



SAINT BENEDICT CENTER
Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
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The Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
October 11, 2016

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Pax Christi. A writer usually writes about the things most on his mind. This is why one who writes ought to feed his mind on good thoughts that he can pass on to others. As I am writing now — considerably past by deadline, and therefore “under the gun” — I have on my mind two events that are upcoming, and many needs of the Center — most especially the need of male vocations.

The first event that is upon us is the annual Pilgrimage for Restoration (September 23-25), a three-day, sixty-five mile walking pilgrimage from Lake George, New York, to Auriesville, New York, where we will pray in the spot sanctified by the martyrdom of three of the eight holy Jesuits known collectively as the “North American Martyrs”: Saints Isaac Jogues, Jean de Lalande, and René Goupil. We sing, pray, listen to spiritual talks from the priests, tell stories, and occasionally distract ourselves from physical pain with a little mirth and levity as we walk the way of the pilgrimage. It hurts. But somehow, when the walking is over and before one’s limp is gone, the pilgrims (most of us, I daresay, anyway) look forward to next year.

The next event on the horizon — some of us will still be limping — is our annual conference (September 30-October 1.) Our theme this year is “Keeping the Counter-Reformation Going.” I have chosen to speak on *another* Jesuit martyr, Saint Robert Southwell, and my effort is dedicated to drawing lessons from his life. This Saint, classically and devoutly educated as an exiled Elizabethan Englishman at Douay (France, but then part of Spanish Flanders), and subsequently formed as a Jesuit at Rome, was sent back to England as a “lamb to the slaughter,” in the words of his superior, to work secretly among the recusant Catholics of Protestant England. He died, as did Our Lord, at the age of thirty-three, but in the brief span of his apostolate left an amazing corpus of poetry to posterity.

The poetry, superlatively beautiful in itself, was an eminently *practical* part of his apostolate among literate and cultured people, for it was a way to instill in them thoughts and sentiments of contrition (“Saint Peter’s Complaint”), hope (“Scorn Not the Least”), meekness (“Content and Rich”), patience amid trials (“Times Go by Turns”), promptitude in doing good (“Loss in Delay”), and desire for Heaven (“At Home in Heaven,” and “Look Home”). He left a deep impress on English poetry, including on the “poetry of tears,” later penned by such of the Metaphysical poets as the convert Richard Crashaw (“The Weeper”). He also influenced Shakespeare (a distant cousin), Milton, and others. He was read and appreciated by heretics as well as by Catholics.

But it is, of course, as a martyr that he was canonized by Pope Paul VI in 1970 — one of the Forty English Martyrs.

Like the pilgrims limpingly wending our way to Auriesville, Saint Robert sang, prayed, encouraged his fellows, and endured trials joyfully as he journeyed; only *his* journey ended at the infamous “Tree” of Tyburn (not a natural tree, but a gibbet). After edifying the faithful during his brief apostolate of six years, he was arrested and imprisoned for three years, being tortured by the notorious priest hunter Richard Topcliffe at least nine times. After a travesty of a trial, Saint Robert Southwell gave his final witness, preached his last sermon, and penned his ultimate poem as a masterpiece of moral beauty when he danced at the end of the hangman’s rope at Tyburn, having first forgiven his enemies and prayed for the very Queen who persecuted the Church. In this aristocrat vowed to poverty were balanced the refined aesthetics of the classically trained literary man, and the Ignatian asceticism of the Jesuit.

Saint Robert was martyred in 1595. The Eight North American Martyrs, ministering under radically different circumstances, received their crowns in the decade of the 1640’s. This Englishman and these Frenchmen all had been prepared for their missions by wonderful classical educations and rigorous Jesuit formations, grace supernaturally elevating their efforts. Embodying the virtues of the Counter-Reformation and the ideals of the Society of Jesus, they applied them in their different fields of labor.

Now Southwell’s Elizabethan England is just as gone as the undisturbed wilderness of Huronia and the Mohawk village of Ossernenon, where Jogues, Goupil, and de Lalande ended their earthly pilgrimages. Today we have need of men who are formed to meet the challenges of the modern apostolate. This is what we MICM Brothers here at Saint Benedict Center aspire to be. While maintaining a prayer life steeped in the traditional liturgy of the Roman Rite, and the Marian consecration of Saint Louis de Montfort, we wish to keep the twofold work of the Counter-Reformation going, both the work of authentic reform (beginning with ourselves), and the work of countering false, so-called “reforms” (i.e., heresies) which abound in our day, e.g., redefining the Church, denying her necessity, and obscuring the borders between her and the world. But a list of modern errors would make my letter too long!

We need more Brothers. We need vocations. Pray for them, and support them among your sons and other young men. Turn this letter over to find a vocations ad you can hand someone.

Thank you for your continued support. God bless and Mary keep you!

In the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Br. André Marie, M.I.C.M.
Brother André Marie, M.I.C.M., Prior

SINGLE CATHOLIC MEN!

- Do you believe the Church is necessary for salvation, not just for yourself, but for everyone?
- Do you wish to see the Social Reign of Jesus Christ the King in America, and the world, become a reality?
- Do you want to work and pray for a Catholic America?

....SO DO WE!...

The **Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary** are looking for a few good men, men who can labor earnestly with hands, hearts, and minds, vowed to the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience in total consecration to the Immaculate Virgin Mary.

WHAT DO WE DO?

Work

- Teaching
- Manual labor
- Multimedia apostolate
- Street Evangelism
- Youth apostolates

Pray

- Traditional Latin Mass
- Divine Office (three canonical offices daily)
- Rosary
- Mental Prayer

Study

- Scripture
- Philosophy
- Fathers & Doctors
- Church History
- Apologetics

...and more. But what we do is secondary to what we are:

Slaves of Mary's Immaculate Heart!

Is God calling you? Then call us.

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