

❖ Ad Veritatem ❖

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National Catholic Family Conference Sept. 7 & 8

The conversion to Catholicism of Scott and Kimberly Hahn is one of the truly remarkable and astonishing stories of faith in our lifetimes. Scott was a rising star in the Presbyterian church who, at the age of 28, was asked to become Dean at a leading Presbyterian seminary on the east coast. Kimberly, the daughter of a well-known televangelist, met Scott while studying for a masters degree in theology to fulfill her childhood dream of becoming a Protestant minister. Both had solid roots in the evangelical movement.

Scott took pride in his ability to sway Catholics away from the Church. He had strong anti-Catholic feelings and described himself by saying, "I wasn't anti-Catholic in a bigoted way--I was anti-Catholic by conviction". Scott's natural intellectual curiosity led him to read Catholic writings in an attempt to use that knowledge to further discredit Catholic teaching. To his personal horror, he found that the early fathers of the Church were indeed Catholic in their beliefs and practices. He began to see passages in the Bible that were clearly Catholic in meaning and intent and this led him to a personal conflict - ignore his intellect and conscience and discontinue his study or embrace the Catholic faith and give up his ministry and livelihood. The result is now history. Scott and Kimberly - after serious soul searching of her own - have both entered the Catholic Faith and have dedicated themselves to spreading the Gospel message of the Church.

In 1991, Scott helped organize the first National Catholic Family Conference at St. Cyprian's Catholic Church in Long Beach. Since then it has grown at epidemic proportions each year. Last year it was held at the Long Beach Convention Center. The idea for the conference came as a response to the growing needs of

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION: NOT JUST AN ACT OF CONGRESS

By: Fr. Hugh Barbour, O. Praem
Our Chaplain

"He doesn't know what he wants". We have all made or heard this observation of someone who is discontented, inconstant, or confused, unable to come to grip with life or its vicissitudes. We may even have made it about ourselves. Usually the person about whom this is said is perceived as lacking self-control, or emotional maturity, or will power, easily agitated, hard to depend on. Whereas all of these things may be true of someone "who doesn't know what she wants," none of them really explains why this is so. The underlying reason for the painful state of mind may come as a surprise to us. When "I don't know what I want" it is because I am not truly free. If I don't know, then I am not free. Freedom has as much to do with knowing as it does with choosing. In fact, in a real sense, it has more to do with knowing than choosing. Let's see what this means. St. Thomas Aquinas, whose teaching about law and conscience we have already considered in this column, managed to produce a masterful synthesis of Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian notions of freedom. Saint Thomas distinguishes between two kinds of

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*St Thomas More:
Be my counsel. Help
me to practice law in
accordance with the
desires of our Lord.
Amen*

*Editor's Note:
"Ad Veritatem" is Latin
for "toward the truth".*

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My Prayer Life

"I should make more time for prayer! I pray before Mass and after reception of the Holy Eucharist. I do make a point to read portions of the Old Testament, New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs, as well as the Daily Missal reading every day and reflect on them. I believe that prayer is a process, not simply of "talking to God", but also "listening to God". In reading God's Word, and whatever commentary of the Church which I may possess applicable to that passage, I believe I am "listening to God" and that is the major part of my prayer life."

Stephen F. Dial
YOUNG, ADMUNDSEN & DIAL

"In our very busy lives, it is often difficult to find a quiet moment to pray to our Lord. Nevertheless, I have found at least three opportunities to pray each day. First of all, when I rise, I start the day by greeting our Lord and thanking Him for the blessings that He has bestowed upon my family. I also use this opportunity to ask that He protect my family during the day in our various endeavors and to help me accomplish the many tasks that I will face that day. Also, I have gotten into the habit of beginning a rosary on my commute to the office in the morning and to try to finish the rosary on my way home in the evening or in my travels during the day. Finally, I finish my day by praying with my two sons and my wife as we put our boys to bed at night.

We also pray at each meal even when we are at a restaurant. My wife and I belong to a couples prayer group that meets every other week, where we share with each other and pray to the Lord in thanksgiving and for special petitions. I believe that prayer is very powerful in helping us to gain insight into the blessings of our Lord in our lives. I also find prayer to be a very soothing influence in an otherwise typically hectic day. It is also exciting to watch for the times when our Lord has answered my prayers, sometimes in little ways and sometimes in much more powerful ways. Through my prayer life, the Lord helps me to see my life, not as a series of challenges, but rather as a series of opportunities that He unfolds for me, minute by minute, each day.

James M. Skorheim
SKORHEIM & ASSOCIATES

"I receive a special inner peace when I pray the rosary...but I also enjoy meditative prayer and scriptural reading."

Dave Belz
LAW OFFICES OF DAVID L. BELZ

"At the end of each day as I floss and brush my teeth just prior to hopping into bed, I change the pages on two calendar spiritual guides (one of which is now seven years old). These two spiritual guides offer a biblical reading or other spiritual thought upon which I dwell at the close of the day and pray the short prayer included on one of the calendars.

In the morning, when I brush my teeth once again, I read the two calendars and pray the short prayer.

Before each meal each day, I ask the Lord to bless the food and say a short prayer for each of my three children. Since I am in the habit of praying before each meal, it triggers me to say the prayer for my children.

Frequently during the day, as I trot down the hall to the restroom, I find that the pause in my work process gives rise to an opportunity to pray another short prayer. Since this occurs during the middle of the work day, these prayers are often for co-workers or for a particular project. It is not unusual to pray that I find the time to finish all of the work that God in His blessings has laid before me, before the deadlines imposed by the client arrive.

My prayer is a short conversation much like I might ask a friend to remember me and to help my burdens simply by listening. I find this is much more my style and fall into this type of prayer much more easily than lingering, deep, contemplative prayer."

Richard P. Neuland
NEULAND & NORDBERG

EDITOR'S NOTE: Look for a regular column "My Prayer Life" featuring a personal statement by an attorney.

"My prayer is a short conversation much like I might ask a friend to remember me and to help my burdens simply by listening."

Richard Neuland

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Catholic families struggling to live an authentic Catholic way of life. Now in its sixth year, the conference has grown from an initial 500 attendees, to well over 4,500 people at last year's conference, including 850 children and over 500 teens.

This year, the conference will return to the Long Beach Convention Center and bring back Scott and Kimberly Hahn, Barbara McGuigan, Gerry Urrutia and former Anglican priest, Fr. George Rutler. The conference will also include Patrick Madrid, Jim Stenson, Jeff Cavins, Victor Calveau, and two

dynamic brothers, Jesse and Johnny Romero. The conference presents three separate programs - adult, children and 8 teen conferences.

SEPTEMBER 7 AND 8

SAT: 8am - 8pm SUN: 9am - 4:30pm

LONG BEACH CONVENTION CENTER

300 E Ocean Blvd.

Long Beach, CA

(818) 331 3549 PRE REGISTER

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freedom which have to be operative in order for an action to be free. The first is called "freedom of exercise" and the second is called "freedom of specification." The former means simply the power to choose or not to choose. This is the type of freedom most people have in mind when they think of freedom: freedom of choice. But the power to choose is not the whole essence of freedom. We must also have the power to determine the objects of our choice: the "freedom of specification." This power comes not from the will or the power to choose, but from our mind, our intellect, reason, judgment. Choice is blind without the light offered it by the intellect. Only our understanding can inform our will so that it has an object of choice. If the will is not provided by the mind with the "what" to choose, it can not function.

Perhaps it has never occurred to us where the expression "informed" choice or decision comes from. Philosophy distinguishes in practically everything that exists between "matter" and "form". That which is material is merely potential, incomplete, unformed. The formal element of a thing is what gives it perfection, completeness, efficacy. The power to choose, the freedom of exercise is like the "matter", like Michelangelo's block of Carrara marble. The power to know what one can choose, is like the possible "form" or "forms" in the mind of the maker that the marble can take as a finished sculpture. The form is key. The depth and quality of our knowledge and judgment whereby we can give form and specification to our choices

determines how perfectly free we are. We can be moral Michelangelos or moral morons. Choice alone won't cut it: we have to know what and how to cut.

The quality of freedom we enjoy, morally, legally, politically, comes from the quality of our knowledge. Granted, to be free, we need the freedom to choose, but to choose, we need the freedom that comes from knowledge. We have to know what we want. Far too often in the prevailing culture, freedom is reduced to the freedom to choose, without reference to the knowledge of the truth which is the only real guarantee of freedom. If a person chooses against what he knows to be right, then he is only half-free; he has the freedom of exercise, but he has thwarted his mind's power of specifying his choice according to what is known to be true. He has acted "against his own better judgment." Freedom and knowledge of the truth go hand and hand. We can say this on the highest authority, for it was Our Lord Jesus Christ who said "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

All this leads to another question: how am I to become best informed of all the options which are available to my power of choice? Next time we will talk about most effective guarantee of freedom: an informed conscience. After all did not Jesus also say "I am the truth" and "Those whom the Son has freed, are free indeed"?

Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem:

Latin for "To turn truth into laughter"



Scriptural Corner:

That evening Jesus said to His disciples, "Let's cross to the east side." So they left the crowd, and His disciples started across the lake with Him in the boat. Some other boats came along. Suddenly a windstorm struck the lake. Waves started splashing into the boat, and it was about to sink.

Jesus was in the back of the boat with His head on a pillow, and he was asleep. His disciples woke Him and said, "Teacher, don't you care that we are about to drown?"

Jesus got up and ordered the wind and the waves to be quiet. The wind stopped, and everything was calm.

Jesus asked His disciples, "Why were you afraid? Don't you have any faith?"

Now they were more afraid than ever and said to each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey Him!" **MARK 5:35-41**

COMMENT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT BIBLE FOR CATHOLICS:**Storms of Life**

It is impossible to avoid the storms of life. A friend's suicide. A miscarriage or still birth. Terminal illnesses. Unemployment. Broken relationships. Trouble in the office. We're shocked! We panic. We stress out.

The apostles did the same thing and Jesus was right there, sleeping through it all! Sometimes, it seems like God is sleeping right through our difficult times--like we've been abandoned. But when Jesus arises and stretches out His powerful hands and the storm passes.

Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help us keep our boat on course. And when we think we're drowning, we have to remember that He is there to calm the storm.

From The Library:

The Truth Shall Set You Free by Michael J. Mazza is a presentation of the Catholic faith for young adults based on The Catechism of the Catholic Church.

"Many Catholics think there is an eighth sacrament, Holy Osmosis, through which the faith is passed to later generations. Good idea, but bad theology--and worst pedagogy. Holy Osmosis doesn't work because it doesn't exist, and the widespread belief in it can be blamed for today's ignorance of faith. If we want our young people to grow up to be Catholic adults and adult Catholics, they need a solid grounding in Catholicism. They need **The Truth Shall Set You Free**."

Karl Keating, Author of Catholicism and Fundamentalism

Ad Veritatem

ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY

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NEXT MEETING: Thursday, September 5 & 12, 1996

TOPIC: Biblical Apologetics (the Eucharist)

SPEAKER: Tim Staples, Catholic Apologist

PLACE AND TIME: Rutan & Tucker, 12th Floor, 12 noon **R.S.V.P. 641-3450**