

◆ Ad Veritatem ◆

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July 1999

JULY MEETING:

SPEAKER:

Fr. Raphael Luevano
Ecumenical Officer



"Tyrants do exist in the world and they can arise whenever enough people believe that they cannot."

Thomas More:
Portrait of Courage
Gerard B. Wegemer
(pg. 45)

Father Raphael Luevano will be our speaker at the monthly meeting on Wednesday, July 28th.

Father is currently serving as the Ecumenical Officer for the Diocese of Orange, having recently been appointed to that position by Bishop Brown. Prior to his appointment, Father was the associate pastor at St. Hedwig's Parish in Los Alamitos. He grew up in Orange County and is a graduate of Mater Dei High School. Father received his seminary training at St. John's College in Camarillo where he earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy in 1977 and a master's degree in divinity in 1981, the same year he was ordained.

Reservations are not required. For more information, call Dave Belz at (949) 347-0447 ext. 102, or Anne Lanphar at (714) 647-2155. *Everyone is welcome!* ☩

INDULGENCES: **Are They Biblical?**

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



QUESTION: *How can anyone hold that the complicated system of the Catholic Church in giving out indulgences can be justified from the Word of God?*

ANSWER: Pope Paul VI in the *Apostolic Constitution Indulgentiarum Doctrina* of 1967 provided the Church with a very clear and beautiful exposition of the teaching behind indulgences. This teaching is extensively offered again in the Catechism of the Catholic Church in the numbers considering the Sacrament of Penance. The Pope wisely points out, *"If we wish to understand exactly the doctrine of indulgences and its benefits in practice, we must remember truths which the whole Church, enlightened by God's Word, has always believed."* The necessity of expiation for personal sins, the reality of

JULY MEETING:

TOPIC: *Ecumenism Today*

SPEAKER: Fr Ralph Luevano

DATE: WED July 28

TIME: Noon

PLACE: Revere House,
First Street & 55 Frwy
in Santa Ana!

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

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the communion of saints, the power of binding and loosing given to the apostles and their successors, purgatory, heaven and the development of doctrine under the guidance of the Holy Spirit Who leads the Church *"into all truth"*: all of these go into the understanding of the practice of granting indulgences to the faithful. A full answer would have to explain each of these doctrines, and how they interrelate.

Your question calls indulgences a *"complicated system."* Rather, indulgences are a practical result of a deep understanding of the ways of God with men. Are works of mercy, visiting the sick, clothing the naked, feeding the hungry sometimes very complicated to arrange? Is meditating on Scripture, singing God's praises with correct harmony and rhythm, giving or hearing a sermon complicated? Are these natural and even necessary aspects of Christian life? Do they have value in the sight of God?

Complicated things are usually the practical ones. Didn't St. Paul say, *"I chastise my body and bring it into subjection, lest having preached to others, I myself might become a castaway"* (1 Cor. 9:27)? Didn't he or-

der that prayers be offered up for all sorts and conditions of men? Didn't he refer to the devotional practice of the early Christians of being baptized on behalf of the dead? Penance, prayer for others, even for the dead, works of mercy; all of these might seem complicated, but they are very practical responses to the needs and realities of the spiritual life. The Word of God involves the Christian in some very complicated activities, indeed. This is because the Word is practical, meant to be carried out in the extremely varied aspects of human life. Indulgences are just a practical outgrowth of the life of the Christian Church, who, in Her wisdom, encourages prayer, penance and works of mercy for the spiritual growth of the Body of Christ, which has been wounded by our own personal sins.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, unlike Mohammed or modern Protestant apologists, never promised that the Gospel would be simple and uncomplicated, only that it would be powerful, and so practical. The Catholic Church is like a good mother to Her children, both powerful and practical in Her application of the Gospel. †

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Scriptural Corner:

⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar, said, "Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some said, "It is he"; others said, "No, but he is like him." He said, "I am the man." ¹⁰They said to him, "Then how were your eye opened?" ¹¹He answered, "The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash'; so I went and washed and received my sight." John 9: 8-11

Comment from the Navarre Bible:*

⁸⁻¹¹ After recounting the miracle, the evangelist reports the doubts of the man's friends and neighbours (vv. 8-12) and the inquiry made by the Pharisees: they question the man (vv. 13-17), his parents (vv. 18-23), and then the man again, whom they end up condemning and expelling from their presence. (vv. 24-34). This passage is so full of detail that it looks like an eyewitness account.

The Fathers and Doctors of the Church have seen this miracle as symbolizing the sacrament of Baptism in which, through the medium of water, the soul is cleansed and receives the light of faith: "He sent the man to the pool called the pool of Siloam, to be cleansed and to be enlightened, that is, to be baptized and receive in baptism full enlightenment" (St Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on St John*, in loc.).

This episode also reflects the different attitudes of people to our Lord and his miracles. The blind man, a straightforward person, believes in Jesus as envoy, prophet (vv. 17,33) and Son of God (vv. 17,33,38); whereas the Pharisees persist in not wanting to see or believe, despite the clear evidence before them (vv. 24-34).

In this miracle Jesus once again reveals himself as the light of the world. This bears out the statement in the prologue: "The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world" (1:9). Not only does he give light to the eyes of the blind man: he enlightens his soul, leading him to make an act of faith in his divinity (v. 38). At the same time we can see the obvious drama of those whose blindness darkens their minds, as our Lord said in his dialogue with Nicodemus: "The light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn 3:19)

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

†

The Decline of Controversy

By:

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen (1895-1979)

Once there were lost islands, but most of them have been found; once there were lost causes, but many of them have been retrieved; but there is one lost art that has not been definitely recovered, and without which no civilization can long survive, and that is the art of controversy. The hardest thing to find in the world today is an argument. Because so few are thinking, naturally there are found but few to argue. Prejudice there is in abundance and sentiment too, for these things are born of enthusiasms without the pain of labor. Thinking, on the contrary, is a difficult task; it is the hardest work a man can do—that is perhaps why so few indulge in it. Thought-saving devices have been invented that rival labor-saving devices in their ingenuity. Fine-sounding phrases like "*Life is bigger than logic*," or "*Progress is the spirit of the age*," go rattling by us like express-trains, carrying the burden of those who are too lazy to think for themselves.

Not even philosophers argue today; they only explain away. A book full of bad logic, advocating all manner of moral laxity, is not refuted by critics; it is merely called "*bold, honest, and fearless*." Even those periodicals which pride themselves upon their open-mindedness on all questions are far from practicing the lost art of controversy. Their pages contain no controversies, but only presentations of points of view; these never rise to the level of abstract thought in which argument dashes with argument like steel with steel, but rather they content themselves with the personal reflections of one who has lost his faith, writing against the sanctity of marriage, mad of another who has kept his faith, writing in favor of it. Both sides are shooting off fire-crackers, making all the noise of an intellectual warfare and creating the illusion of conflict, but it is only a sham battle in which there are not casualties; there are plenty of explosions, but never an

exploded argument.

The causes underlying this decline in the art of controversy are twofold: religious and philosophical. Modern religion has enunciated one great and fundamental dogma that is at the basis of all the other dogmas, and that is, that religion must be freed from dogmas. Creeds and confessions of faith are no longer the fashion; religious leaders have agreed not to disagree and those beliefs for which some of our ancestors would have died they have melted into a spineless Humanism. Like other Pilates they have turned their backs on the uniqueness of truth and have opened their arms wide to all the moods and fancies the hour might dictate. The passing of creeds and dogmas means the passing of controversies. Creeds and dogmas are social; prejudices are private. Believers bump into one another at a thousand different angles, but bigots keep out of one another's way, because prejudice is antisocial. I can imagine an old-fashioned Calvinist who holds that the word "*damn*" has a tremendous dogmatic significance, coming to intellectual blows with an old-fashioned Methodist who holds that it is only a curse word; but I cannot imagine a controversy if both decide to damn damnation, like our Modernists who no longer believe in Hell.

The second cause, which is philosophical, bases itself on that peculiar American philosophy called "*Pragmatism*," the aim of which is to prove that all proofs are useless. Hegel, of Germany, rationalized error; James, of America, derationalized truth. As a result, there has sprung up a disturbing indifference to truth, and a tendency to regard the useful as the true, and the impractical as the false. The man who can make up his mind when proofs are presented to him is looked upon as a bigot, and the man who ignores

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proofs and the search for truth is looked upon as broad-minded and tolerant.

Another evidence of this same disrespect for rational foundations is the general readiness of the modern mind to accept a statement because of the literary way in which it is couched, or because of the popularity of the one who says it, rather than for the reasons behind the statement. In this sense, it is unfortunate that some men who think poorly can write so well. Bergson has written a philosophy grounded on the assumption that the greater comes from the less, but he has so camouflaged that intellectual monstrosity with mellifluous French that he has been credited with being a great and original thinker. To some minds, of course, the startling will always appear to be the profound. It is easier to get the attention of the press when one says, as Ibsen did, that "*two and two make five*," than to be orthodox and say that two and two make four.

The Catholic Church perhaps more than the other forms of Christianity notices the decline in the art of controversy. Never before, perhaps, in the whole history of Christianity has she been so intellectually impoverished for want of good sound intellectual opposition as she is at the present time. Today there are no foe-men worthy of her steel. And if the Church today is not producing great chunks of thought, or what might be called "*thinkage*" it is because she has not been challenged to do so. The best in everything comes from the throwing down of a gauntlet—even the best in thought.

The Church loves controversy, and loves it for two reasons; because intellectual conflict is informing, and because she is madly in love with rationalism. The great structure of the Catholic Church has been built up through controversy. It was the attacks of the Docetists and the Monophysites in the early centuries of the Church that made her clear on the doctrine concerning the nature of Christ; it was the controversy with the Reformers that clarified her teaching on justification. And if today there are not nearly so many dogmas defined as in the early ages of the Church it is because there is less controversy—and less thinking. One must think to be a heretic, even though it be wrong thinking.

Even though one did not accept the infallible authority of the Church, he would still have to admit that the Church in the course of centuries has had her finger on the pulse of the world, ever defining those dogmas which needed definition at the moment. In the

light of this fact, it would be interesting to inquire if our boasted theory of intellectual progress is true. What was the Christian world thinking about in the early centuries? What doctrines had to be clarified when controversy was keen? In the early centuries, controversy centered on such lofty and delicate problems as the Trinity, the Incarnation, the union of Natures in the Person of the Son of God. What was the last doctrine to be defined in 1870. It was the capability of man to use his brain and come to a knowledge of God Now, if the world is progressing intellectually, should not the existence of God have been defined in the first century, and the nature of the Trinity have been defined in the nineteenth? In the order of mathematics this is like defining the complexities of logarithms in the year 30, and the simplification of the addition table in the year 1930. The fact is that there is now less intellectual opposition to the Church and more prejudice, which, being interpreted, means less thinking, even less bad thinking.

Not only does the Church love controversy because it helps her sharpen her wits; she loves it also for its own sake. The Church is accused of being the enemy of reason; as a matter of fact, she is the only one who believes in it. Using her reason in the [First] Council of the Vatican she officially went on record in favor of Rationalism [meaning, here, the proper use of reason], and declared, against the mock humility of the Agnostics and the sentimental faith of the Fideists, that human reason by its own power can know something besides the contents of test-tubes and retorts, and that working on mere sensible phenomena, it can soar even to the "*hid battlements of eternity*," there to discover the Timeless beyond time and the Spaceless beyond space which is God, the Alpha and Omega of all things.

The Church asks her children to think hard and think clean. Then she asks them to do two things with their thoughts. First, she asks them to externalize them in the concrete world of economics, government, commerce, and education, and by this externalization of beautiful, clean thoughts to produce a beautiful and clean civilization. The quality of any civilization depends upon the nature of the thoughts its great minds bequeath to it. If the thoughts that are externalized in the press, in the senate chamber, on the public platform, are base, civilization itself will take on their base character with the same readiness with which a chameleon takes on the color of the object upon which it is placed. But if the thoughts that are vocalized and

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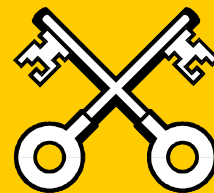


THE HEART OF THE CHURCH

VI Conversion:

The Path of True Renewal (Cont'd)

By: John Flynn, Partner
Nossaman, Guthner, Knox & Elliott



This is the final two installments of a 7 part article. For prior installments, please see the prior month newsletters which are posted on our web site at: www.stthomasmore.net.

6. The Suffering Heart of the Church

Because to be converted is to see oneself in the light of the **Cross**, it is difficult to escape the intuition that true conversion bears an essential relationship to suffering: *"Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit."* (Jn 12:24.) Conversion brings suffering, but it is only in suffering that we are able to find Christ, **for it is precisely in His suffering that His love was revealed**. The sufferings of Christ gave birth to the Church, and the Church's very life is that love of Christ which suffered for others. It is that love, so intimately and mysteriously related to suffering, which is the life of the Church and the gateway of salvation, even today. Renewal requires conversion, and conversion the suffering that brings death to everything within us that obscures the image of Christ.

Suffering is perhaps the most challenging and daunting of all of the mysteries of human existence; for many, it has caused a loss of faith. At the same time, we must understand that membership in the Church enters us into a new, fundamentally different relationship to suffering, because the mystery of suffering is very much the mystery of the Church:

"Now I rejoice in my sufferings, for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of His body, which is the church ..." (Col. 1:24.)

In the same vein, the Holy Father wrote, in *Salvifici Doloris*, his encyclical on the meaning of suffering:

"And at the same time, during the holy year of the redemption we recall the truth expressed in the encyclical Redemptor Hominis (Redeemer of Man): In Christ 'every man becomes the way for the Church'. It can be said that man in a special fashion becomes the way for the Church when suffering enters his life." (SD, § 3, emphasis added.)

The Cross, as the answer to suffering, is an answer that is truly **complete**, though the fullness of the response cannot yet be comprehended by the human mind. We know the answer is complete, however, for God has no answer to our question that is greater than Himself:

"Love is also the fullest source of the answer to the question of the meaning of suffering. This answer has been given by God to man in the Cross of Jesus Christ." (SD, §13.)

However difficult it is for us to absorb the response provided by the Cross, we know at the very least that if Christ did not suffer, we would not know the love of God. As the Holy Father himself dramatically observed in *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*: **"If the agony on the Cross had not happened, the truth that God is Love would have been unfounded."** (p. 66, emphasis added.) In other words, the love of God is revealed precisely in the suffering of His Son. Love, therefore, in some way seems to derive its power and meaning from suffering, the test of love's authenticity.

Suffering both reveals and **unleashes** love, as the Holy Father has also observed:

"Following the parable of the Gospel, we could say that suffering, which is present under so many different forms in our human world, is also present in order to unleash love in the human person, that unselfish gift of one's 'I' on behalf of other people, especially those who suffer. The world of human suffering unceasingly calls for, so to speak, another world: the world of human love; and in a certain sense man owes to suffering that unselfish love which stirs in his heart and actions." (SD, § 29, first emphasis in original, second emphasis added.)

Suffering is also mysteriously linked to man's transcendence, for, in the willingness to suffer for the sake of love, humanity rejects the finality of suffering: *"Suffering seems to belong to man's transcendence: it is one of those points in which man is in a certain sense 'destined' to go beyond himself and he is called to this in a mysteri-*

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ous way.” (SD, §2.) Thus, suffering itself, when borne for the sake of love, breaks the bonds of suffering. Through love, the same suffering that threatens to imprison us becomes the vehicle of our freedom. It is love, therefore, that imparts value to suffering, value revealed to us in the sufferings of Christ.

The Cross is, in a sense, present in all human suffering:

*“One can say that with the passion of Christ all human suffering has found itself in a new situation ... in the Cross of Christ not only is the redemption accomplished through suffering, **but also human suffering itself has been redeemed.** Christ -- without any fault of His own -- took on Himself ‘the total evil of sin.’” (SD, §19, emphasis added.)*

Suffering has therefore been “divinized” by the Cross, rescued forever from futility, and made fruitful:

“Those who share in Christ’s sufferings have before their eyes the Paschal Mystery of the Cross and Resurrection, in which Christ descends, in a first phase, to the ultimate limits of human weakness and impotence; indeed, he dies nailed to the Cross. But if at the same time in this weakness there is accomplished his lifting up, confirmed by the power of the Resurrection, then this means that the weaknesses of all human sufferings are capable of being infused with the same power of God manifested in Christ’s Cross. In such a concept, to suffer means to become particularly susceptible, particularly open to the working of the salvific powers of God, offered to humanity in Christ. In him, God has confirmed his desire to act especially through suffering, which is man’s weakness and emptying of self, and he wishes to make his power known precisely in this weakness and emptying of self. This also explains the exhortation in the First Letter of Peter: ‘Yet if one suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but under that name let him glorify God.’” (SD, § 23, emphasis in original.)

In a sense, suffering can be likened to work. We cannot go, for example, from one place to another without work. **Suffering is the work required to go from a place of sin to a place of grace.** It is also like the work required to produce, just as a carpenter works to make a chair. When we suffer, we are working in a highly productive manner:

“This evangelical outlook especially highlights the truth concerning the creative character of suffering. The sufferings of Christ created the

good of the world’s redemption.” (SD, § 24, emphasis in original.)

Because the Cross sanctifies, divinizes suffering, what might appear to some to be pointless, becomes transcendent, pointing heavenward, turning defeat into victory. The Cross becomes a kind of ladder, which we can use to climb out of the futility of suffering. The dead are resurrected; by the Cross, death is raised to life. Life answers death; God Himself enters our suffering. What seems an end, a death, becomes a beginning, a life. The Cross itself is the source of this fruitful suffering. What appears to the world as folly is revealed to faith as divine wisdom, because of the life that suffering produces when it is united to the Cross. By means of that union, our suffering has a share in the power of Christ’s suffering; by that means, our own suffering is transformed, rescued from futility, and made fruitful.

Despite the transformation, suffering continues to present itself to human experience as an evil, i.e., suffering is still suffering. Nevertheless, there is great value, and perhaps even a form of consolation, in knowing that it can be so highly fruitful:

*“Christ does not explain in the abstract the reasons for suffering, but before all else he says: ‘Follow me!’ Come! Take part through your suffering in this work of saving the world, a salvation achieved through my suffering! Through my Cross. Gradually, as the individual takes up his cross, spiritually uniting himself to the Cross of Christ, the salvific meaning of suffering is revealed before him. He does not discover this meaning at his own human level, but at the level of the suffering of Christ. At the same time, however, from this level of Christ the salvific meaning of suffering descends to man’s level and becomes, in a sense, the individual’s personal response. **It is then that man finds in his suffering interior peace and even spiritual joy.***

Saint Paul speaks of such joy in the Letter to the Colossians: ‘I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake’. A source of joy is found in the overcoming of the sense of the uselessness of suffering, a feeling that is sometimes very strongly rooted in human suffering. This feeling not only consumes the person interiorly, but seems to make him a burden to others. The person feels condemned to receive help and assistance from others, and at the same time seems useless to himself. The discovery of the salvific meaning of suffering in union with Christ transforms this depressing feeling. Faith in sharing in the suffering of Christ brings with it the interior certainty that the suf-

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fering person ‘completes what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions’; the certainty that in the spiritual dimension of the work of Redemption he is serving, like Christ, the salvation of his brothers and sisters.” (SD, §§ 26, 27, boldface emphasis added, all others in original.)

Divine love was revealed in the sufferings of Christ. In a certain sense, it was the will of God to choose suffering as the place of His union with humanity. God has revealed Himself in suffering; suffering is the place where He can be “found” or “discovered”. Indeed, **suffering is where the union of the human and the divine is perfected in the Church.** Hence, the Holy Father wrote in *Salvifici Doloris*:

“It is precisely the Church which ceaselessly draws on the infinite resources of the redemption, introducing it into the life of humanity, which is the dimension in which the redemptive suffering of Christ can be constantly completed by the suffering of man. This also highlights the divine and human nature of the Church. Suffering seems in some way to share in the characteristics of this nature. And for this reason suffering also has a special value in the eyes of the Church. It is something good, before which the Church bows down in reverence with all the depth of her faith in the redemption. She likewise bows down with all the depth of that faith with which she embraces within herself the inexpressible mystery of the Body of Christ.” (SD, § 24, emphasis added.)

Led by the insights of St. Maximilian Kolbe, the second and third parts of this series proposed that the Church, as Mother (see *Catechism*, § 169), is the place of union between the Heart of God and the heart of man, a truth affirmed by the *Catechism*, which describes the two principal dimensions of the Church:

“These dimensions together constitute ‘one complex reality which comes together from a human and a divine element’: the Church is essentially both human and divine, visible but endowed with invisible realities, zealous in action and dedicated to contemplation, present in the world, but as a pilgrim, so constituted that in her the human is directed toward and subordinated to the divine, the visible to the invisible, action to contemplation, and this present world to that city yet to come, the object of our quest.” (*Catechism*, § 771.)

What the *Catechism* has said about the coming together of the human and the divine in the Church, St. Maximilian said about Mary:

“In the Holy Spirit’s union with Mary we observe more than the love of two beings: in one there is all the love of the Blessed Trinity; in the other all of creation’s love. So it is that in this union heaven and earth are joined; all of heaven with all the earth, the totality of eternal love with the totality of created love. It is truly the summit of love.” (Emphasis added.)

So, as noted in the third part of this series, in Mary’s union with the Holy Spirit, we see the very coming together of the human and the divine that the *Catechism* describes as “one complex reality,” and which Cardinal de Lubac calls “the doctrine of human cooperation in the redemption, the matrix concept of the dogma of the Church.” (de Lubac, *The Splendor of the Church*, p. 316.)

This union of the divine and the human, the “one complex reality” that comprises the Church, is already perfect in Mary:

“But while in the most Blessed Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she exists without spot or wrinkle, the faithful still strive to conquer sin and increase in holiness. And so they turn their eyes to Mary’: in her, the Church is already ‘all-holy’”. (*Catechism*, § 829.)

The perfection of this union through suffering, and the Church as the place where this union is perfected, is prefigured in the sufferings of Christ’s Mother. This union, to which the Church aspires, **is at all times oriented to salvation**, and therefore fulfills its purpose in Our Lady’s sharing in the redemptive suffering of her Son:

“It is especially consoling to note – and also accurate in accordance with the Gospel and history – that at the side of Christ in the first and most exalted place, there is always his Mother through the exemplary testimony that she bears by her whole life to this particular Gospel of suffering. In her, the many and intense sufferings were amassed in such an interconnected way that they were not only a proof of her unshakeable faith but also a contribution to the redemption of all. In reality, from the time of her secret conversation with the angel, she began to see in her mission as a mother her ‘destiny’ to share, in a singular and unrepeatable way, in the very mission of her Son. And she very soon received a confirmation of this in the events that accompanied the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, and in the solemn words of the aged Simeon, when he spoke of a sharp sword that would pierce her heart. Yet a further confirmation was in the anxieties and privations of

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the hurried flight into Egypt, caused by the cruel decision of Herod.

*And again, after the events of her Son's hidden and public life, events which she must have shared with acute sensitivity, it was on Calvary that Mary's suffering, beside the suffering of Jesus, reached an intensity which can hardly be imagined from a human point of view **but which was mysteriously and supernaturally fruitful for the redemption of the world.** Her ascent of Calvary and her standing at the foot of the Cross with the Beloved Disciple were a special sort of sharing in the redeeming death of her Son. And the words which she heard from His lips were a kind of solemn handing-over of this Gospel of suffering so that it could be proclaimed to the whole community of believers." (SD, § 25, first emphasis in original, second emphasis added.)*

The Heart of the Church is the one heart formed by the union of the two: the divine and the human. The redemptive suffering of the Son of God is the place of their meeting, where this union is perfected. Thus, the Church is, *by its very nature*, co-redemptive. The idea of co-redemption is neither an innovation nor a merely secondary aspect of the Church's identity. Co-redemption is the core reality of the Church; as such, it both illuminates and reveals the Church. In a very real sense, the self-awareness and self-realization of which the Church spoke with such great hope at Vatican II depends upon a more focused theological and pastoral development of the idea of co-redemption.

Mary's unique role in the co-redemptive union that forms the Church is owed to her purity, her obedience and, most especially, to her maternity. Nevertheless, while Mary's co-redemptive role is unique, she is not entirely alone. We are linked to Mary in co-redemption, that is, in the Church, because of our shared humanity, and our aspirations as members of the Church. A dogma holding that Mary is co-redemptrix would mean more than its most ardent proponents imagine it to mean (i.e., a dogma grounded in a theology of the whole Church) and less than its opponents fear it to mean (Mary as "goddess"). Indeed, as suggested above, properly understood, the proclamation of such a dogma could very well represent a high point in the self-realization of the Church that began at Vatican II.

Co-redemption does not imply equality with Christ; perhaps the key to avoiding confusion lies in the careful choice of the correct "*matrix concept*," as Cardinal de Lubac might have said. Who, for example, would argue

that the soul's desire for union with God is a "*grasping at equality*," or, to say it more simply, that union implies equality? What need has God for us? Yet, is He less God, or less "*efficacious*," because He desires union with us? The answer should be self-evident. In the same way, our union with the redemptive suffering of Christ takes nothing whatever away from the efficacy of His suffering. Indeed, it is precisely in His suffering where union is completed and perfected. Co-redemption, therefore, refers not to equality, but to **union**, the union of the divine and the human which comprises the Church, and to the redemptive suffering of Christ as the precise place of their meeting. Co-redemption, like union, refers to mutual love.

By our membership in the Church, and our participation in the Church's sacramental life, we too signify our willingness to share in the redemptive sufferings of Christ. When we receive the Eucharist, it is as if we do so in response to Jesus' asking the question, "*Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink?*" (Mt 20:22.) By uniting ourselves to Him in the Eucharist, we say "yes" to His suffering, accepting His suffering as our own, His truth as our truth. Our "yes" is more than a statement of belief; it is also an act of love, of affirmation. This is communion - uniting our own purpose, that is, our very being, to the suffering and death of Christ. In this affirmation, the acceptance of His suffering, we achieve union with Jesus, with His Cross, freely uniting ourselves to Him on the Cross, becoming crucified with Him. Having seen with the eyes of faith through the surface of His agony, we are moved by the sight of His love to join ourselves to Him.

Through the Eucharist, properly received, we enter into the great mystery of Christ's suffering and death, the mystery of all suffering, of divine love and the economy of salvation. Suffering is the price of sin, but in the divine plan it exists to serve mercy, as the Holy Father noted in *Salvifici Doloris*:

"Already in the Old Testament we note an orientation that begins to go beyond the concept according to which suffering has a meaning only as a punishment for sin, insofar as it emphasizes at the same time the educational value of suffering as a punishment. Thus in the sufferings inflicted by God on the Chosen People there is included an invitation of His mercy, which corrects in order to lead to conversion: '...these punishments were designed not to destroy but to discipline our people'.

Thus the personal dimension of punishment is affirmed. According to this dimension, punishment has a meaning not only because it serves to repay the objective evil of the transgression

The Heart of the Church (Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8) **The Heart of the Church**

with another evil, but first and foremost because it creates the possibility of rebuilding goodness in the subject who suffers.

This is an extremely important aspect of suffering. It is profoundly rooted in the entire Revelation of the Old and above all the New Covenant. Suffering must serve for conversion that is, for the rebuilding of goodness in the subject, who can recognize the divine mercy in this call to repentance. The purpose of penance is to overcome evil, which under different forms lies dormant in man. Its purpose is also to strengthen goodness both in man himself and in his relationships with others and especially with God.” (SD, § 12, emphasis in original.)

Our Lord takes no pleasure from the sight of our suffering. What parent can bear to watch his children suffer? But God also wills for us eternal life, and there is no choice but to suffer if we are to have that life:

“Then He said to all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.’” (Lk 9:23-24.)

Therein lies the power of the Eucharist, its “secret,” therein the beauty, the glory of salvation, and of the Church: the union of the whole Church with the redemptive suffering of Christ for the salvation of the world. Thus, the true beauty of the Church is owed to this crucified love, **into which the whole Church enters through the Eucharist**, to which all of the Church is united. This crucified love is the source of the Church’s beauty, of the Church’s glory, and the inspiration of the martyrs. The Eucharist therefore “contains” all of the treasures of the Church:

“When we have entered the holy dwelling, whose dimensions are vaster than those of the universe, and have become members of the Mystical Body--

‘... we have at our disposal for loving, understanding and serving God not only our own powers but everything from the Blessed Virgin in the summit of heaven down to the poor African leper, who bell in hand, whispers the responses of the Mass through a mouth half eaten away. The whole of creation, visible and invisible, all history, all the past, the present and the future, all the treasure of the saints multiplied by grace -- all that is at our disposal as an extension of ourselves, a mighty instrument. All the

saints and the angels belong to us. We can use the intelligence of St. Thomas, the right arm of St. Michael, the hearts of Joan of Arc and Catherine of Siena, and all the hidden resources which have only to be touched to be set in action. Everything of the good, the great and the beautiful from one end of the earth to the other -- everything which begets sanctity (as a doctor says of a patient that he has got a fever) -- it is as if all that were our work. The heroism of the missionary, the inspiration of the Doctors of the Church, the generosity of the martyrs, the genius of the artists, the burning prayer of the Poor Clares and Carmelites -- it is as if all that were ourselves; it is ourselves. All that is one with us, from the North to the South, from the Alpha to the Omega, from the Orient to the Occident; we clothe ourselves in it, we set it in motion. All that is in the orchestral activity by which we are at one and the same time revealed and made as nothing. In the core of the vast gathering of Christianity there is to be found the equivalent of that which, in the individual body, is entrusted to the choir of cells -- nourishment, respiration, circulation, elimination, appetite. The Church transposes, and paints outside us on a vast scale, all that is in us almost without our knowing it. Our brief and blind impulses are wedded, taken up again, interpreted, developed, by vast stellar movements. Outside ourselves we can decipher at astronomic distances the text written on a microscopic scale in the further depths of the heart.” (de Lubac, *The Splendor of the Church*, pp. 239-240, quoting Paul Claudel *Interroge le Cantique des Cantiques*, emphasis in original.)

This is the beauty of the hidden Church, waiting to be revealed, as so many rays of light emanating from the crucified Heart of Christ.

7. Conclusion

To what form of suffering are we called for the sake of the Church’s renewal? We are called to deeper conversion, “ever-renewed ablatio -- removal,” in the words of Cardinal Ratzinger, the removal of everything within us that resists or obscures Christ’s crucified love. His is the love of total, unreserved self-giving, love which endures

The Heart of the Church (Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9) **The Heart of the Church**

scourging, scorn, mockery and supreme injustice. We are called to penance, repentance and purification, to become the image of the Cross, the image of hope, and, in a sense, the signal of the Resurrection:

“Christ’s Resurrection has revealed ‘the glory of the future age’ and, at the same time, has confirmed ‘the boast of the Cross’: the glory that is hidden in the very suffering of Christ and which has been and is often mirrored in human suffering, as an expression of man’s spiritual greatness. This glory must be acknowledged not only in the martyrs for the faith but in many others also who, at times, even without belief in Christ, suffer and give their lives for the truth and for a just cause. In the sufferings of all of these people the great dignity of man is strikingly confirmed.” (SD, § 22, emphasis in original.)

We are called to the suffering of self-denial and self-emptying, to making room for grace, for the Holy Spirit. Consider how the Holy Father’s words on the subject of suffering correspond with his words on conversion:

“It is suffering, more than anything else, which clears the way for the grace which transforms human souls.” (SD, § 27.)

...

*“It is precisely this acknowledgment [of our sinfulness] which creates in brothers and sisters living in Communities not in full communion with one another **that interior space where Christ, the source of the Church’s unity, can effectively act, with all the power of his Spirit, the Paraclete.**”* (UUS, § 35, emphasis added.)

We suffer when we deny the impulse to seek personal vindication or triumph, retaliation, or the embarrassment and humiliation of those who oppose us. Are we unwilling to suffer enough to refrain from words that injure, wound, or harden hearts? Are those moments of unworthy satisfaction more important to us than the healing of the Church’s wounds? Our Redeemer has already warned us, in the strongest possible terms, to choose our words with care:

“You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, ‘Raga,’ will be answerable to the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ will be liable to fiery Gehenna.” (Mt 5:21-22.)

...

“You brood of vipers, how can you say good things when you are evil? For from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks. A good person brings forth good out of a store of goodness, but an evil person brings forth evil out of a store of evil. **I tell you, on the day of judgment people will render an account for every careless word they speak. By your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.**” (Mt 12:34-37, emphasis added.)

God the Father, teaching St. Catherine of Siena about the soul who lives in the third light, or stage, of spiritual progress, told Catherine:

*“When you cannot see clearly and openly whether the sin is deadly, you must not pass judgment in your mind, but be concerned only about my will for that person. And if you do see it, **you must respond not with judgment but with holy compassion.** In this way you obtain perfect purity, for if you act in this way your spirit will not be scandalized either in me or in your neighbors. For you cast contempt on your neighbors when you pay attention to their ill will towards you rather than my will for them. **Such contempt and scandal alienates the soul from me, blocks her perfection, and to some extent deprives her of grace – in proportion to the seriousness of the contempt and hatred she has conceived for her neighbor because of her judgmental thoughts.***

*So if you would attain the purity you ask of me, there are three principal things you must do. You must be united with me in loving affection, bearing in your memory the blessings you have received from me. With the eye of your understanding you must see my affectionate charity, how unspeakably much I love you. And where the human will is concerned, you must consider my will rather than people’s evil intentions, **for I am their judge – not you, but I.** If you do this, all perfection will be yours.*

This, if you remember well, is the teaching my Truth [Jesus, in the Gospel] gave you.

Now I tell you, dearest daughter, those who have learned this teaching taste the pledge of eternal life even in this life. If you keep this teaching in mind you will fall neither into the devil’s trap (for you will recognize it) nor into the traps you asked me about.” (The Dialogue, § 100, emphasis added.)

The devil’s trap, it seems clear, is pride, Satan’s most ef-

The Heart of the Church (Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10) **The Heart of the Church**

fective weapon against the Church. Its effectiveness is owed precisely to the fact that, as it takes root in the heart, pride becomes blind to itself. Pride cannot see itself; those have been taken over by pride, blind to its presence, do nothing to rid themselves of it. Thus, Our Lord said:

"Why do you notice the splinter in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own eye? How can you say to your brother 'Let me remove that splinter from your eye,' while the wooden beam is in your eye? You hypocrite, remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother's eye." (Mt 7:3-5.)

Pride crowds out compassion, erases the memory of our own need for God's forgiveness and mercy, the knowledge of our littleness and weakness, and our fundamental identity and solidarity with other sinners. Having turned our backs on our true selves, refusing to acknowledge our sinfulness, our weakness, our littleness, we turn our backs on our own brothers and sisters. In doing so, we forsake them. In forsaking them, we condemn them, and make gods of ourselves. So long as our hearts are infected by pride, we are in no condition to participate fruitfully in dialogue for the good of the Church.

Love imposes specific demands upon the character

of dialogue, demands that require self-restraint and self-denial, in recognition of the overpowering reality of the Cross and our mutual indebtedness. The suffering that results from this self-denial produces a powerful yield for the good of the Church.

The Church is suffering, and we are called to suffer with her and for her. The Heart of the Church is suffering from discord, strife, warfare; her Heart is full of sorrow. No one, it seems, is true to the Heart of Jesus, to His love. We want to take; no one is willing to give, because we do not fully understand the ways of His Heart, which is forever in a state of giving, of sacrifice. The Heart of Jesus seeks to give more, the more that is taken: *"If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic, hand him your cloak as well."* (Mt 5:40.)

It is in the sufferings of Christ where the union of Jesus and Mary was perfected, both hearts pierced by the sword of violence and anger. In the same way, suffering is where the union of the human and the divine is perfected in the Church, suffering affirmed in and through the Eucharist.

Love and truth are one, and the love to which truth is united is crucified, forever in a state of giving. Give no offense to love in defending the truth. Suffer to forsake the words of insult, bitterness and derision. Choose the words that love demands.

The path to renewal is the Way of the Cross. ✚

RETREAT!

**Please mark your calendars to reserve October 4-6.
Plan to attend a silent retreat at the Marywood Center.
Watch for more information in future newsletters.
To reserve your place, please send the form below
or call Jim Hayes (949) 347-0079 ✚**

Please register me for the St. Thomas More Retreat for the weekend of October 4-6, 1999

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**Mail to: Jim Hayes, c/o Arthur, Ashwood, Hayes & Moran
28202 Cabot Rd, Suite 100, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677**

Thought for the Day

A Story To Live By by Ann Wells (Los Angeles Times)

My brother-in-law opened the bottom drawer of my sister's bureau and lifted out a tissue-wrapped package. "This," he said, "is not a slip. This is lingerie." He discarded the tissue and handed me the slip. It was exquisite; silk, hand-made and trimmed with a cobweb of lace. The price tag with an astronomical figure on it was still attached. *"Jan bought this the first time we went to New York, at least 8 or 9 years ago. She was saving it for a special occasion. Well, I guess this is the occasion."* He took the slip from me and put it on the bed with the other clothes we were taking to the mortician. His hands lingered on the soft material for a moment, then he slammed the drawer shut and turned to me.

"Don't ever save anything for a special occasion. Every day you're alive is a special occasion."

I remembered those words through the funeral and the days that followed when I helped him and my niece attend to all the sad chores that follow an unexpected death. I thought about them on the plane returning to California from the Midwestern town, where my sister's family lives. I thought about all the things that she hadn't seen or heard or done. I thought about the things that she had done without realizing that they were special. I'm still thinking about his words, and they've changed my life. I'm reading more and dusting less. I'm sitting on the deck and admiring the view without fussing about the weeds in the garden. I'm spending more time with my family and friends and less time in committee meetings. Whenever possible, life should be a pattern of experience to savor, not en-

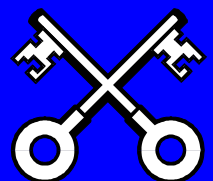
sure. I'm trying to recognize these moments now and cherish them. I'm not "saving" anything; we use our good china and crystal for every special event-such as losing a pound, getting the sink unstopped, the first camellia blossom. I wear my good blazer to the market if I like it. My theory is if I look prosperous, I can shell out \$28.49 for one small bag of groceries without wincing. I'm not saving my good perfume for special parties; clerks in hardware stores and tellers in banks have noses that function as well as my party-going friends. "Someday" and "one of these days" are losing their grip on my vocabulary. If it's worth seeing or hearing or doing, I want to see and hear and do it now.

I'm not sure what my sister would've done had she known that she wouldn't be here for the tomorrow we all take for granted. I think she would have called family members and a few close friends. She might have called a few former friends to apologize and mend fences for past squabbles. I like to think she would have gone out for a Chinese dinner, her favorite food. I'm guessing I'll never know. It's those little things left undone that would make me angry if I knew that my hours were limited. Angry because I put off seeing good friends whom I was going to get in touch with - someday. Angry because I hadn't written certain letters that I intended to write - one of these days. Angry and sorry that I didn't tell my husband and daughter often enough how much I truly love them.

I'm trying very hard not to put off, holdback, or save anything that would add laughter and luster to our lives. And every morning when I open my eyes, I tell myself that it is special. Every day, every minute, every breath truly is... a gift from God. ‡



You re Invited to Meet the Bishop!
Wednesday Evening September 29th
at the Marywood Center
Catered Dinner



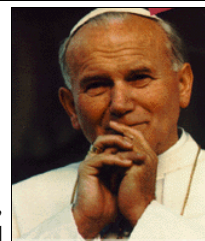


The Pope's Prayer Intentions for July



GENERAL INTENTION

*That Christians, through hospitality,
especially to their immigrant brothers and sisters,
actively bear witness to the love of God the Father for us all.*



The circumstances of migrants and the painful misfortunes of refugees, sometimes insufficiently taken into account by public opinion, cannot fail to inspire deep sympathy and interest in believers....

"Often, flourishing Christian communities started out as small colonies of immigrants which, under the leadership of a priest, met in humble buildings to hear the Word of God and to beg him for courage to face the trials and sacrifices of their difficult life." Many peoples came to know Christ through migrants who arrived from the lands evangelized in ancient times.

Today the trend of migratory movement has been as it were inverted. It is non-Christians, increasingly numerous, who go to countries with a Christian tradition in search of work and better living conditions, and they frequently do so as illegal immigrants and refugees. This causes complex problems which are not easy to solve. For her part, the Church, like the Good Samaritan, feels it her duty to be close to the illegal immigrant and refugee, contemporary icon of the despoiled traveler, beaten and abandoned on the side of the road to Jericho (see Luke 10:30). She goes towards him, pouring *"on his wounds the oil of consolation and the wine of hope,"* feeling herself called to be a living sign of Christ, who came that all might have life in abundance (John 10:10).

In this way she acts in the spirit of Christ and follows in his steps, at the same time attending to the proclamation of the Good News and to solidarity towards others, elements which are intimately united in the Church's activity.

-- Message of Pope John Paul II for the World Day for Migrants and Refugees, 1997

For the Christian, acceptance of and solidarity with the stranger are not only a human duty of hospitality, but a precise demand of fidelity itself to Christ's teaching. For the believer, caring for migrants means striving to guarantee a place within the individual Christian community for his brothers and sisters coming from afar, and working so that every human being's personal rights are recognized. The Church invites all people of goodwill to make their own contribution so that every person is respected and discriminations that debase human dignity are banned. Her action, sustained by prayer, is inspired by the Gospel and guided by her age-old experience.

The ecclesial community's activity is also an incentive to the leaders of peoples and international communities, institutions and organizations of various kinds involved in the phenomenon of migration. An expert in humanity, the Church fulfills her task by enlightening consciences with her teaching and witness, and by encouraging appropriate initiatives to ensure that immigrants find the right place within individual societies.

In particular, she concretely urges Christian migrants and refugees not to turn in on themselves, isolating themselves from the pastoral life of the diocese or parish that accepts them. At the same time, however, she puts clergy and faithful on guard against attempting merely to assimilate them, which destroys their particular characteristics. Rather she encourages the gradual integration of these brothers and sisters, making the most of their diversity to build an authentic family of believers which is welcoming and supportive.

To this end it is good for the local community into which migrants and refugees are integrated to provide them with structures that help them actively assume their responsibilities. In this regard, the priest specifically assigned to the care of migrants is asked to be a bridge between different cultures and mentalities. This presupposes an awareness that he is fulfilling a truly missionary ministry *"in the same way that Christ by his Incarnation committed himself to the particular social and cultural circumstances of the people among whom he lived."*

-- Message of Pope John Paul II for World Migration Day



From the Writings of St. Thomas More:

Throughout the time of his imprisonment, More's greatest sufferings did not come from his poverty or his poor health or his weak-willed friends. They came from his own family. Having taken such great care to educate his children, More now found that none of them supported him in his decision of conscience. Nor did his wife.....

Lady Alice was especially opposed. Son-in-law Roper tells us that when she was finally able to see her husband for the first time, she "*bluntly*" greeted him thus: "*Master More, I marvel that you, who have always been taken for such a wise man, should now play such a fool as to lie here in this tiny, filthy prison and be content to be shut up with rats and mice when you could be about and at your liberty...*" After quietly listening to her long reproof, More "with a cheerful expression said to her, '*I pray you, good Mistress Alice, tell me one thing.*'" Roper continues:

"What is that?" She said.

"Is not this house as close to heaven as my own?"

To which she, after her accustomed fashion, not liking such talk, answered, "Tilly-vally, tilly-vally!"

"But what do you say, Mistress Alice?" he asked. "Is it not so?"

"Good God, good God, man, will you never stop repeating the same things?" she said.

"But, Mistress Alice, if they are true, it is very well [that I say them]."

At this point Lady Alice "*kept on pleading and harping on a long life,*" so Thomas finally interrupted her.

"How long, my Alice, shall I be able to enjoy this life?"

"A full twenty years, if God so wills."

"Do you wish me, then, to exchange eternity for twenty years? Here, good wife, you do not bargain very skill fully."

Thomas More: Portrait of Courage

By: Gerald B. Wegemer (Pg. 171-2) †

Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem*



*Latin for "To turn truth into laughter"

LIFE SKILLS

Never trust a dog to watch your food. Patrick, Age 10

When you want something expensive, ask your grandparents. Matthew Age 12

Never smart off to a teacher whose eyes and ears are twitching. Andrew, Age 9

Wear a hat when feeding seagulls. Rocky, Age 9

Never try to hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk. Rosemary (7)

Don't flush the john when your dad's in the shower. Lamar, Age 10

Never ask for anything that costs more than five dollars when your Parents are doing taxes. Carrol, Age 9

Never bug a pregnant mom. Nicholas, Age 11

Don't ever be too full for dessert. Kelly, Age 10

When your dad is mad and asks you, "Do I look stupid?" don't answer him. Heather, Age 16

Never tell your mom her diet's not working. Michael, Age 14

Don't pick on your sister when she's holding a baseball bat. Joel, Age 12

When you get a bad grade in school, show it to your mom when she's on the phone. Alysha, Age 13

Never try to baptize a cat. Laura Age 13

Never spit when on a roller coaster. Scott, Age 11

Never do pranks at a police station.

Sam, Age 10

Beware of cafeteria food when it looks like it's moving. Rob Age 10

Never tell your little brother that you're not going to do what your mom told you to do. Hank, Age 12

Remember you're never too old to hold your father's hand. Molly, Age 11

Listen to your brain. It has lots of information. Chelsey, Age 7

Stay away from prunes. Randy, Age 9

Never dare your little brother to paint the family car. Phillip, Age 13

Forget the cake, go for the icing. Cynthia, Age 8

Remember the two places you are always welcome - church and grandma's house. Joanne, Age 11 †

If God is truth, then truth must be absolute.

(Continued from page 4) **The Decline of Controversy**

articulated are high and lofty, civilization will be filled, like a crucible, with the gold of the things worthwhile.

The Church asks her children not only to externalize their thought and thus produce culture, but also to internalize their thoughts and thus produce spirituality. The constant giving would be dissipation unless new energy was supplied from within. In fact, before a thought can be bequeathed to the outside, it must have been born on the inside. But no thought is born without silence and contemplation. It is in the stillness and quiet of one's own intellectual pastures, wherein man meditates on the purpose of life and its goal, that real and true character is developed. A character is made by the kind of thought a man thinks when alone, and a civilization is made by the kind of thoughts a man speaks to his neighbor.

On the other hand, the Church discourages bad thinking, for a bad thought set loose is more dangerous than a wild man. Thinkers live; toilers die in a day. When society finds it is too late to electrocute a thought, it electrocutes the man. There was once upon a time when Christian society burned the thought in order to save society, and after all, something can be said in favor of this practice. To kill one bad thought may mean the salvation of ten thousand thinkers. The Roman emperors were alive to this fact; they killed the Christians not because they wanted their hearts, but because they wanted their heads, or better, their brains--brains that were thinking out the death of Paganism.

My conclusion is yes, there is a great struggle for the soul of the Church, and all methods of battle are necessary in order to win it. ✚

Catholic Web Sites

Change the World!

THE
HUNGER SITE

<http://www.thehungersite.com>

The Hunger Site is a unique concept combining charity with business. Once a day you can visit this site and donate **FOR FREE** one serving to a starving person merely by clicking the button!

Corporate sponsors pay for the donation!

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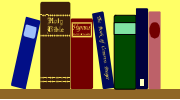
The donated food is distributed through large international relief organizations. Currently the donations go to the United Nations World Food Program, the world's largest food aid organization, with projects in 80 countries. They also work with a number of other relief organizations.



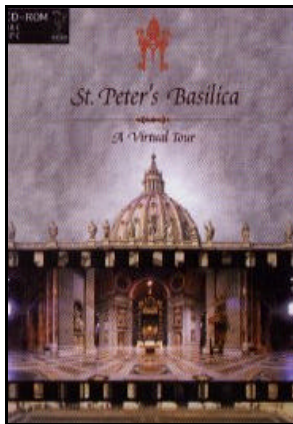
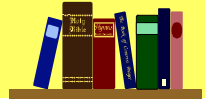
Did you know that every 3.6 seconds someone dies of hunger and 3/4ths of those deaths are children!

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Attn: Anne Lanphar

alanphar@firstam.com

Our Next Meeting:

DATE: July 28, Wednesday, @ NOON

TOPIC: *Ecumenism Today*

SPEAKER: Father Ralph Luevano

PLACE: Revere House in Santa Ana (1st St @ 55 Fwy)

FOR INFORMATION: Anne Lanphar @ 647-2155 or

Dave Belz @ 347-0447

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