

◆ Ad Veritatem ◆

Volume 5 Issue 4

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April 2000

APRIL MEETING:

Speaker:
Cheryl Ward
"Forgiveness"



More claimed that "the active study of the four last things (death, judgment, heaven and hell), and the deep consideration of them, is the thing that will keep you from sin."

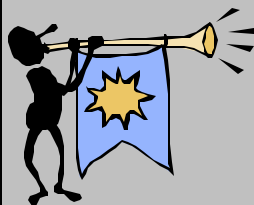
Thomas More:
Portrait of Courage
Gerard B. Wegemer
(pg. 93)

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

Cheryl Ward is an amazing Christian whose faith was severely tested in 1991 when she and her family were the victims of a home invasion robbery. Before her eyes, her daughter was assaulted with a shotgun and her husband was murdered. She spent the next twenty-two months in court putting away the people responsible for the crime. However, the essence of her message is how she found the grace and courage to forgive the perpetrators. Her story is as inspiring as it is amazing!

Reservations are not required. For more information, contact Dave Belz at (949) 347-0447 dbelz@kuhnbelz.com, or Anne Lanphar at (714) 800-3225 alanphar@firstam.com.

Everyone is welcome! ☩



PLEASE NOTE:

Our meetings have been changed from breakfast meetings to a luncheon meeting.

APRIL MEETING:

TOPIC: "Forgiveness"
SPEAKER: Cheryl Ward
WHEN: LUNCH Meeting on
Wednesday April 19th
PLACE: First American Title
Lender's Advantage Bldg
3 First American Way, Santa Ana
(see map on page 11)

Saints & Relics

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

Question: *I guess it makes sense to visit the tombs of the saints, just like one would visit the graves of loved ones, but this business of dividing up the bodies of the saints to provide relics all around the world seems revolting and irreverent to me. Why does the Catholic Church permit the bodies of the saints to be cut up? Wouldn't it be more reverent to leave them intact?*

Answer: I can understand your feelings, but this ancient practice is quite reverent. In The Martyrdom of Polycarp (A.D. 156), who was a disciple of St. John the Apostle and the teacher of St. Irenaeus, condemned to burn at the stake in witness to the true faith, we read, "Afterwards taking up his bones, which were more exquisite than the most precious gems and more pure than fire-tried gold, we deposited them fittingly. In which place each year the Lord will

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(Continued from page 1) **Saints & Relics**

grant us, as we gather in exultation and joy, to celebrate the anniversary of his martyrdom.” It was from such celebrations in honor of the martyrs that the practice of the veneration of relics began. Since the celebration of the Mass became part of the celebration of the anniversaries or “birthdays” of the martyrs, there grew up the practice of placing the altar at or over the martyr's grave, or even placing the martyr inside the altar. The Christians saw this practice as an earthly symbol of the heavenly worship described in the Book of Revelation 6:9: “I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.” The holy souls of the martyrs were in heaven under the altar which is the body of the risen Christ; their bodies were on earth under the sacramental altar of Christ's sacrifice. St. Ambrose (A.D. 333-397) comments on this passage of Revelation as he speaks of the practice of placing the bodies of the martyrs under the altar in one of his letters, “Let the triumphant victims be placed at the spot where Christ is the victim. Yet He is placed over the altar because He suffered for all, they are under the altar, who were redeemed by His suffering” (Letter 22, 15). Naturally, as the Faith spread, Christians in places where no martyrs were buried wanted to have relics of the martyrs for their altars. Thus there began the custom of more ancient local churches giving a portion of the relics of the martyrs to other, newer communities for their altars. As the custom became more widespread,



and the number of altars in churches increased, the relics became smaller and smaller. One has to understand the division of the bodies of the saints into such tiny portions in the light of this gradual development. This wasn't ghoulish or irreverent.

Eventually, the celebration of Holy Mass on the relics of the martyrs became a requirement of Church law in both the Latin and Greek Churches.

There is ample evidence for the veneration of the relics of the saints apart from the Mass and liturgy. Their bodies were temples of the Holy Spirit, and the intensity of the holiness of the saints makes their relics powerful reminders and even channels of the grace of Christ which we share with them in the communion of saints, the church and Body of Christ. If mere pieces of cloth which had been touched to the apostles had the power to heal the sick as we can read in Acts 19, 11-12, then we can expect great graces from the veneration of the bones of the saints, even the grace of the resurrection of the dead as we can read in the Old Testament in 2 Kings 13, 20-21. For someday these bodies, even though scattered, will rise gloriously in the likeness of the risen Christ. Thus relics are also the “places” of a future miracle which we know will occur with the certainty of faith. Our veneration of them is also a profession of faith in the resurrection of the body through the power of God, who is “wonderful in His saints” (Psalm 68, 26). †

Reprinted from the Jan/Feb 1997 issue of *ENVOY*, a Catholic Apologetic & Evangelization Magazine.

SIMPLE TRUTHS



Fulton J. Sheen

Faith is related not to self-assurance, but to God; not to an event, but to truth. In fact, there is often the greatest faith when there is the least prosperity. Such was the case with Job who, full of sores and sitting on a dung hill, said: "I will trust Him though He slay me." †



The Last Things: Heaven



By Michael Shonafelt, Esq.

This is the last of a four part series on the Last Things: Death, Judgment, Heaven & Hell. Throughout his life, Thomas More wrote extensively about the Four Last Things as he strongly believed that focusing on these matters would prevent any one from losing his soul.

Everything around us is constantly telling us that we are on a journey. Like a passenger in an automobile racing down a long country road, nose pressed to the glass, we watch the scenes whip by. Something captures our attention, and, as soon as we can fix our gaze, it is gone, giving way to something else, which in turn will pass. The kaleidoscope of images moves on and on, ending only when we have reached our destination, accomplishing the purpose of our journey.

In life's journey, time sweeps us away from one scene to the next, to some final destination. Hour melts into hour, day into day, and year into year; another birthday, another Christmas, another anniversary. More memories are made, some goals are attained, names and faces are recalled and forgotten, and everything -- even memories, our only bulwark against the ravages of time -- fades slowly, gently away. While the journey, for so many of us, becomes the focal point, our *raison d'etre*, shouldn't it be the destination that gives purpose to our every plan and endeavor?

But so few people, even the most devout, have time to focus on the destination. Part of this phenomenon owes to the fact that none of us really knows how to picture Heaven. We can't even know whether to call it a "place." And if Heaven is anything like the popular renderings, white-gowned saints on clouds plucking on golden harps, then this world, with its intermittent glories, beauties and fascinations seems a lot more interesting an object for our attentions.

What the Heart Tells Us of Heaven

Clouds and harps aside, it is said that all of us in some way know what Heaven will really be like. Whether we truly understand what our intuitions are telling us, we are all, as Peter Kreeft says, "haunted by Heaven." Though we only see "through a glass, darkly," we understand some-

thing of heaven when we experience intense beauty, but are left with a lingering disappointment that we cannot somehow possess it, or when we lose track of time in the company of a dear friend, and are then disquieted when the clock strikes the parting hour, or every time a familiar sadness hangs over the last hours of a perfect vacation, or when we feel a nostalgic pang at lost youth or love, or moments of carefree bliss that we know can never again be repeated.

In all moments such as these, the heart tells us about Heaven. We may confuse these moments with the scenes we see on the journey. In fact, they tell us not of the journey, but of the destination. "There have been times," says C.S. Lewis, "when I think we do not desire Heaven, but more often I find myself wondering whether, in our heart of hearts, we have ever desired anything else."

If we examine our own heart's fondest longings, and its ultimate disappointments, we will be able to paint a much more personal, more meaningful glimpse of Heaven. We can do no better here than a glimpse, however, since Heaven, it is told, is infinitely greater than anything our mind's eye can conjure, or anything our experiences have shown us: "Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it even entered into the heart of man, what God has prepared for those who love Him." But our yearnings and the joys and beauty that captivate us here gives us a clearer picture than we realize. "What would it be like to taste at the fountain-head," C.S. Lewis asks, "that stream of which even these lower reaches prove so intoxicating?"

Take each of your most intense experiences of joy, of love and beauty in this life, in what ever form. Now imagine being able to truly possess -- indeed to become -- the very beauty that captivated us throughout life, in a heightened, and perfect form. In his work "The Weight of Glory," C.S. Lewis reminds us that Heaven takes us to the highest fulfillment of the heart's deepest yearnings which our earthly experiences only peaked in a dim fashion here below. Heaven is "to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it." He continues:

The Last Things: Heaven (Continued on page 4)



(Continued from page 3) ***The Last Thing: Heaven***

At present we are on the outside of the world, the wrong side of the door. We discern the freshness and purity of morning, but they do not make us fresh and pure. We cannot mingle with the splendors we see. But all the leaves of the New Testament are rustling with the rumour that it will not always be so. Someday, God willing, we shall get in.

Heaven constitutes the final destination of our earthly journey: “*the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness.*” (CCC 1024.) It is the ultimate reason for our work, our play, our loves, even the most mundane of our daily acts, and our very existence. If we understood that all of us, without exception, was made for Heaven, and that Heaven is our only real home, we would focus more intently on our destination, and eschew the deplorable renderings of Heavenly glory that have been foisted on us by popular culture through the ages. Instead, as C.S. Lewis writes,

It is promised, firstly, that we shall be with Christ; secondly, that we shall be like Him; thirdly, with an enormous wealth of imagery, that we will have glory; fourthly, that we shall, in some sense, be fed or feasted or entertained; and finally, that we shall have some sort of official position in the universe—ruling cities, judging angels, being pillars of God’s temple.

The Beatific Vision

While it may sound too academic to ring with any real meaning for us now, the essence of our final destiny is the beatific vision. In that vision, the elect will see and possess God directly, face-to-face, without any intermediaries, forever. This vision is “*beatific*” because it will transform the soul into the object of its vision -- making it like God Himself (1 Jn. 3:2.) -- and fill it with a sublime joy that defies any description or comparison here.

This is the greatest mystery of Heaven, and the pen falls helpless to the task of describing it. He that asks for a description of the Beatific Vision, “*means not to hear me,*” writes John Donne, “*but to silence; he knows I cannot tell him: when I meet him there, I shall be able to tell him, and then he will be as able to tell me ... but the tongues of angels, the tongues of the glorified saints, shall not be able to express what that Heaven is; for even in Heaven, our faculties shall be finite.*”

An elderly saint John the Apostle, who rested on Christ’s breast at the Last Supper, alluded in the last years of his life to the profundity of the beatific vision when he said, “*My dear people, we are already the children of God, but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed; all we know is, that when it is revealed, we shall be like him because we shall see him as he is.*” (1 Jn. 3:2.) In that vision, we will have no more need of the virtues of faith and hope. The vision of God Himself will render them completely

unnecessary. (Constitution of Benedict XII *Benedictus Deus* (Denzinger 530-531).)

The Social Joys of Heaven

We will not be alone in this unimaginable experience. Heaven is the final and greatest of all social events. We will find ourselves as guests of honor in a great celestial bash where the celebrities with whom we consort will include none other than the Christ Himself, the Virgin Mary, Saint Francis, Saint Theresa, our deceased friends and family members, the multitude of unsung faithful, who died in Christ -- all of whom are now charged with glory and grandeur.

Our contact with our fellow elect will consist of such complete union that we will know everyone with a degree of perfection to which no earthly union, no matter how intimate, can compare. The Church’s theologians inform us that our relationships on earth with friends and loved ones will continue in an elevated and perfected form. We will also, as Father Martin von Cochem, O.S.F.C., writes, have a unique relationship with each saint to whom we were devoted here, and they, in turn, will reciprocate their devotion to us. If we were united in the sacrament of marriage, our relationship with our spouse will be transformed and glorified, though, as Christ Himself said, marriage itself will cease to be, since the nuptial union will be rendered superfluous by the perfect and intense union shared by all persons united in the beatific vision.

The Luminescence of the Blessed

While we will converse freely with the angels, we will not *be* angels in Heaven. We will not sit around on clouds with spread wings. As Christ showed us when He ate fish with the disciples after His resurrection, and as the Saint Paul reminds us in his First Letter to the Corinthians, we will have our bodies, but they will be somehow spiritualized, rendered completely incorruptible, immortal, and beautiful beyond comprehension.

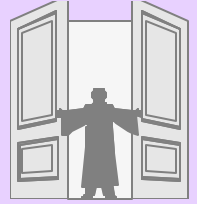
Church doctrine has taught that the glorified body will have four qualities: (1) impassability; (2) subtlety; (3) agility; and (4) perfect beauty. That means they will not be capable suffering, sickness, aging or hunger; they will be able to pass through material objects as if they were not there; and, for all those times in life when we wished we could soar effortlessly like eagles, our bodies will have the capacity to traverse the universe effortlessly, as if on the wings of the wind, as quickly as the speed of thought. These qualities are not fairly tale fantasies. They were shown to us by Christ, when, with His resurrected body, he passed through the locked door to show Himself to His apostles. They also are qualities which logically flow from a “*spiritualized*” body, that is, one that is completely subject

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RIGHT WITH THE CHURCH

Father C. John McCloskey III, STD



First, what is, by definition, right with the Church? Most importantly we have to remind ourselves that the Church is the immaculate Body of Christ "*without stain or wrinkle.*" It is a divine Person with a human nature. The Church stands alone in the world as a moral authority, bloody and sometimes bowed like our crucified Lord, but also glorified like his Body in heaven. All of us who strive to be faithful Catholics, with all our so human weaknesses, are on the winning side, sure victors after the Resurrection. The clear remedy for pessimism, besides the sacraments and prayer, is to gain perspective by simply reading the history of the Church (try Warren Carroll's magisterial work). After two thousand years, here we are ready to enter another "springtime of the Church", whether we see it from below here on earth or from an infinitely better vantage point (binoculars provided) from heaven.

The only thing wrong with the Church is that on this earth it is made up of sinners. To be shocked, scandalized, or otherwise disappointed by the reality of the human element of the Church here on earth before the second coming would reveal an angelic view of human nature worthy of Rousseau. I asked him if he had changed his mind about human nature when I visited his tomb in the Pantheon of Paris last August, but he refused to answer. I suspect he has, however.

What is right with the Church at the end of the twentieth century is that after the uncertainty and confusion which historically often has followed an ecumenical council, we are now more ready to apply the teachings of the Second Vatican Council to the Church and the world. Vatican II's essential message concerns the baptismal call to holiness of all the faithful and the inherent necessity of all in the Church to be evangelizers. In other words, the Church is about "person" and not about "structure." It is about the "sincere gift of self" of the Christian in and to the world and not about power plays or gender wars inside the Church. As John Paul II reminds us in *Christifideles Laici*: "holiness is the hidden source and infallible measure of her apostolic activity and missionary zeal." This is not an easy message for people of a certain generation and pre-Vatican II formation to absorb, whatever their degree of faithfulness to the Church and its teaching. However, the message is what lies at the heart of the mission of John Paul II, as reflected in his writings and his world-wide trips.

It is why the Holy Father has spent his pontificate in a positive manner, teaching, and watering the healthy seeds and plants of the Church, some of them still underground or just emerging. He has not wasted precious energy in disciplining those unfaithful who would not obey anyway. The Pope sees further and deeper into the future of the Church and the world than we and has acted unswervingly according to this vision, not unassisted, we trust, by the Holy Spirit. The Pope, with a supernatural outlook, thinks in terms of decades and centuries as should we who are also immortals.

A snapshot of what is right with the Church as we end this millennium and begin another was the closing Mass on Sunday August 24th of the World Youth Days in Paris. This was the largest Mass in the long history of France. A million young people, double the number expected, gathered together, in the most stifling heat Paris has experienced in this century, to endure discomfort, lack of sleep, and thirst in order to praise God and worship him in the Eucharist. One out of every thousand Catholics in the world was present at this Mass. They no doubt represented millions more in their adherence to the Church and its teaching as represented in the person of the Roman Pontiff.

Many tens of thousands of these young people would not have been there ten years ago. They came from Poland, Slovenia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Lithuania and so on, countries that had been under the yoke of Communist domination. They were drawn by the charismatic figure of a man described in a French newspaper as "*precarious (in) step, shaky voice, features riddled with weariness, struggling pathetically with a merciless Parkinson's at the end of an exhausting Pontificate.*" In short, these young people recognized the holy features of Christ in his Passion in one of the greatest Popes in history.

Among the crowd one could count tens (if not hundreds) of thousands of young people associated with the new institutions, religious congregations, and lay movements which the Holy Father has so strongly encouraged during his pontificate. He relies upon them for the spiritual energy directed towards building "*the civilization of love and truth*" that he foresees for the next century. Many were from the largely secularized West, including North America, and most notably, France and

Right with the Church (Continued on page 8)

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to the control of the beatified soul.

Regarding the beauty of the blessed, our Lady herself revealed to Saint Bridget, *"The saints stand around my Son like countless stars, whose glory is not to be compared with any earthly light. If the saints could be seen shining with the glory they now possess, no human eye could endure their light; all would turn away, dazzled and blinded."* The difference between our mortal flesh now and its glorified counterpart later will be as between coal and a pristine diamond: the same matter, but transformed.

The sufferings borne for Christ and every merit gained on earth will elevate the beauty and glory of each soul. The grand design of the human project and the meaning of each of our particular trials that baffled us on earth will be revealed. And, while all will be filled to overflowing with perfect joy and resplendence pursuant to their capacity, there will be higher forms of joy for those who served Christ with greater generosity, love and courage here on earth. In any event, all who have died with Christ will have their glory revealed to the world, as Saint Paul says, *"But when Christ is revealed—and he is your life—you too will be revealed in all your glory with him."* (Col. 3:4.)

The "Weight of Glory"

We may grow a bit sheepish with a sense of unworthiness at the incomprehensible glories that await us. Our humility may even chide us for meditating on the fact that one day -- if by God's grace we persevere to the end -- we will be crowned with glory, honor and shine with a brightness,

splendor and radiance that would cause the earth-bound members of the Church militant here on earth to prostrate themselves in awestruck wonder.

Here, C.S. Lewis proposes an important lesson that such meditations contain. If we shrink from envisioning ourselves among the blessed, think, instead of your neighbor, particularly the less desirable among those whom you know or meet, those whom the world has shrugged off as being of little or no account. Make it a practice to bear on your own back your neighbor's "weight of glory":

It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you say it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship ... There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal ... it is with immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendours.

Accordingly, our treatment of our neighbor must be serious and laden with genuine love and abiding respect. No one would dare snub a king or queen. In the same way, any stray unkind comment, gesture or treatment against our neighbor is against the glory of Christ Himself. I finish, again, with C.S. Lewis:

Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses. If he is your Christian neighbor, he is holy in almost the same way, for in him also Christ vere latitat—the glorifier and the glorified, Glory Himself, is truly hidden. †

Catholic Web Sites



The Redemptorists are a religious order of men founded in 1732 by St. Alphonsus Liguori. Their special mission is to spread the Gospel to the poor and most abandoned. Their work began among the poor and forgotten shepherds living in the hill country surrounding Naples in southern Italy.

In 1832, when the congregation was 100 years old, six Redemptorists journeyed to America. At present there are about 7,000 Redemptorists working for souls in nearly every part of the world. Over 1,000 Redemptorists work in the United States.

The motto of the Redemptorists also reflects their mission and charism. Translated from the Latin, it is *"With Him is plentiful redemption."*

The work done by the American Redemptorists include parishes, special preaching, retreat houses, special apostolates, overseas missions, and apostolate of the pen.

<http://www.liguori.org>



Liguori Publications, faithful to the charism of St. Alphonsus, is an apostolate within the mission of the Denver province. Its mission, a collaborative effort of Redemptorists and laity, is to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ primarily through the print and electronic media. It shares in the Redemptorist priority of giving special attention to the poor and most abandoned.





Scriptural Corner:

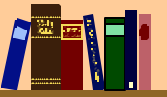
⁴¹And he sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the multitude putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴²And a poor widow came, and put in two copper coins, which make a penny. ⁴³And he called his disciples to him, and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. ⁴⁴For they all contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had; her whole living." Mark 12:41-44

Comment from the Navarre Bible*:

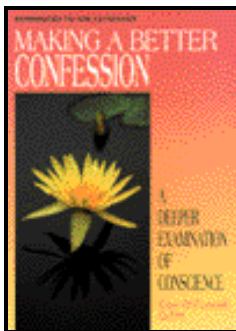
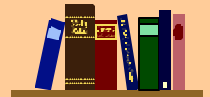
Our Lord uses this little event to teach us the importance of things which apparently are insignificant. He puts it somewhat paradoxically; the poor widow has contributed more than all the rich. In God's sight the value of such an action lies more in upright intention and generosity of spirit than in the quantity one gives. "Didn't you see the light in Jesus' eyes as the poor widow left her little alms in the temple? Give him what you can: the merit is not in whether it is big or small, but in the intention with which you give it" (J. Escriva, *The Way*, 829).

By the same token, our actions are pleasing to God even if they are not as perfect as we would like. St Francis de Sales comments: "*Now as among the treasures of the temple, the poor widow's mite was much esteemed, so the least little good works, even though performed somewhat coldly and not according to the whole extent of the charity which is in us, are agreeable to God, and esteemed by him; so that though of themselves they cannot cause any increase in the existing love [...] yet divine providence, counting on them and, out of his goodness, valuing them, forthwith rewards them with increase of charity for the present, and assigns to them a greater heavenly glory for the future*" (St Francis de Sales, *Treatise on the Love of God*, book 3, chap. 2).

**The Navarre Bible, an edition of Sacred Scripture prepared by members of the Faculty of Theology of Navarre University, consists of the New Vulgate, the Revised Standard Version and commentaries. †*



From the Library



Making a Better Confession: A Deeper Examination of Conscience

Con O'Connell, O.F.M.

Many of us are unhappy with our confessions. It may seem as though you can never think of anything to tell, or you always say the same old things. Or maybe confession doesn't always make you feel better afterwards - it has become a routine.

Father O'Connell helps readers unmask deep attitudes which lie at the root of sin. Through soul searching, you will begin the process of self-discovery and reconciliation - the process of making a more satisfying, meaningful confession. In order to experience a more fulfilling confession, you must carefully examine your conscience. However, people often do this by themselves without the help of Jesus or the Holy Spirit. Without the guidance of Jesus, you may be asking yourself the wrong questions.

With Jesus as your guide, he can help you realize "why" you have wronged another person. Without his help, you may end up confessing the symptoms of the sin - such as not helping someone in need, taking someone else's possessions, or lashing out at others - instead of the sin. These behaviors are usually indications of a self-centered attitude fueled by laziness, greed, and anger - the real sins.

Referenced to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, How to Make a Better Confession allows users to gain a deeper understanding of how to make a more meaningful confession.

16 pages; Paperback—Liguori Publications No. 52190

ISBN: 892438630

Cost: \$1.95

(Continued from page 5) ***Right with the Church***

Italy. These are the young people he counts upon now and later to effect "*the re-evangelization of the West,*" another central theme of his pontificate.

Also present were some 7000 priests and 500 bishops from all over the world, who concelebrated Mass with the Pope. In many cases they spent the week in catechizing in Parisian Churches and living together with the young people in hostels on the Ile de France. The great majority of these priests were noticeably young themselves, no doubt products of that constant annual 10 % increase in vocations that has been universal (excepting in the decadent West) during the Holy Father's pontificate. These priests are the future pastors, seminary teachers, and vocation directors in the dioceses of the world. They will help to insure that what is right with the Church will only get better. The present Pope has appointed perhaps a majority of the bishops present, and all the active cardinals. In them, we also see so much that is good in the life of the Church. Think of Cardinal Lustiger, the amazing story of his conversion, his re-opening of the seminary of Paris, and all that he has done to serve the Church. While we pray for many more years of life for our exceptional Holy Father, could

it be that this Jewish convert, at the side of the Holy Father during all of those glorious days in Paris might be his successor? I wouldn't bet against it.

In the austere, cold Church of the Dome in Les Invalides I wondered what Napoleon thought as he watched French helicopters ascend and descend right in front of his tomb bearing the Polish Pope preparing to march a million of his "*troops*" into Paris and then marching them out again into the third millennium. What did he think of his countrymen St. Therese of Liseux, a contemplative nun, being proclaimed a Doctor of the Church and Frederick Ozanam, a pioneer of the lay apostolate in France and an outstanding statesman, being beatified at Notre Dame where once the Goddess of Reason was worshipped? Did Napoleon remember that moment a little less than 200 years ago when he boastfully crowned himself Emperor in front of the Pope in Notre Dame, or later when he sacrilegiously imprisoned the Vicar of Christ to further his own grandiose ambitions? Perhaps he asked himself, "*What is right with the Church?*" and answered himself at last from Scripture, "*Upon this Rock I shall build my Church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.*" †

From the Writings of St. Thomas More

MORE ON SPIRITUALITY

....(A) major theme of his first spiritual handbook (was) that the pleasure of fleshly delight is not a genuine or lasting pleasure; that it is "*but a false, counterfeit image of pleasure.*" To order one's life to such counterfeit images will cause a "*grudge and grief of conscience that makes the stomach wamble ... and vomit.*" Whoever persists in pursuing such counterfeits will "*by a mischievous custom of sin perceive no fault in his evil deed*" and will thereby "*lose the natural light of reason and the spiritual light of faith.*"

For health and clear sight, one needs a well-cultivated soul that has come to love the "*spiritual pleasure of...truth.*" So long as the soul is "*overgrown with the barren weeds of carnal pleasures,*" it will have "*no place for the good corn of spiritual pleasure.*"

To acquire a healthy soul, one relies on the great doctor, Christ. By following both the example and the instructions of this physician, any soul can achieve a "*mastering of outward, fleshly pain with inward, spiritual pleasure.*"

The whole point is to "*keep our minds occupied with good thoughts,*" for a "*wandering mind*" is never associated with "*wisdom and good manners.*" In this context, one can better understand More's claim that "*the active study of the four last things, and the deep consideration of them, is the thing that will keep you from sin.*" This "*diligent remembrance*" is well worth the effort it takes, for it is sure to flower in "*not a false imagination, but a very true contemplation*" of God and the world as they exist.



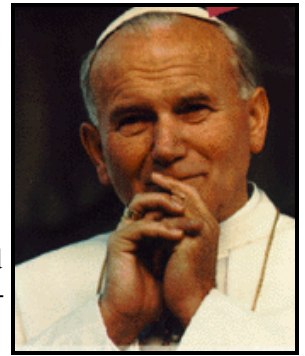


The Pope's Prayer Intentions for April



GENERAL INTENTION

*That, through Christians' generous welcome,
refugees and immigrants may experience
God the Father's goodness*



By her nature, the Church is in solidarity with the world of migrants who, with their variety of languages, races, cultures and customs, remind her of her own condition as a people on pilgrimage from every part of the earth to their final homeland. This vision helps Christians to reject all nationalistic thinking and to avoid narrow ideological categories. It reminds them that the Gospel should be incarnated in life in order to become its leaven and soul, also through a constant effort to free it from the cultural incrustations that inhibit its inner dynamism....

The importance of the parish in welcoming the stranger, in integrating baptized persons from different cultures and in dialoguing with believers of other religions stems from the mission of every parish community and its significance within society. This is not an optional, supplementary role for the parish community, but a duty inherent in its task as an institution....

The Christian is called to evangelize by reaching out to people wherever they may be, to meet them with warmth and love, to shoulder their problems, to know and appreciate their culture, to help them overcome prejudices. This concrete form of outreach to so many of our needy brothers and sisters will prepare them to encounter the light of the Gospel, and, by forging bonds of sincere esteem and friendship, will lead them to ask: "we wish to see Jesus" (John 12:21). Dialogue is essential for a peaceful and productive society.

In view of the ever more pressing challenges of indifferentism and secularization, the Jubilee requires that this dialogue be intensified. In their everyday relations, believers are called to show the face of a Church that is open to everyone, attentive to social realities and to whatever enables the human person to affirm his dignity. In particular, Christians, conscious of the heavenly Father's love, will heighten their concern for migrants, in order to develop a sincere and respectful dialogue aimed at building the "civilization of love."

-- John Paul II, Message for World Migration Day (February 2, 1998)

Some "universal pilgrimages" assume a particular significance. We are thinking, first of all, of the vast movement of groups, of masses, at times of whole peoples, who face enormous sacrifices and risks to flee from hunger, wars, environmental catastrophe, and to look for security and well-being for themselves and for their loved ones. No one should remain an inactive spectator before these immense flows that pervade mankind, almost like currents that expand on the face of the earth. No one should feel foreign to the injustice that is often at its roots, to the personal and collective drama, but also to the hopes that bloom for a different future and a prospect of dialogue and a peaceful multiracial coexistence. The Christian, in particular, must become the good Samaritan on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, ready to help and accompany his brother to an inn of fraternal charity and a life together in solidarity. We may be led to this "spirituality of the way" by knowing, listening to and sharing the experience of that particular "people of the road" who are the nomads, the gypsies, the "children of the wind."

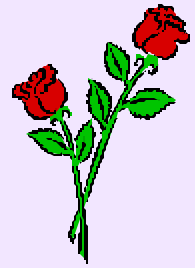
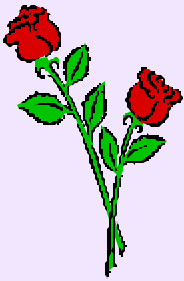
**-- Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People
"The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee" (April 25, 1998)**

Scripture for reflection: Psalm 124: The Lord's help in escaping enemies; Psalm 137: A song while in exile; Deuteronomy 1:17-22: Love the sojourner, for you were sojourners. Hebrews 13:16: All the faithful are exiles on this earth.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1931-33, 1935, 1939, 2433-34, 2447-49 †

Thought for the Day

THE HAND



This picture appeared in the Tennessean in Nashville. It should be "*The Picture of the Decade*" but it won't be. In fact, most people never saw it, as most media outlets refused to show it. The picture is that of a 21-week-old unborn baby named Samuel Alexander Armas, who is being operated on by a surgeon named Joseph Bruner. The baby was diagnosed with spina bifida and would not survive if removed from the mother's womb. Little Samuel's mother, Julie Armas, is an obstetrics nurse in Atlanta. She knew of Dr. Bruner's remarkable surgical procedure. Practicing at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, he performs these special operations while the baby is still in the womb. In the procedure, a C-section removes the uterus and the doctor makes a small incision to operate on the baby. During the surgery, little Samuel reached his tiny, but fully developed, hand through the incision and firmly grasped the surgeon's finger. The photograph captures this amazing event with perfect clarity. The editors titled the picture, "*Hand of Hope.*" The text explaining the picture begins, "*The tiny hand of 21-week-old fetus Samuel Alexander Armas emerges from the mother's uterus to grasp the finger of Dr. Joseph Bruner as if thanking the doctor for the gift of life.*" Little Samuel's mother said they "*wept for days*" when they saw the picture. She said, "*The photo reminds us that my pregnancy isn't about disability or illness; it's about a little person.*" †

Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem*



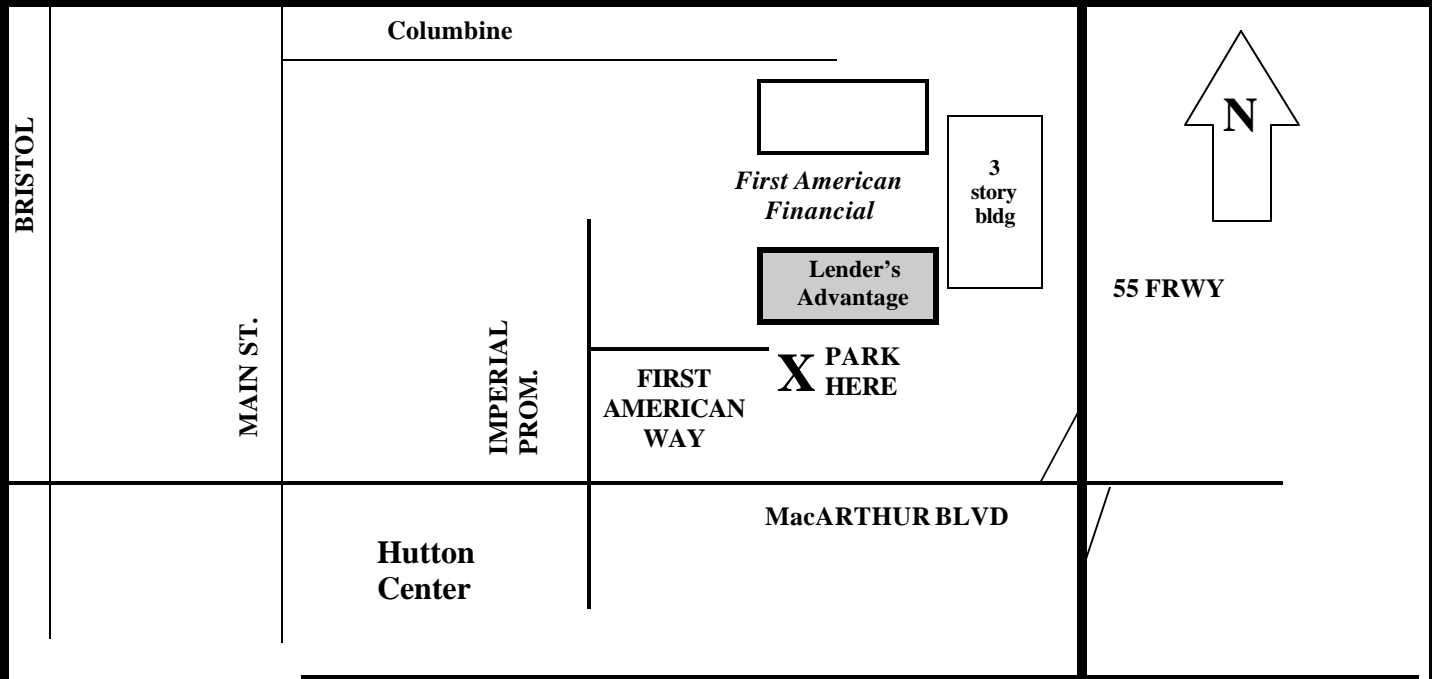
*Latin for "To turn truth into laughter"

IS HELL EXOTHERMIC OR ENDOTHERMIC?

A thermodynamics professor had written a take-home exam for his graduate students. It had one question: "Is hell exothermic or endothermic? Support your answer with a proof."

For non-science majors, exothermic is when something releases heat and endothermic is when something generates heat. Most of the students wrote proofs of their beliefs using Boyle's Law or some variant. One student, however, wrote the following: "First, we postulate that if souls exist, they must have some mass. If they do, then a mole of souls can also have a mass. So, at what rate are souls moving into hell and at what rate are souls leaving? I think that we can safely assume that once a soul gets to hell, it will not leave. Therefore, no souls are leaving. As for souls entering hell, let's look at the different religions that exist in the world today. Some of these religions state that if you are not a member of their religion, you will go to hell. Since there are more than one of these religions and people do not belong to more

than one religion, we can project that all people and all souls go to hell. With birth and death rates as they are, we can expect the number of souls in hell to increase exponentially. Now, we look at the rate of change in volume in hell. Boyle's Law states that in order for the temperature and pressure in hell to stay the same, the ratio of the mass of souls and volume needs to stay constant. #1. So, if hell is expanding at a slower rate than the rate at which souls enter hell, then the temperature and pressure in hell will increase until all hell breaks loose. #2. Of course, if hell is expanding at a rate faster than the increase of souls in hell, then the temperature and pressure will drop until hell freezes over. So which is it? If we accept the postulate given me by Jennifer Smith during Freshman year, and take into account the fact that I still have not succeeded in having sexual relations with her, then #2 cannot be true, and hell is exothermic." The student got an A. †



DIRECTIONS TO MEETING: From the 55 Frwy, take MacArthur off ramp, go west to Imperial Prom. Turn north to First American Way then turn right. At stop sign turn right and follow around to front of 2 story bldg facing south (toward MacArthur Blvd)
Address: Lender's Advantage 3 First American Way, Santa Ana

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**Our
Next
Meeting:**

WHEN: Wednesday April 19th @ *NOON (Lunch)*

TOPIC: *"Forgiveness"*

SPEAKER: Cheryl Ward— A Crime Victim

PLACE: *First American Financial Headquarters*

— *Lender's Advantage Bldg., 3 First American Way, Santa Ana*

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