

# ◆ Ad Veritatem ◆

Volume 6 Issue 2

Official Publication of the St. Thomas More Society

March 2001

## NO MEETING THIS MONTH!

Due to an unfortunate conflict, our normal meeting room at First American is unavailable this month so there will be no meeting in March. Our regular meeting date is the third Wednesday of every month. Reservations are not required. For more information, contact Dave Belz at (949) 347-0447 [dbelz@kuhnbelz.com](mailto:dbelz@kuhnbelz.com), or Anne Lanphar at (714) 800-3225 [alanphar@firstam.com](mailto:alanphar@firstam.com). We look forward to seeing you next month!

### Special Event in May!

On Friday night May 4th, we are co-sponsoring the play "Late Nite Catechism" with Mary's Shelter (a home for pregnant teenage girls). This play is incredibly funny and entertaining while being respectful of the Catholic faith. Whether or not you went to Catholic school, the experience will be enjoyable and the proceeds will benefit Mary's Shelter and our Society.

For more details, see page 8. †

## SPECIAL EVENT "LATE NITE CATECHISM"

WHEN: **Friday May 4th @ 7 pm**

COST: **\$37.50**

PLACE: **St. John Neumann**

**Parish, 5101 Alton Parkway, Irvine**

TICKETS: **Call Mary's Shelter**  
**@ (714) 730-0930**

## Mary's Virginity and Salvation

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



**Question:** *I had a discussion with an Evangelical friend on the virginity of Our Blessed Mother. I pointed out that Protestant reformers Luther, Calvin, Zwingli and taught the*

*historic Christian doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity. He didn't care and said that our salvation doesn't depend on belief about Mary's virginity. All we have to do, he said, is believe that Jesus is our personal Lord and Savior and we will be saved. He also said Catholicism isn't "true" Christianity. What should I tell him?*

**Answer:** The Reformers indeed taught the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity, but

*Mary's Virginity* (Continued on page 2)



*Tyranny comes about through the negligence, greed, and cowardice of respectable people in respectable positions.*

Thomas More

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

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(Continued from page 1) ***Mary's Virginity***

that usually doesn't impress modern-day Protestants like your friend. Protestants agree with the Catholic Church's teaching that faith in Christ is necessary for salvation. But faith in Christ includes faith in and assent to what He taught, His commandments and doctrines. Your friend's minimalist attitude toward what is necessary to salvation risks turning Christianity into a mechanical ideology: "Say the 'sinner's prayer' and you're in, nothing else matters. Just don't become a Catholic." Point out that if there are no conditions for salvation other than faith in Christ as one's Savior, then not being a Catholic cannot be a condition for salvation. If he says you can't be a Catholic and be saved, then he's added a condition and is being inconsistent. This may help him see that there's more to salvation than mere faith in Christ. Jesus reminded us that faith alone isn't sufficient: "Why do you say to me, 'Lord, Lord,' but do not do the things I command?" (Luke 6:46-47; cf. Matt, 7:21-23). This includes believing in all that He and the Apostles taught. And that includes the truth of Mary's perpetual virginity. You see, all of revelation is connected. One cannot say, for example, I'm willing to accept this doctrine but I won't accept that one. That's completely contrary to Christ's will. Your friend's point of view is common among Protestants, who have a tendency to reduce "faith in Christ" to simply the belief that He is our

Savior. But let's remember what "Savior" means. It means that Christ is saving us from something, He is saving us for something, His salvation comes to us in a certain way and under certain conditions (e.g. believe, repent, be baptized, etc.). This also tells us who He is: God Himself. You see what a wealth of doctrinal implications are contained in the word "savior": sin, death, and hell, the commandments, grace, heaven, sacrifice, merit, sacraments, the Church, the Trinity, the Incarnation, His death, Resurrection, and Second Coming.

For those who know and love Christ, there is nothing about Him, His life, His friends, His teachings, that is not of interest or help to them.

Christ came to "bear witness to the truth" (John 18:37) and to reveal many supernatural mysteries about God and the kingdom of God which we could never have known by the power of unaided human reason. Believing the truths about Christ contained in Sacred Scripture are part of having faith in Him. We can't separate faith in the person of Christ from faith in His life and message, in the prophets who preceded Him, and the Apostles and their successors who followed after Him. These Apostles, "the early Church magisterium," proclaimed the truth with the teaching authority Christ gave them: "He who hears you, hears Me" (Luke

*Mary's Virginity* (Continued on page 5)

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**SIMPLE TRUTHS**

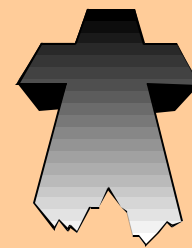


**Fulton J. Sheen**

**"It is the trials imposed upon us by others, such as their injustices, their harsh words, their knife-in-the-back attitudes, and their peevishness, that gall us; yet these are counted as the daily crosses of the man who would be truly religious. Much of the weariness of the spiritual life is due to the constant necessity of bearing the shortcomings of others, along with the never-ending strife against our own base inclinations." †**



# The Myth of the Spanish Inquisition



By David Belz, Esq.

In December 2000, C-Span broadcast a repeat of a live telecast in September 2000 of a debate sponsored by Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. It was repeated because it earned the highest viewer rating when first broadcast in September 2000. The participants were Dr. Alan Keyes and Harvard Prof. of Law, Alan Dershowitz. The topic for the debate was *"The Role of Religion in Modern Culture."*

This was a very intense debate. Shortly into the debate, Prof. Dershowitz abandoned the topic to focus his attack on historical Christianity. As has been very common in recent times with others, he pointed to the Spanish Inquisition as an example of the many instances in history where Christianity was responsible for great injustices. Prof. Dershowitz used this example to make the argument that religion has no place in the public arena and in fact presents a potential danger to the common good.

In recent times we have seen a progression of attacks on Christianity from the academic and secular worlds. These attacks have taken on many forms but the common theme accuses Christianity of excessive aggression over the centuries in the name of religion. The point of this article is to demonstrate how these attacks are based on a historical revisionism that is inconsistent with historical fact and often motivated by a bias against the Catholic Church and Christianity in general.

Shortly after the C-Span debate in December,

the History Channel broadcast a 1994 BBC production called *"The Myth of the Spanish Inquisition."* In this 60 minute production archives from the time of the Inquisition were examined by historians to determine the true historical facts for what has been called a dark scar on the face of historical Christianity.

**The more severe tortures were characterized in the History Channel special as abuses by the civil authorities, not the clergy. The Church is on record for condemning the abuses of the courts of inquisition.**

The term, *"Inquisition,"* derives itself from the words inquiry or inquire. It means questioning into an issue through a court of inquiry. Our present day grand jury performs a similar investigative function. The Spanish Inquisition is associated with the medieval event traced back to 1478. However, in historical terms this was not the first such event. With the establishment of the Holy Roman Empire in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century early forms of the Inquisition are recorded. The Spanish Inquisition ceased to exist by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and was abolished by decree in 1834.

With the establishment of the Roman Empire, Christianity became the religion of Europe resulting in a close alliance between the Church and State. This made unity of faith essential not only to the Church but also to the civil order. Heresy became a crime against the State and was akin to anarchy in the view of the civil authorities.

In medieval times because of political and cultural circumstances the Church was very much involved in matters of the State. At that time there was a common conviction that religious belief was

(Continued from page 3) ***Inquisition Myth***

objective and therefore outside the realm of private judgment. It was also believed that by holding to common tenets of faith the civil order would be maintained serving the welfare of the state. King Peter of Aragon voiced this view when he said, "*The enemies of the Cross of Christ and violators of the Christian law are likewise our enemies and the enemies of our kingdom, and ought therefore be dealt with as such.*" Modern critics of the Church often fail to recognize these important facts.

Manichaeism was one of the heresies of the medieval era. The Manichians viewed all matter as evil. All things spiritual were good. They believed the sacrament of marriage was a demonical institution, therefore; a woman who was pregnant was considered possessed and therefore the child was the product of evil. They were very righteous on the outside but operated in a very secretive way. This heretical group was perceived as a threat to the state. The governments of the Inquisition used the tribunal courts to identify the leaders of the Manichaeans just as governments today set up authorities or tribunals to identify threats to the state, i.e. Congressional committees of investigation.

Heresy against the Christian faith was not the only concern of the state at the time of the Inquisition. The Spanish Inquisition was established during the reign of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. At the time of the Spanish Inquisition, Spain had just finished a 750-year war with the Muslims who had presented a substantial threat to the Christian governments of Europe. The Muslim threat was thought to be very real and the governments of that time sought to protect their realms against it.

The Court of Inquisition was set up to determine whether people were who they purported to be versus agents of insurrection for the Muslims. There were various atrocities that created an intense fear of insurrection by the Muslims. In 1480 the Turks attacked a little Catholic town in Italy called Atronto. The attack was vicious. All Catholic residents were put to death for not converting to Muslim. The Catholic Archbishop was murdered by being sawed in two. All priests were tortured to death. This town was not far from the border with

Spain. It was with the knowledge of this threat of attack that Courts of Inquisition operated.

Upon learning of this attack the civil authorities in Spain, fearing an impending invasion, set up a court to identify subversives within the population who may have been sympathetic to the Turks and who were posing as Catholics.

What is never mentioned by the critics is the number of people who were saved from unjust punishment by the tribunal of the Inquisition. In the first 25 years of the Spanish Inquisition, beginning in 1480, about 100,000 people were denounced. Out of the 100,000 people, more than 80,000 were found to be innocent. About 15,000 were found to be guilty of being imposters and secretly working to subvert the State.

Those individuals found guilty were required to take an oath of loyalty to the State and the Christian faith. Of the 15,000 people found guilty, only 2,000 were actually put to death. The reasons for death was a finding that these individuals had in fact lied during their trial and had in fact lied in taking the oath of loyalty to the state and therefore were found to have committed an act of treason.

Clergy played a role in this tribunal since they were experts in matters of ecclesiastics. Franciscans and Dominicans dominated these ranks because of their reputation for piety and wisdom in matters of faith. Although members of the Church were involved with these tribunals, the trials were set up by the State and run by the State, not the Church.

The Spanish Inquisition was a product of its political and cultural time. The punishments commonly mentioned were not as common as reported. The more severe tortures were characterized in the History Channel special as abuses by the civil authorities, not the clergy. The Church is on record for condemning the abuses of the courts of inquisition. Never is it recorded that Church officials complained that the punishments were too merciful.

It should also be understood the approval for these techniques of torture were a natural expression of a popular hatred for heresy in an age when criminals of all types were dealt with in a much harsher manner than today.

***Inquisition Myth*** (Continued on page 6)

## Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem\*



\*Latin for "To turn truth into laughter"

### Divine Advice

A businessman was in a great deal of trouble. His business was failing, he had put everything he had into the business, he owed everybody - it was so bad he was even contemplating suicide. As a last resort he went to a priest and poured out his story of tears and woe.

When he had finished, the priest said, *"Here's what I want you to do: Put a beach chair and your Bible in your car and drive down to the beach. Take the beach chair and the Bible to the water's edge, sit down in the beach chair, and put the Bible in your lap. Open the Bible; the wind will rattle the pages, but finally the open Bible will come to rest on a page. Look down at the page and read the first thing you see. That will be your answer, that will tell you what to do."*

A year later the businessman went back to the priest and brought his wife and children with him. The man was in a new custom-tailored suit, his wife in a mink coat, the children shining. The

businessman pulled an envelope stuffed with money out of his pocket, gave it to the priest as a donation in thanks for his advice.

The priest recognized the benefactor, and was curious. *"You did as I suggested?"* he asked. *"Absolutely,"* replied the businessman.

*"You went to the beach?"*

*"Absolutely."*

*"You sat in a beach chair with the Bible in your lap?"*

*"Absolutely."*

*"You let the pages rattle until they stopped?"*

*"Absolutely."*

*"And what were the first words you saw?"*

*"Chapter 11." †*



(Continued from page 2) **Mary's Virginity** 10:16; cf. Matt. 16:18, 18:18).

And remember what Christ command the magisterium of His Church to do: *"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you"* (Matt. 28:19-20). Christ wants Christians to assent to and profess all the doctrines contained in the Deposit of Faith, including the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity. He reminds us that, *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of My Father in Heaven."* (Matt. 7:21). †

**FRANK ERNEST**



Thought  
For  
The  
Day



## THE EMPTY CHAIR

A man's daughter had asked the local priest to come and pray with her father. When the priest arrived, he found the man lying in bed with his head propped up on two pillows. An empty chair sat beside his bed. The priest assumed that the old fellow had been informed of his visit. *"I guess you were expecting me,"* he said. *"No, who are you?"* asked the father.

The priest told him his name and then remarked, *"I see the empty chair; I figured you knew I was going to show up."*

*"Oh yeah, the chair,"* said the bedridden man. *"Would you mind closing the door?"* Puzzled, the priest shut the door. *"I have never told anyone this, not even my daughter,"* said the man. *"But all of my life I have never known how to pray. At church I used to hear the pastor talk about prayer, but it went right over my head. I abandoned any attempt at prayer,"* the old man continued, *"until one day about four years ago my best friend said to me, 'Johnny, prayer is just a simple matter of having a conversation with Jesus. Here is what I suggest.' 'Sit down in a chair; place an empty chair in front of you, and in faith see Jesus on the chair. It's not spooky because he promised, 'I'll be with you always.' Then just speak to him in the same way you're doing with me right now. So, I tried it and I've liked it so much that I do it a couple of hours every day. I'm careful though. If my daughter saw me talking to an empty chair, she'd either have a nervous breakdown or send me off to the funny farm"* The priest was deeply moved by the story and encouraged the old man to continue on the journey. Then he prayed with him, anointed him with holy oil, and returned to the church.

Two nights later the daughter called to tell the priest that her daddy had died that afternoon. *"Did he die in peace?"* he asked *"Yes, when I left the house about two o'clock, he called me over to his bedside, told me he loved me and kissed me on the cheek. When I got back from the store an hour later, I found him dead. But there was something strange about his death. Apparently, just before Daddy died, he leaned over and rested his head on the chair beside the bed. What do you make of that?"*

The priest wiped a tear from his eye and said, *"I wish we could all go like that."* †

(Continued from page 4) ***Inquisition Myth***

A look at history demonstrates that every age has had its characteristic traits that in later generations were considered outrageous and uncivilized. There was a time when slavery in this country was considered a good and customary practice. But in later times the cruel reality of what slavery really embodied turned the tide of public opinion and ultimately resulted in its demise.

Our moment in history is no exception. It can be said that ours is an unprecedented time in history when it comes to atrocities perpetrated against the lives of the unborn. A reading of the recent Supreme Court case, Stenberg v Carhart, would have shocked the generations of our forefathers. There will come a time when our descendants will look back with equal criticism and disbelief at our attitudes and practices on abortion.

It is common in the political arena today to hear people like Professor Dershowitz distort historical circumstance as a debating tactic. This abuse of

historical reality encourages religious intolerance within our culture when it seeks to defame those institutions that defend the value of human life and encourage the implementation of social justice in our political process. What was not mentioned in the debate between Dr. Keyes and Prof. Dershowitz were the **millions** of people, over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century alone, who have been killed in inquisitions committed in the name of Godless governments and ideologies. A few names that come to mind would be Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin, Adolph Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Pol Pot (Khmer Rouge), Fidel Castro or Mao Tse-tung, These millions of murders pale in comparison to the 2,000 executions recorded during the 300 to 400 year history of the Spanish Inquisition.

**Characters of the Inquisition** by William Walsh (Tan books) is a very scholarly treatment on the Inquisition as is **Reasons for Hope** by Warren Carroll. †



## Scriptural Corner:

***“<sup>19</sup>Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, <sup>20</sup>but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Mathew 6:19-21***

### **Comment from the Navarre Bible:\***

The idea here is very clear: man’s heart yearns for a treasure which will give him security and happiness. However, every treasure in the form of earthly goods—wealth, property—becomes a constant source of worry, because there is always the risk we will lose it or because the effort to protect it is such a strain.

Against this, Jesus teaches us here that our true treasure lies in good works and an upright life, which will be eternally rewarded by God in heaven. That indeed is a treasure which one never loses, a treasure on which Christ’s disciple should pout his heart.

Jesus closes the teaching contained in the preceding verses with a kind of refrain (v. 21). He is not saying that people should be unconcerned about earthly things; what he does say is that no created thing can be “the treasure”, the ultimate aim, of man. What man should do is make his way to God, sanctify himself and give all glory to God, by making right use of the noble things of the earth: “Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor 10:32; cf. Col 3:17).

*\*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. †*

## The Writings of Thomas More

### MORE ON WEALTH

**Though they were, by any standard, quite wealthy, the Mores were taught never to consider money their own. This lesson Sir Thomas taught his children by both word and deed, In a writing contest he set up between his daughter Meg and himself, he explained how to use riches properly:**

*It is not a sin to have riches, but to love riches. “If riches come to you, set not your heart on them,” says Holy Scripture...He who forgets that his goods are the goods of God, and who reckons himself an owner rather than a disposer, takes himself to be rich. And because he reckons these riches to be his own, he casts his love on them and so much is his love set less upon God, For as Holy Scripture says, “Where your treasure is, there is your heart.”*



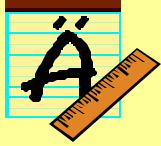
**This theoretical lesson was proved by More’s own practice. For example, he rented a house for the poor and had his children care for it. Then there was the year of famine when More fed a hundred people a day at his home.**

**Thomas More: A Portrait of Courage**

**By: Gerard B. Wegemer**

**(Pg. 84-5) †**

The St. Thomas More Society & Mary's Shelter Present:



# LATE NITE CATECHISM



**"RICH WITH LAUGHTER!"**

—Fox TV News

**"HILARIOUSLY AUTHORITARIAN"**

—Daily News

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—Associated Press

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## THE HOLY FATHER

The Roman Pontiff, as the successor of Peter, is the perpetual and visible principle and foundation of unity of both the bishops and of the faithful.

LUMEN GENTIUM, 23



### HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR MARCH

The Holy Father's general prayer intention is:

*"That, with the committed help of all believers, the scourge of poverty may come to an end, eliminating the intolerable social and economic inequality in the world."*

His missionary intention is:

*"That the heroism of the Martyrs and of the 'Witnesses to the faith' who have been remembered during the Great Jubilee may spur all people to increase ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue." †*





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### John (Jay) McCauley, Esq.

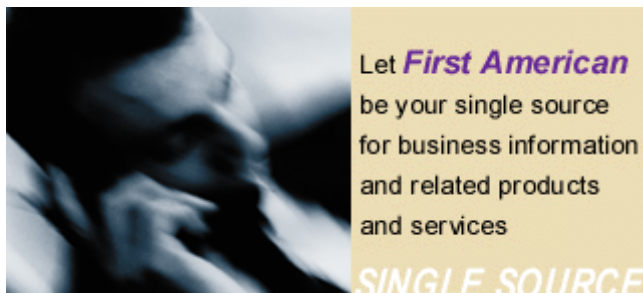
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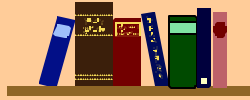
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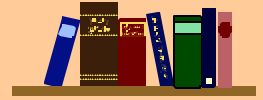
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# From the Library



## LIFE OF CHRIST

*By: Bishop Fulton J. Sheen*

Life of Christ has been hailed as the most eloquent of Fulton Sheen's writing, the fruit of many years of dedication and research. Filled with compassion and brilliant scholarship, his recounting of the birth, life, Crucifixion, and Resurrection of Christ is as dramatic and moving as the subject Himself. Here is a passionate portrait of the God-Man, the teacher, the healer, and most of all, the Savior whose promise has sustained humanity for two millennia.

*"It was not so much that His birth cast a shadow on His life, and led to His death,"* writes Sheen. *"It was rather that the Cross was there from the beginning, and it cast its shadow backward to his birth."* With his customary insight and reverence, the author interprets the scripture and describes Christ not only in historical perspective but in exciting and contemporary terms; he sees in Christ's life modern parallels and timeless lessons. Sheen probes the hearts of many prominent New Testament figures—Joseph and Mary. Peter and the disciples, Herod, Pilate, et. al—shedding new light on age-old events. The whole adds up to a masterful study: a faithful blending of philosophy, history, and biblical exegesis.

This book has been a revelation to countless readers, as well as a source of inspiration and guidance. Every Christian should read and own this vivid retelling of the greatest life ever lived.

Image Publishers

ISBN: 0-385-13220-4

Price: \$ 12.95 †

## AD VERITATEM

*St. Thomas More Society*

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**Our  
Next  
Meeting:**

# ***NO MEETING IN MARCH!***

**FOR INFORMATION:** Anne Lanphar 714 800-3225 [alanphar@firstam.com](mailto:alanphar@firstam.com)  
or Dave Belz @ 949 347-0447 [dbelz@kuhnbelz.com](mailto:dbelz@kuhnbelz.com)

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