few more little jobs to do in a day in the whole grand scheme of things?”

After 56 years of marriage, you get to know your partner pretty well. Some of this new stuff surprises you. He was never physically aggressive; usually even-tempered; liked to drive a bit fast, but that is a male thing anyway, isn’t it? You brush it off, yet... Eventually you begin to realize that this new situation is changing your life partner into someone he was not. You discuss it with your children, even your grown grandchildren. As the evidence mounts over the months and years, you can no longer deny the obvious. “His father got that way,” you have to confess to yourself and others. “Remember the gentle and gracious Papa, the epitome of the Southern gentleman?” He, too, became aggressive, said odd things and became difficult. Maybe dad is going the same way his own dad went? And you hope and pray that he is not.

You accompany him to the doctor’s office for the umpteenth time. He goes through all the same old tests — “what day is it?” “what month are we in?” “how many fingers am I holding up?” hammer on the knee to test the reflexes. REALLY? You ask questions that he dances around. Finally, you look him in the eye and say “IS IT the “A” disease?” He reluctantly tells you “YES.” What took so long to elicit an admission from him? And what good are all these visits doing anyway? The caretaker gets absolutely no clue as to how to help the patient. So... You start researching.

Ah, yes, as a librarian, research has always been one of my favorite things to do. So — on to the computer and the Internet. You find LOTS of information about this condition, too much, maybe. Some of it is helpful; some conflicting; none very satisfactory since “expert” opinions vary and there is no cure anyway. Sure, Dr. B. cured her husband’s Alzheimer’s with coconut oil in the diet (tried that). Someone else recommends a bariatric chamber (good luck getting your loved one in THAT thing). There are as many fixes for Alzheimer’s as there are for cancer, none of which work and most of which cost lots of dollars. You get very frustrated as you see your husband get worse and worse while you spend money on “cures” that don’t work.

Finally, an “event” occurs that brings things to a head. In our case it was a fall late at night at the end of November. Being of sound mind, but weak back, I could not help him up, nor could he understand an explanation on how he could get himself up. “Call Brother for help; he is nearby.” This good son came, lifted dad, got him dressed and off to the emergency department of the local hospital. They released him after two days of observation. Knowing I could no longer do the full-time care at home, I took my beloved to Saint Augustine’s Priory, the home of the M.I.C.M. Brothers. On my 76th birthday. What a gift they gave me! For eight months, this wonderful son and his religious brothers took care of dad

with as much love and caring as if he had been each Brother’s dad. The other gents in the house helped, too, even the boys who boarded for school. We had amazing outside care, but it was the Brothers who saved my sanity because I knew he was in loving and strong hands.

Eight months is a long time to perform two full-time jobs, even with help. It had to come to an end after he continued to require more attention. The Brothers had gone above and beyond the call of duty, and I will forever be grateful for their attention, support and love. There is no way I can ever pay them back except to let the world know of their continued sacrifices all those months and to give them my own love and gratitude in return. Our little close community here in Richmond pitched in as well. God bless them all. Our

other two sons, our beloved daughter-in-law and our precious grandchildren are supportive although they live far away. They come when they can and call often.

Now my mate is residing in a dementia care facility not very close to home. I hope to see him soon. He is in good hands. Maybe he will remember me when we meet again. Pray for Will. ■



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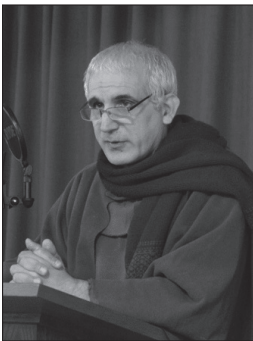
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V. Let us pray for our pontiff, Pope Francis.

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, Francis, 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).

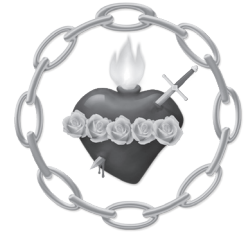
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