

❖ Ad Veritatem ❖

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DECEMBER MEETING:

Dr. Richard Wetzel
on
Sexual Wisdom



“For surely this sin of pride, as it is the first of all sins, begun among the angels in heaven, so it is the head and root of all other sins and of them all most pestilent.”

A Book for All Seasons
Arranged by
E.E. Reynolds
(Pg 124)

Editor's Note:
“Ad Veritatem”
is Latin for
“toward the truth”.

Dr. Richard Wetzel is board certified physician and member of the American Academy of Family Practice. The American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors and Therapists, the Sex Information & education Council of the United States, the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex, and the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars. Dr. Wetzel's involvement with sex education began 10 years ago when the director of a free clinic in the inner city asked him to teach sexuality to teenagers living in group homes. Since then he has become noted in this area and written a book “Sexual Wisdom” which has been endorsed by 2 Pontifical Councils along with prominent Protestant, Jewish, Muslim and Mormon leaders. He returned to Catholicism after leaving it and all religion during medical school. Dr. Wetzel and his family reside in Orange County.

Everyone is welcome! †

DECEMBER MEETING:

TOPIC: *Sexual Wisdom*
SPEAKER: *Dr. Richard Wetzel*
DATE & TIME: *NOON on WEDNESDAY, December 16th*
PLACE: *Revere House, First Street and 55 Frwy in Santa Ana*

Please Come and Join Us!

VOCATIONS: A Parent's Duty!

Fr. Hugh Barbour, O. Praem, Ph.D.
Our Chaplain



QUESTION: *My only daughter is 21 and wants to enter an order of sisters. She went on a vocational retreat and was really swept away by it all. My husband and I wonder if she should take such a drastic step so early in life. We think she should experience a little more of the world first, working, dating, etc. After all, she ought to know what she's giving up! She would make a good wife and mother, but seems to think that being a sister is a “higher way” than marriage. We told her marriage is just as good as being a nun, and that she does not have our support if she goes off into*

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the convent. We're practicing Catholics, and we're not against sisters or anything like that, but we think she ought to wait. She'll probably do what we advise, but I'm a little worried we might not be acting according to the Church's teaching. What do you think?

ANSWER: There are two main issues in your question. First, let's consider the relation of marriage and celibacy. Then we can take a look at the question of your attitude toward your daughter's vocation.

St. Paul teaches in 1 Corinthians 7, *"The unmarried woman or girl is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit, but the married woman is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please her husband...He who marries his betrothed does well, but he who refrains from marriage will be better."*

In Matthew 19, Our Lord talks about those who practice perfect chastity for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, saying, *"He who is able to receive this, let him receive it."* The Church, by her solemn Magisterium, defined the sense of these scriptural teachings at the Council of Trent. That council defined as a dogma the preeminence of consecrated celibacy over marriage in these words, *"If anyone says that the married state is to be placed before that of virginity or celibacy, and that it is not more blessed and better to remain in virginity and celibacy, than to be joined in marriage, let him be anathema"* (session 24, canon 10). The superiority of virginity over marriage as a state of life is a matter then, of Catholic Faith. This superiority of the state of celibacy does not necessarily mean the individual *moral* superiority of virgins over married people. Holiness is a matter of the degree of our love of God and neighbor. The virginal state allows greater freedom in the service of God and neighbor, and so is a more secure path to perfect charity. Yet, this does not mean that married people cannot have a charity and holiness as great or greater than those dedicated to God in celibacy. Rather, it merely asserts that those who live in the world in marriage have a way of life in which the primacy of the spiritual life is not as clearly shown. This is precisely the meaning of St. Paul's words just quoted.

Why is this? To understand the reason, we have to look at the nature of our spiritual life as principally

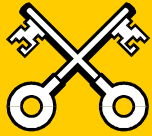
a union with Christ. In explaining the value of Christian celibacy, the Catechism of the Catholic Church says, *"Christ is the center of all Christian life. The bond with Him takes precedence over all other bonds, familial or social...Virginity for the sake of the kingdom of heaven is an unfolding of the baptismal grace, a powerful sign of the supremacy of the bond with Christ and of the ardent expectation of His return, a sign which also recalls that marriage is a reality of this present age which is passing away"* (1618-1619). In our day, it isn't popular or easily understood to speak of one way of life as being superior to another, and so the current Magisterium tends to describe celibacy as showing the supremacy of union with the Lord, or of being a closer follower of Christ (cf. CCC 916). Under this aspect, what applies to virginity applies also to religious and consecrated life in general. The exaltation of virginal and religious life, far from lowering the value of marriage, only points out how great a good it is, and how significant is the sacrifice of giving up so good a thing for the sake of the kingdom.

While marriage is indeed a very good thing, a vowed espousal to Christ in celibacy shows more fully the hope of the life of heaven and the resurrection beyond this world, as the Catechism points out, *There, Christ Himself will be the Bridegroom of the whole race of the redeemed, and of each one in particular. Our Lord reaches us in Luke 20 that the saints in glory "neither marry nor are given in marriage, for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to the angels and are the sons of God, being sons of the resurrection."* The earliest tradition of the Church, especially in the East, calls the celibate and religious life *"the angelic life"* for just this reason: It points, even in this life, to the future kingdom.

All of this urges you to adopt a different, more faith-filled and Catholic attitude toward your daughter's vocation. Catholic parents, in fact, according to all the tradition of moral teaching in the Church, have an obligation to foster religious vocations in their children who show an inclination and suitability for such a holy way of life. The Second Vatican Council teaches of parents *"They should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each child, fostering with special care any religious vocation"* (Lumen

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The Four Signs of Christ's Church on Earth



Part 2: One



Anne Lanphar, Esq.

The Nicene creed, written by the Council of Nicaea in fourth century, recites the basic tenets of the Catholic faith including the four external signs of Christ's church: "*I believe in **one, holy, catholic and apostolic church...***"

*"The true Church is called One, because her children of **all ages and places** are united together in the **same** faith, in the **same** worship, in the **same** law; and in participation of the **same** Sacraments, under the **same** visible Head, the Roman Pontiff."* (Pius X Catechism). But can there be several true Churches? Answer: "*No, there cannot be more than one Church; for as there is but one God, one Faith and one Baptism, there is and can be but one true Church.*" (Ibid.) From prison, St Paul implored the early Christians to be "...eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all." (Ephesians 4: 3-5)

There is no evidence in Scripture that Christ ever even implied that there was more than one way to salvation. He was unequivocal and clear that He alone was "*the way, and the truth, and the life.*" (John 14:6) The Scriptures are replete with His making this clear and many disciples refusing to hear and falling away. (See John 6 and Christ's discussion of the Eucharist and true Presence). While Christ walked the

earth, some who heard Him still failed to follow Him. How then could it be that after His death, future generations could be sure to hear the truth of His teachings if He relied solely on sinful and weak men? Is it likely that He would leave the earth without establishing

His church and entrusting an authority structure created **in Him** that would last for all time?

The cornerstone of Christ's church is that it is "one" – the same across all nations and across all time, unified in Him and through Him: it has **unity** of government, **unity** of beliefs and **unity** of worship through the Sacraments. The Church's unity is first evidenced and grounded in its unity of government, the Magisterium. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states:

"The sole Church of Christ [is that] which our Savior, after his Resurrection, entrusted to Peter's pastoral care, commissioning him and the other apostles to extend and rule it.... This Church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the

successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him." The Second Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism explains: "*For it is through Christ's Catholic Church alone, which is the universal help toward salvation, that the fullness of the means of salvation can be obtained. It was to the apostolic college alone, of which Peter is the head, that we believe that our Lord entrusted all the blessings of the New*

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*The true Church is called One, because her children of **all ages and places** are united together in the **same** faith, in the **same** worship, in the **same** law; and in participation of the **same** Sacraments, under the **same** visible Head, the Roman Pontiff."*

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Covenant, in order to establish on earth the one Body of Christ into which all those should be fully incorporated who belong in any way to the People of God.” (Section 816)

The Scriptural proof of these assertions is pointed and has been accepted since the death of Christ, as evidenced by the writings of the early Church fathers. Saint Cyprian’s treatise *De unitate Ecclesiae* (*On the Unity of the Church*) begins by emphasizing the need to follow Christ’s commandments in order to escape eternal death and obtain eternal life. He then questions how can anyone purport to follow Christ if they promote heresies? He saw the promotion of heresies as the work of Satan who seeks to sow dissention in order to draw souls away from God under the guise of false Christianity. St. Cyprian pointed out that those promoting “*plausible lies*” use theological dissention to “*offer night for day, death for salvation, despair under the offer of hope, perfidy under the pretext of faith, anti-christ under the name of Christ.*”

Christ established Peter as the visible head of His church on earth when He stated: “*And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”* (Matthew 16:17-19)

Further, Christ directed his apostles to teach all peoples: “*And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.”* (Matthew 28: 18-20). Obviously the apostles, being men, could not live forever – therefore, Christ’s direction to them to teach all nations was entrusting to them the salvation of the world, not just then but also all future generations, must have been an empowerment not just to them personally but to those who would

follow in their office.

At the Last Supper, Christ’s desire that all of his followers be united in Him, unified in one truth, one way, one church, was reflected in His prayer to His Father in which He states that He is praying *specifically* for the apostles that they may continue His work:

“I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom thou hast given me, for they are thine; all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name, which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in thy name, which thou hast given me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I do not pray that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth. As thou didst send me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be consecrated in truth.”

“Not for these only do I pray, but for them also who through their words shall believe in Me: that they may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in Thee: that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent Me.” (John 17:20-21).

These Scriptural texts, which are the basis of the grant of authority to the apostles and their successors, are reinforced by the direction of Christ found in the Gospel of Matthew when Christ specifically directs His followers that the **ultimate authority for settlement of disputes** after His death is the church: “*If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two*

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*others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, **tell it to the church**; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” (Matthew 18:15-18)*

Christ made two clear promises that the Holy Spirit would lead His Church into all truth (John 16:13) and that He would be with her always, even unto the end of the world (Matthew 28:20). By creating an established authority and promising to protect it from the Evil One, He sanctified His Church and provided for all future generations. Unless He did so, future generations would have no way to know the truth as otherwise His message would most certainly become lost or at least ambiguous as passed from man to man, like the children’s game of “telephone,” where even the most simple messages become completely distorted within the transmission of not more than 4 or 5 people! Is it likely that Christ who loved us so much that He died for us, would desert us to our devices – that He would not establish a structure to help direct future generations to the truth? If a human parent would not desert his/her child to fend for themselves in the world, would Christ do less? It is simply not logical that Christ would desert us in such a manner.

The mark of unity of Christ’s true church is further evidenced by the *failure of unity* in the teachings of all other churches: since the “Reformation” the Protestant faiths have splintered into thousands of sects with none maintaining the original “truths” of any of their human founders, not even Lutheranism! For 2,000 years the Catholic church has maintained the deposit of faith, not because of men, but because of the divine hand of Christ! Not even the few bad Popes that the Church has endured ever changed or disavowed any of the fundamental teachings of the faith! Can there be there any stronger evidence of the divine presence of Christ in the Church than this?

The early Christians reflected the acceptance of the unity of the Church in the Magisterium as evidenced by the writings. Furthermore, it is through

this authority structure that Christ established the Scriptures! The New Testament was assembled and disseminated as the true word of God to all generations through the Magisterium of the Church. If Scripture is the divine word of God, then one must assume that God entrusted *someone* on earth to assemble the books and so distribute them to the faithful directing them to believe in them as the truth. As stated by St. Augustine: “... *I should not believe the gospel except as moved by the authority of the Catholic Church.*”

Heresy is the antithesis or the reverse side of the concept of unity. Christ warned against “false prophets” “*Not every one who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you evildoers.'*”

“Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it.” (Matthew 7: 21-27) St. Paul also warned against schism and heresy: “*I appeal to you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.*” (1 Cor 1, 10) St. Paul also specifically warns the faithful *against heresy* and directs them to avoid those who continue to espouse heresy after they have been corrected by the Church authorities: “*A man that is a heretic after the first or second correction, avoid.*” (Tit. 3, 10)

St. Thomas More lived during the Reformation and was adamant as well as eloquent in his defense of the unity of the Church. His scholarly and legally

One Faith, One Church (Continued on page 7)



Statement of Life

By the U.S. Bishops

The U.S. Bishops have issued a powerful, no-nonsense, clear and unambiguous statement in defense of life; they have put Catholics on notice that they must defend life or risk the loss of it eternally. This "Statement on Life" was issued on November 19th at the close of the National Council of Catholic Bishops' meeting in Washington, D.C. Here are a few excerpts:

ON THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY:

"Taking a distorted 'right to privacy' to new heights, and developing a new moral calculus to justify it, Roe has spread through the American political ecology with toxic results."

ON CATHOLIC RESPONSIBILITY:

"We cannot simultaneously commit ourselves to human rights and progress while eliminating or marginalizing the weakest among us. Nor can we practice the Gospel of life only as a private piety. American Catholics must live it vigorously and publicly, as a matter of national leadership and witness, or we will not live it at all."

ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN:

"Women have a unique role in the transmission and nurturing of human life. They can best understand the bitter trauma of abortion and the hollowness and sterility at the heart of the vocabulary of 'choice.' Therefore, we ask women to assume a special role in promoting the Gospel of life with a new pro-life feminism."

ON PLURALISM:

"Since the entry of Catholics into the U.S. political mainstream, believers have struggled to balance their faith with the perceived demands of democratic pluralism. As a result, some Catholic elected officials

have adopted the argument that, while they personally oppose evils like abortion, they cannot force their religious views onto the wider society. This is seriously mistaken on several key counts. First, regarding abortion, the point when human life begins is not a religious belief but a scientific fact-- fact on which there is clear agreement even among leading abortion advocates. Second, the sanctity of human life is not merely Catholic doctrine but part of humanity's global ethical heritage, and our nation's founding principle. Finally, democracy is not served by silence. Most Americans would recognize the contradiction in the statement, 'While I am personally opposed to slavery or racism or sexism I cannot force my personal view on the rest of society.' Real pluralism depends on people of conviction struggling vigorously to advance their beliefs by every ethical and legal means at their disposal.... Only tireless promotion of the truth about the human person can infuse democracy with the right values. This is what Jesus meant when He asked us to be leaven in society."

ON EPISCOPAL RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD PUBLIC OFFICIALS:

"As chief teachers in the Church, we must therefore explain, persuade, correct and admonish those in leadership positions who contradict the Gospel of life through their actions and policies. Catholic public officials who disregard Church teaching on the inviolability of the human person indirectly collude in the taking of innocent life."

ON UNFAITHFUL CATHOLIC POLITICIANS:

"We urge those Catholic officials who choose to depart from Church teaching on the inviolability of human life in their public life to consider the consequences for their own spiritual well being, as well as

American Bishops Speak (Continued on page 7)

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the scandal they risk by leading others into serious sin. We call on them to reflect on the grave contradiction of assuming public roles and presenting themselves as credible Catholics when their actions on fundamental issues of human life are not in agreement with Church teaching. No public official, especially one claiming to be a faithful and serious Catholic, can responsibly advocate for or actively support direct attacks on innocent human life. Certainly there are times when it may be impossible to overturn or prevent passage of a law which allows or promotes a moral evil -- such as a law allowing the destruction of nascent human life. In such cases, an elected official, whose position in favor of life is known, could seek legitimately to limit the harm done by the law. However, no appeal to policy, procedure, majority will or pluralism ever excuses a public official from defending life to the greatest extent possible. As is true of leaders in all walks of life, no political leader can evade accountability for his or her exercise of power (Evangelium Vitae, 73-4). Those who justify their inaction on the grounds that abortion is the law of the land need to recognize that there is a higher law, the law of God. No human law can validly contradict the Commandment: "Thou shalt not kill."

ON THE HIERARCHY OF RIGHTS:

"Opposition to abortion and euthanasia does not excuse indifference to those who suffer from poverty, violence and injustice. Any politics of human life must work to resist the violence of war and the scandal of capital punishment. Any politics of human dignity must seriously address issues of racism, poverty, hunger, employment, education, housing, and health care. Therefore, Catholics should eagerly involve themselves as advocates for the weak and marginalized in all these areas. Catholic public officials are obliged to address each of these issues as they seek to build consistent policies which promote respect for the human person at all stages of life. But being 'right' in such matters can never excuse a wrong choice regarding direct attacks on innocent human life. Indeed, the failure to protect and defend life in its most vulnerable stages renders suspect any claims to the 'rightness' of positions in other matters affecting the poorest and least powerful of the human community."

**For the full text of the Bishops' message
please visit:**

<http://www.petersnet.net/research/retrieve.cfm?recnum=708> †

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brilliant defense of the Church against the scurrilous attacks are valid and applicable today, five hundred years later! But More always went beyond just the academic arguments to also point out the human failings that misled men into sin. His persistently pointed out that pride was the underlying cause of most sins. With respect to the attacks on the Church, More pointed out that again pride was the most likely underlying cause: that men who were arrogant and full of pride could not humble themselves to be subservient to the church. More noted: "...(*Pride is as Saint Augustine sayeth is the very mother of heretics.*)" More strongly believed that the real underlying issue was whether one had the humility to submit to the judgment and authority of the Church. He pointed out that it is what the Church Fathers did themselves and what they taught others to do as well.

More, always perceptive of human nature, also

warned that heresy did not become accepted overnight but rather by a slow erosion caused by familiarity and gradual acceptance. More cautions that the faithful must be diligent and watchful lest this disease gradually infect them: "*For the fact is that wherever this plague rages today most fiercely, everyone did not catch the disease in a single day. Rather the contagion spreads gradually and imperceptibly while those persons who despise it at first, afterwards can stand to hear it and respond to it with less than full scorn, then come to tolerate wicked discussions, and afterwards are carried away into error, until like a cancer (as the apostle says (2 Tim 2:17) the creeping disease finally takes over the whole country.*" †

All Good Things

By: Sister Helen P. Mroska

He was in the first third grade class I taught at Saint Mary's School in Morris, Minn. All 34 of my students were dear to me, but Mark Eklund was one in a million. Very neat in appearance, but had that happy-to-be-alive attitude that made even his occasional mischievousness delightful. Mark talked incessantly. I had to remind him again and again that talking without permission was not acceptable. What impressed me so much, though, was his sincere response every time I had to correct him for misbehaving - *"Thank you for correcting me, Sister!"* I didn't know what to make of it at first, but before long I became accustomed to hearing it many times a day. One morning my patience was growing thin when Mark talked once too often, and then I made a novice-teacher's mistake. I looked at Mark and said, *"If you say one more word, I am going to tape your mouth shut!"*

It wasn't ten seconds later when Chuck blurted out, *"Mark is talking again."* I hadn't asked any of the students to help me watch Mark, but since I had stated the punishment in front of the class, I had to act on it. I remember the scene as if it had occurred this morning. I walked to my desk, very deliberately opened by drawer and took out a roll of masking tape. Without saying a word, I proceeded to Mark's desk, tore off two pieces of tape and made a big X with them over his mouth. I then returned to the front of the room. As I glanced at Mark to see how he was doing, he winked at me. That did it!! I started laughing. The class cheered as I walked back to Mark's desk, removed the tape, and shrugged my shoulders. His first words were, *"Than you for correcting me, Sister."*

At the end of the year, I was asked to teach junior-high math. The years flew by, and before I knew

it Mark was in my classroom again. He was more handsome than ever and just as polite. Since he had to listen carefully to my instruction in the "new math," he did not talk as much in ninth grade as he had in third. One Friday, things just didn't feel right. We had worked hard on a new concept all week, and I sensed that the students were frowning, frustrated with themselves and edgy with one another. I had to stop this crankiness before it got out of hand. So I asked them to list the names of the other students in

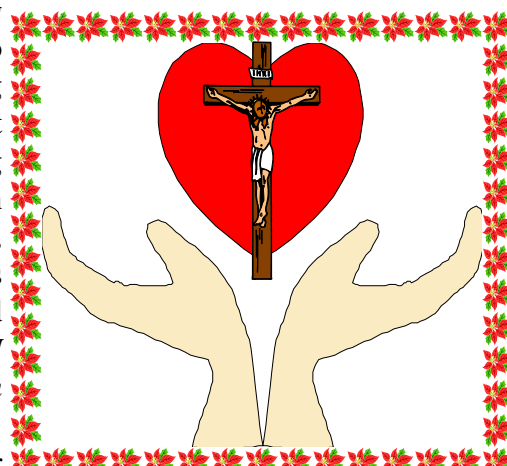
the room on two sheets of paper, leaving a space between each name. Then I told them to think of the nicest thing they could say about each of their classmates and write it down. It took the remainder of the class period to finish their assignment, and as the students left the room, each one handed me the papers. Charlie smiled. Mark said, *"Thank you for teaching me, Sister. Have a good weekend."* That Saturday, I wrote down the name of each student on

a separate sheet of paper, and I listed what everyone else had said about that individual. On Monday I gave each student his or her list. Before long, the entire class was smiling. *"Really?"* I heard whispered. *"I never knew that meant anything to anyone!"* *"I didn't know others liked me so much."*

No one ever mentioned those papers in class again. I never knew if they discussed them after class or with their parents, but it didn't matter. The exercise had accomplished its purpose. The students were happy with themselves and one another again.

That group of students moved on. Several years later, after I returned from vacation, my parents met me at the airport. As we were driving home, Mother asked me the usual questions about the trip - the

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weather, my experiences in general. There was a lull in the conversation. Mother gave Dad a sideways glance and simply says, "Dad?" My father cleared his throat as he usually did before something important. "The Eklunds called last night," he began. "Really?" I said. "I haven't heard from them in years. I wonder how Mark is." Dad responded quietly. "Mark was killed in Vietnam," he said. "The funeral is tomorrow, and his parents would like it if you could attend."

To this day I can still point to the exact spot on I-494 where Dad told me about Mark. I had never seen a serviceman in a military coffin before. Mark looked so handsome, so mature. All I could think at that moment was, Mark I would give all the masking tape in the world if only you would talk to me. The church was packed with Mark's friends. Chuck's sister sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Why did it have to rain on the day of the funeral? It was difficult enough at the graveside. The pastor said the usual prayers, and the bugler played taps. One by one those who loved Mark took a last walk by the coffin and sprinkled it with holy water. I was the last one to bless the coffin. As I stood there, one of the soldiers who acted as pallbearer came up to me. "Were you Mark's math teacher?" he asked. I nodded as I continued to stare at the coffin. "Mark talked about you a lot," he said.

After the funeral, most of Mark's former classmates headed to Chuck's farmhouse for lunch. Mark's mother and father were there, obviously waiting for me. "We want to show you something," his father said, taking a wallet out of his pocket. "They found this on Mark when he was killed. We thought you might recognize it."

Opening the billfold, he carefully removed two worn pieces of notebook paper that had obviously

been taped, folded and refolded many times. I knew without looking that the papers were the ones on which I had listed all the good things each of Mark's classmates had said about him. "Thank you so much for doing that," Mark's mother said. "As you can see, Mark treasured it."

Mark's classmates started to gather around us. Charlie smiled rather sheepishly and said, "I still have my list. It's in the top drawer of my desk at home." Chuck's wife said, "Chuck asked me to put his in our wedding album."

"I have mine too," Marilyn said. "It's in my diary." Then Vicki, another classmate, reached into her pocketbook, took out her wallet and showed her worn and frazzled list to the group. "I carry this with me at all times," Vicki said without blinking an eyelash. "I think we all saved our lists." That's when I finally sat down and cried. I cried for Mark and for all his friends who would never see him again.

The purpose of this article is to encourage everyone to compliment the people you love and care about. We often tend to forget the importance of showing our affections and love. Sometimes the smallest of things, could mean the most to another. I am asking you, to please send this article around and spread the message and encouragement, to express your love and caring by complimenting and being open with communication. The density of people in society is so thick that we forget that life will end one day. And we don't know when that one day will be. So please, I beg of you, to tell the people you love and care for, that they are special and important. Tell them, before it is too late. †

**For every good man is bounden between truth and falsehood,
the Catholic Church and heretics, between God and the devil,
to be partial, and plainly to declare himself to be full and
whole upon the one side and clear against the other.**

Thomas More, Apology



From the Writings of St. Thomas More:

Reason tells us that the enduring of a temporary pain is worthwhile if by it a greater good is gained thereof; such is the case with certain medical treatments (such as the surgical procedures in More's own day) that a reasonable man will willingly undergo. Should not, then, reason building on the foundation of faith enjoin us to accept a painful death in order to attain the eternal joys of heaven and escape the unending pains of hell?

As to the terrible physical pains that can come with martyrdom, More now addresses the question of whether it is better to placate one's persecutors by exteriorly pretending to renounce the faith while interiorly continuing to adhere to it, and thereby escape the risk of faltering during torture and dying thereupon in apostasy. More finds such reasoning utterly unsound, comparing it to an unstable three-legged stool that collapses as soon as anyone attempts to sit upon it. In this analogy the three legs symbolize obsessive fear, false faith, and false hope. To begin with, it is absurd to think that the profession of one's faith in the face of persecution is a risky proposition, as if God would leave a person unaided and fail to grant him the grace to repent abandoning him summarily to damnation, if he faltered while suffering for Him. Furthermore, those who deny their faith exteriorly have a false faith, no matter what they may claim to profess interiorly. Finally, it is nothing less than a presumptuous and false hope to assume that if we deny Christ for the present in order to satisfy our persecutors, we can count on the grace of reconciliation with God when the threat of persecution has passed. Nor can we count upon suffering an easier death thereafter, for natural death can be just as painful, if not more so, in its duration and intensity than violent death.

The horrible end of those who renounce their faith to escape martyrdom becomes all the more evident when it is remembered that the pains of those who die in apostasy are but the prelude to the endless torments they will suffer in hell. Yet few realize that hell is actually a manifestation of God's mercy to us—a means for directing your steps here on earth toward heaven:

"But surely God in that thing wherein he may seem most rigorous is very merciful to us, and that is (which many men would little ween) in that he provided hell. For I suppose very surely, Cousin, that many a man and woman too, of whom there now sit some, and more shall hereafter sit full gloriously crowned in heaven, had they not first been afraid of hell, would toward heaven never have set foot forward." †

James Monti **The King's Good Servant But God's First** p. 351-2

(Continued from page 2) **Vocations: A Parent's Duty**

Gentium, 11). In fact, it is a grievous sin to block a religious vocation without a serious reason. If your daughter is well-suited and desires religious life, you have no right to discourage her, unless only temporarily because you absolutely depend on her financial or physical care to live. Otherwise, to discourage her would go against the very purpose of your own married life, which is to bring forth children in love for the glory of God. Parents who foster religious vocations in their children show they understand what marriage is all about.

Of course, children should not be forced or "programmed" to become religious, and not every individual is suited to religious life. It remains true, though, that a girl who would make a good, holy

mother would probably make a good, holy sister. The same virtues of "charity, of hospitality, and of sacrifice" (CCC 1654) which characterize Christian marriage are also the virtues of religious life. A good priest, brother or sister worth his or her salt would make a good husband, wife, father or mother. Take it as a blessing, and a sign that you have done well as parents that your daughter wants to be a spouse of Christ. †

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Scriptural Corner:

²⁴Another parable he put before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. ²⁷And the servants of the householder came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then has it weeds?’ ²⁸He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ ²⁹But he said, ‘No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ **Matthew 13:24-30**

Comment from the Navarre Bible:*

24-25. “The situation is clear: the field is fertile and the seed is good; the Lord of the field has scattered the seed at the right moment and with great skill. He even has watchmen to make sure that the field is protected. If, afterwards, there are weeds among the wheat, it is because men have failed to respond, because they—and Christians in particular—have fallen asleep and allowed the enemy to approach” (Bl. J. Escriva, *Christ is passing by*, 123).

25. This weed—cockle—looks very like wheat and can easily be mistaken for it until the ears appear. If it gets ground up with wheat it contaminates the flour and any bread made from that flour causes severe nausea when eaten. In the East personal vengeance sometimes took the form of sowing cockle among an enemy’s wheat. Roman prescribed penalties for this crime.

28. “When the careless servants ask the Lord why weeds have grown in his field, the explanation is obvious: ‘*inimicus hom hoc fecit*: an enemy has done this.’ We, Christians, should have been on guard to make sure that the good things placed in this world by the Creator were developed in the service of truth and good. But we have fallen asleep—a sad thing, that sluggishness of our heart! While the enemy and all those who serve him worked incessantly. You can see how the weeds have grown abundantly everywhere” (Bl. J. Escriva, *Chris is passing by*, 123).

29-30. The end of this parable gives a symbolic explanation of why God allows evil to have its way for a time—and for its ultimate extirpation. Evil is to run its course on earth until the end of time; therefore, we should not be scandalized by the presence of evil in the world. It will be obliterated not in this life, but after death; at the Judgment (the harvest) the good will go to heaven and the bad to hell. †

* *The Navarre Bible is a renown edition of Sacred Scripture prepared by members of the Faculty of Theology of Navarre University.*

I wept because I had no shoes,
until I saw a man who had no feet.

The Pope's Prayer Intention for December



GENERAL INTENTION

That the Spirit of Christ, who was poor and humble, may bring about in the Church more effective solidarity with the distressed and underprivileged

The option or love of preference for the poor ... is an option, or a special form of primacy in the exercise of Christian charity, to which the whole tradition of the Church bears witness. It affects the life of each Christian inasmuch as he or she seeks to imitate the life of Christ, but it applies equally to our social responsibilities and hence to our manner of living, and to the logical decisions to be made concerning the ownership and use of goods.

Today, furthermore, given the worldwide dimension which the social question has assumed, this love of preference for the poor, and the decisions which it inspires in us, cannot but embrace the immense multitudes of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without medical care and, above all, those without hope of a better future. It is impossible not to take account of the existence of these realities. To ignore them would mean becoming like the "rich man" who pretended not to know the beggar Lazarus lying at his gate (cf. Lk 16:19-31)."

Our daily life as well as our decisions in the political and economic fields must be marked by these realities....

An essential condition for global solidarity is autonomy and free self-determination.... But at the same time solidarity demands a readiness to accept the sacrifices necessary for the good of the whole world community.

John Paul II, Sollicitudo rei socialis (On Social Concern), December 30, 1987

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 544, 525, 2443-49, 1939-41

Communion of Saints: For this intention we can ask the intercession of Saint Frederic Ozanam, who worked tirelessly for the poor in his life. The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, which he founded, works to better the condition of countless suffering to this day. †

Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem*



*Latin for "To turn truth into laughter"

NEW OLD PROVERBS

A first grade teacher collected old, well known proverbs. She gave each kid in her class the first half of a proverb, and had them come up with the rest.

As You Shall Make Your Bed So Shall You... Mess It Up.

Better Be Safe Than... Punch A 5th Grader.

Strike While The... Bug Is Close.

It's Always Darkest Before... Daylight Savings Time.

Never Under Estimate The Power Of... Termites.

You Can Lead A Horse To Water But.. How?

Don't Bite The Hand That... Looks Dirty.

No News Is... Impossible.

A Miss Is As Good As A... Mr.

You Can't Teach An Old Dog New... Math.

If You Lie Down With The Dogs, You'll... Stink In The Morning.

Love All, Trust.. Me

The Pen Is Mightier Than The... Pigs.

An Idle Mind Is... The Best Way To Relax.

Where There's Smoke, There's... Pollution.

Happy The Bride Who... Gets All The Presents!

A Penny Saved Is... Not Much.

Two's Company, Three's... The Musketeers.

Laugh And The Whole World Laughs With You, Cry And... You Have To Blow Your Nose.

None Are So Blind As... Helen Keller.

Children Should Be Seen And Not... Spanked Or Grounded.

If At First You Don't Succeed... Get New Batteries.

You Get Out Of Something What You... See Pictured On The Box.

When The Blind Leadeth The Blind... Get Out Of The Way.

There Is No Fool Like... Aunt Eddie. †

Catholic Web Sites



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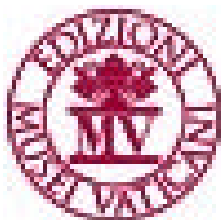
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Ornaments
Plaques
Posters
Publications
Rosary Beads
Sculptures
Tote Bags
Videos
 †

Thought for the Day

FRIENDS ARE LIKE ANGELS

Our friends are like angels,
 Who brighten our days.
 In all kinds of wonderful,
 Magical ways.

Their thoughtfulness comes,
 As a gift from above.
 And we feel we're surrounded,
 By warm, caring love.

Like upside-down rainbows,
 Their smiles bring the sun.
 And they fill ho-hum moments,
 With laughter and fun.

Friends are like angels,
 Without any wings.
 Blessing our lives,
 With the most precious things.

Author Unknown
 †



From the Library

“The Life of Thomas More”

Peter Ackroyd

The Life of Thomas More is a magnificent reconstruction of the life and imagination of one of the most remarkable figures of history—and arguably the most brilliant lawyer the English-speaking world has ever known. Thomas More was a renowned statesman, the author of a political fantasy that gave a name to a literary genre and a worldview (Utopia), and most famously, a Catholic martyr and saint, who was beheaded when he refused to follow his sovereign, King Henry VIII, in severing England’s ties from the Catholic Church.

Born into the professional classes, Thomas More (1478-1535) rose by dint of formidable intellect and well-placed connections to become the most powerful man in England after the king. An exponent of what was called in his day “the mixed life,” More combined medieval piety with worldly mastery of legal argument and the art of negotiation. Ackroyd shows dramatically how the clouds of Reformation that swarmed over the European continent unleashed the storm of the early modern period that swept away More’s world and took his life. He clarifies the whirl of dynastic, religious, and mercantile politics that brought the autocratic Henry VIII and the devout More into their fateful conflict. And he narrates the unrelenting drama of More’s final days—his detention, trial, and execution—with a novelist’s mastery of suspense.

In Ackroyd’s hands, this renowned “man for all seasons” emerges in the fullness of his complex humanity, we see the unexpected side of his character as well as his indisputable moral courage.

Publisher: Doubleday

ISBN: 0-385-47709-0

Cost: \$30 †

AD VERITATEM

St. Thomas More Society

1102 N. Niguel Canyon Way

Brea, CA 92821

Attn: Anne Lanphar

alanphar@firstam.com

Our Next Meeting:



DATE: *Wednesday, December 16th @ NOON*

TOPIC: *Sexual Wisdom*

SPEAKER: *Dr. Richard Wetzel*

PLACE: *Revere House in Santa Ana (4th St @ 55 Fwy)*

FOR INFORMATION: *Anne Lanphar @*

647-2155 or Dave Belz @ 347-0447