eritatei Volume 8 Issue 5 **MAY 2003** St. Thomas More Society of Orange County To contemplate reality as it is, we must first have trained ourselves to flee the "vain pleasures of the flesh that keep out the very pleasures of the soul." Thomas More: Portrait of Courage By Gerard Wegemer **MAY MEETING:** NOON WEDNESDAY MAY 21, 2003 FR. NORBERT WOOD, O. PRAEM "MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH" DETAILS ON PAGE 3 "Ad Veritatem" is Latin for "Toward the truth."

Page 2 Ad Veritatem



WHO WE ARE

In 1966, the movie *A Man For All Seasons* inspired the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to recognize this film as the Picture of the Year. This was one of the few occasions in the history of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences where the life of a religious figure won the hearts of the motion picture industry's elite. The central figure portrayed in *Man For All Seasons* was, of course, St. Thomas More, the great lawyer, statesman, apologist, husband, father and faithful Catholic. In 2000, St. Thomas was honored as the Lawyer of the Millennium by a secular panel of historians for the British Commonwealth. Shortly thereafter, John Paul II declared St. Thomas as the Patron Saint of Statesmen.

Inspired by a homily given by Bishop Norman McFarland at the 1995 Red Mass of Orange County, 5 "fearless" members of the Orange County bar met shortly thereafter at the law offices of Rutan and Tucker in Costa Mesa. These lawyers all shared the realization that the legal practice takes a severe toll on the personal and spiritual lives of those involved in it and that many in the legal profession had become too focused on the material life with the natural consequence being the de-emphasis on their spiritual life. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the formation of a new organization for lawyers and judges in the County of Orange with its mission being to publicly support and encourage the spiritual development of its members in their Catholic faith. The group chose as its patron St. Thomas More, the greatest lawyer of his time, who was a dedicated husband and father with a deep and profound commitment to his Catholic faith, his profession and his fellow man. Thus the St. Thomas More Society of Orange County was born.

Attendance at the monthly meetings in the early years was sporadic. Our spiritual director, Fr Hugh Barbour, wisely advised us not to worry about numbers because it was more important "to be than to do or say." He encouraged the virtues of patience and perseverance. His sage advice, together with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and St. Thomas More, has led us to our current level of a fourteen member Board of Directors of lawyers and judges and a mailing list for the monthly newsletter of over 970.

The goal of the Society is to inspire and lift up the minds and hearts of the legal community of Orange County to follow the example of St. Thomas More by integrating God in every aspect of their professional and personal lives. The Society seeks to accomplish this goal through inspirational speakers at monthly meetings, this newsletter, the Red Mass, a website, an annual spiritual retreat and other events. The St. Thomas More Society also seeks to provide a haven where those who are committed to their Catholic faith as well as those who are seeking to learn more about the Church, can find fellowship and encouragement in the face of overwhelming media and cultural forces working against that pursuit.

St. Thomas More, please pray for us. \$\dagger\$

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

David Belz at (949) 347-0447 or email to dbelz@kuhnbelz.com, or Anne Lanphar at (714) 800-3225 or email to alanphar@firstam.com.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE at www.stthomasmore.net

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FR. NORBERT WOOD, O. PRAEM "MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH"

WHEN: Noon Wed. May 21st

WHERE:

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Jeffery Lee Wood was born in Oklahoma on October 12, 1956, one of 7 children. He grew up in Pennsylvania and Minnesota. He entered the Norbertine Order at St. Michael's Abbey in Orange County in 1975 and was ordained in 1981. He attended the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theology followed by three years of liturgical studies at the Pontifical Liturgical Institute of St. Anselm in Rome.

Within the Norbertine Order, he has served as the Associate Master of novices and postulants and a teacher at St. Michael's Abbey. He was the Master of professed and novices at the Norbertine monastery of Tepl in Villingen, Germany. Fr. Norbert was the local superior of the Norbertine community in San Pedro, California and a teacher at Mater Dei and Mary Star of the Sea high schools. Fr. has also served on numerous religious and civic committees.

For more information, please contact either David Belz at (949) 347-0447 or email to dbelz@kuhnbelz.com, or Anne Lanphar at (714) 800-3225 or alanphar@firstam.com. EVERYONE IS WELCOME! \$\Psi\$

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MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2003
HOLY FAMILY CATHEDRAL
6:30 PM MASS
RECEPTION FOLLOWING

FOR DETAILS, SEE PAGE 15

on rollowing

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SPECIAL DINNER MEETING
WITH GUEST SPEAKER:
PROF. RONALD RYCHLAK

SEE PAGE 11 FOR DETAILS

CALENDAR REMINDERS



4

A Message from our Chaplain

Mary and the Serpent

5

Your Heavenly Momma Wears Combat Boots!

7

A Message from Pope John Paul II

The Rosary

0

National Catholic Conference

15

Truth or Myth
The Incorruptibles

IN THIS ISSUE:



Your Heavenly Momma Wears Combat Boots! Page 5



The Incorruptible

16

Cyber Heaven
Catholic Information Network

18

The Writings of More
More on the Interior Life

19

Thought for the Day

Where Do They Get Young Men Like This?

22

From the Library

Hail, Holy Queen: The Mother of God in the Word of God Page 4 Ad Veritatem

MARY AND THE SERPENT

FR. HUGH BARBOUR, O. PRAEM, PH.D.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN

Question: I noticed a statue of Mary stepping on a snake. I asked the owner of the store to explain what this meant. She said that in Genesis 3:15 the Lord said that Mary would someday crush the serpent's head, the serpent being the devil. I checked this in my Bible (a Catholic version that I bought at the same shop). But Genesis 3:15 doesn't say that. It says that the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head. I understand this to be Jesus Christ, not Mary. So, how can that statue of Mary with the serpent be justified?

Answer: In the Book of Genesis 3:15 God speaks to the serpent after the fall of Adam and Eve into sin, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed; He shall crush your head and you shall lie in wait for his heel." This is a correct translation of the original Hebrew text and the traditional text of the Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament. But two ancient translations, the Latin Vulgate (revised by St. Jerome) and the ancient Coptic version (Coptic is the Egyptian language used prior to the Arab Muslim invasions), read, "She shall crush your head." But current editions of the Bible in modern languages, translations from the original languages, all follow the translation "He shall crush."

Now, in order to understand why Our Lady is depicted crushing the serpent, you need to know that the whole of Christian tradition in any language of East or West interprets that passage as a prophecy of the coming of the Messiah or Savior, Jesus Christ, the "seed of the woman." He is the Second or New Adam, and His Mother Mary, because she was completely free from sin, both original and actual, is the new Eve, the only woman who has a perfect enmity with the devil. This passage, sometimes referred to as the Protoevangelium (Greek = "first Gospel") is the first announcement of the Good News of Salvation after the Bad News of Sin and Death. Many popes, including the Pope John Paul II, have repeatedly interpreted this passage in a prophetic sense, referring to Christ and Mary. Take a look, for example, at Pope John Paul II's Marian encyclical Redemptoris Mater. The Catechism's teaching on this passage is found in paragraphs 70, 410, and 411.



THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1767-69) Some Scripture scholars deny that this passage refers to Jesus or Mary. They see the literal sense of this verse only as a popular folk tale, written as a way to explain why humans are afraid of snakes! (That's a slippery interpretation if there ever was one.)

Naturally in the Latin tradition, because of the translation "she shall crush," the passage has had a more vivid Marian meaning. That's where the tradition of depicting Mary crushing the head of the serpent arose. But it's a very apt and theologically precise image, nonetheless, since it's a perfect image of her Immaculate Conception, her lifelong immunity from sin, won for her by Christ's saving passion and death on the cross (cf. Luke 1:47). This is one reason why the new liturgy of the Roman Rite, promulgated at Vatican II, retains the reading "she will crush your head." It is part of the antiphon (a short thematic verse) used for Mass on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. It's part of the Church's tradition, a witness to the Blessed Virgin Mary's special role in her Divine Son's plan of salvation. \P

YOUR HEAVENLY MOMMA WEARS COMBAT BOOTS!

DAVID BELZ, ESQ.

In the first books of the Bible, Genesis 1 and 2, God created everything out of nothing proclaiming all His creation as good. But then in Genesis 3, something went wrong. In the form of a serpent, Satan, the cleverest and the most devious of all creatures, approaches Eve, the mother of all the living, and asks her if she can eat the fruit in the garden. Eve responds that yes, but adds that God has prohibited them from eating the fruit from the tree in the center of the garden. The serpent tells Eve she should not believe God and insists that if she eats the fruit from this tree, she will be able to see for herself what is good and what is evil because she will obtain the wisdom of God.

St. Thomas Aquinas identifies pride as the root of original sin. Both Adam and Eve chose of their free will to put their own self-interest, their pride, ahead of their obedience to God. Satan played to their pride tempting them with the vision that they would "be like God." Who wouldn't want that?

This first act of disobedience fractured the perfect harmony between God and man. Genesis tells us that the serpent succeeded as a mercenary of disharmony. In response to Satan's inducement, our first parents freely chose to disobey God. But in Genesis 3:14, God did not respond to this act of disobedience by crushing or killing the serpent or Adam or Eve but rather in a parental act of mercy, God's words provide some hope for the future of mankind: He foretells that He will send a savior and that a woman will be the leader of the earthly family's opposition to Satan. God's plan of redemption of the human race evolved around Mary who was to act as the adversary of Satan, the Evil One who seeks always to destroy the relationship between her Son and mankind.

So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, 'Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman [emphasis added], and between your offspring and hers; he (her son) will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." Genesis 3:14-15

Chapter VII of the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church (*Lumen Gentium*) confirms the importance of the Genesis passages:

The Sacred Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament, as well as ancient Tradition show the role of the Mother of the Savior in the economy of salvation in an ever-clearer light and draw attention to it. The books of the Old Testament describe the history of salvation, by which the coming of Christ into the world was slowly prepared. These earliest documents, as they are read in the Church and are understood in the light of a further and full revelation, bring the figure of the woman, Mother of the Redeemer, into a gradually clearer light. When it is looked at in this way, she is already prophetically foreshadowed in the promise of victory over the serpent, which was given to our first parents after their fall into sin.

The final book of the Bible, Revelation, gives us another glimpse of our Lady's role in a celestial war:

A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and

Combat Boots (Continued on page 6)



THE VIRGIN OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND ST JOHN

El Greco (1585)

Page 6 Ad Veritatem

(Continued from page 5) Combat Boots

flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born. She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne. The woman fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days. And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. Revelation 12:1-9.

Who is this woman, Mary? Who is this mother that Christ gave to us? What is her role in the Church and this world? The Catholic Catechism instructs us:

By her complete adherence to the Father's will, to his Son's redemptive work, and to every prompting of the Holy Spirit, the Virgin Mary is the Church's model of faith and charity. Thus she is a "preeminent and wholly unique member of the Church;" indeed, she is the "exemplary realization" of the Church.

Her role in relation to the Church and to all humanity goes still further. "In a wholly singular way she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope, and burning charity in the Savior's work of restoring supernatural life to souls. For this reason she is a mother to us in the order of grace." CC 967 & 968

So what is the evidence that Mary has served as a leader in this battle against Satan, the angel of darkness? As we have seen, the proof comes from Sacred Scripture but is also confirmed by certain historical events: Marian apparitions which are supernatural visions, bodily or visual, where Mary appears to people on earth and, in most cases, leaves some sign or confirmation of the authenticity of the event.

The Church does not rush to judgment on these events. The Church conducts thorough and cautious investigations before declaring an apparition as valid. Even in the cases where the apparition is judged to have the requisite supernatural qualities, the Church recognizes them as private revelations which means they are not considered equal to Holy Scripture.

Mary's first participation in an apparition occurs in the Gospel of Luke. The angel Gabriel, at the moment of the Annunciation, salutes her as "full of grace." The Church teaches that Mary was enriched from the first instant of her conception by the splendor of an entirely unique holiness and thus professes that Mary is truly the "Mother of God" ("Theotokos"). CC 492 & 495

Through the centuries there have been numerous reported apparitions or visitations by Mary each of which coincided with some spiritual urgency within the Church. In each instance, Mary specifically calls for greater holiness and reminds "her children," (as she always refers to us), that prayer, repentance, conversion and devotion are the ways to growing closer to her Son.

The earliest record of a Marian apparition dates back to Gregory the Wonderworker (A.D. 270) who was an Eastern mystic who studied under Origen at the school of Caesarea in Palestine. Gregory lived during the time of the Arian heresy. As a young man studying to be a priest, he struggled to find his way through the confusions of the Arian teachings to find the truth. One day he had a vision of an old man (St. John the Apostle) and a beautiful woman (Mary). The two figures spoke to one another and then revealed to Gregory the truths of the "true faith." Thereafter, Gregory became a champion in the fight against Arianism.

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

The Lady declared that she was "The Lady of the Rosary" and gave the children this final message, "People must amend their lives, ask pardon for their sins, and not offend my Son any more for He is already greatly offended."

Combat Boots (Continued on page 12)

THE ROSARY

In a recent audience with Cardinal Norberto Rivera Carrera, John Paul II mentioned his July visit this year to Mexico to canonize Juan Diego. "Ever since I went on pilgrimage for the first time to the splendid Shrine of Guadalupe on January 29, 1979, she has guided my steps in these almost 25 years of service as Bishop of Rome and universal pastor of the Church."

Certainly we can see the evidence of that statement in his participation in the prophecy of Fatima when his blood was shed by the assassination attempt in 1981. The personal charisma he shares with the world has given rise to his anticipated legacy as "Pope John Paul II, the Great." As he has said, the source of his strength derives from his devotion to Mary. The rosary is his favorite prayer.

In October 2002, John Paul released a new apostolic letter, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*. The rosary (which means "Crown of Roses") of the Virgin Mary is a personal as well as ecclesiastical summary of the age old prayer to Mary. John Paul's personal reflections bring an added dimension to the depth of the letter.

The Pope's letter starts out, "The Rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at heart a Christocentric prayer. In the sobriety of its elements, it has all the depth of the Gospel message in its entirety, of which it can be said to be a compendium." The succession of Hail Mary's "constitutes the warp on which is woven the contemplation of the mysteries" of Christ's life. The Gospel accounts of Christ's life makes up the essential blueprint for the Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries.

He identifies a crisis of the Rosary which is not being taught or encouraged to the younger generation. He also seeks to calm the fear of some that the Rosary is somehow "unecumenical" because of its distinctly Marian character.

He then states, "But the most important reason for strongly encouraging the practice of the Rosary is that it represents a most effective means of fostering among the faithful that commitment to the contemplation of the Christian mystery which I have proposed in the Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* as a genuine 'training in holiness': 'What is needed is a Christian life distinguished above all in the art of prayer.' Inasmuch as contemporary culture, even amid so many indications to the contrary, has witnessed the flowering of a new call for spirituality, due also to the influence of other religions, it is more urgent than ever that our Christian communities should become 'genuine schools of prayer.'"

To recognize and contemplate the face and person of Christ is the task of each one of us. The Pope points us to the words of St. Paul, "Beholding the glory of the Lord, we are being changed into his likeness, from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." (2 Cor. 3:18) "From the divine standpoint, the Spirit is the interior teacher who leads us to the full truth of Christ." The Holy Father further says, "The contemplation of Christ has an incomparable model in Mary" because it was in her womb He was conceived and it was before her eyes He grew. And as we are told in Scripture, "She kept all these things, pondering them in her heart." (Lk. 2:51) The Pope states clearly that, "If Jesus, the one Mediator, is the Way of our prayer, then Mary, his purest and most transparent reflection, shows us the Way."

The Pope gives us a glimpse of his own personal journey under the guidance of Mary's eye:

"This is the luminous principle expressed by the Second Vatican Council which I have so powerfully experienced in my own life and have made the basis of my

The Rosary (Continued on page 8)



FROM
PETER'S
SUCCESSOR,
POPE
JOHN
PAUL
II



The Pope's Personal Motto: "Totus Tuus" means "Totally Yours"

*David Belz, Esq.

Page 8 Ad Veritatem



MADONNA OF THE ROSARY Lorenzo Lotto (1539)

(Continued from page 7) **The Rosary**

episcopal motto: Totus Tuus. The motto is of course inspired by the teaching of Saint Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort, who explained in the following words Mary's role in the process of our configuration to Christ: 'Our entire perfection consists in being conformed, united and consecrated to Jesus Christ. Hence the most perfect of all devotions is undoubtedly that which conforms, unites and consecrates us most perfectly to Jesus Christ. Now, since Mary is of all creatures the one most conformed to Jesus Christ, it follows that among all devotions that which most consecrates and conforms a soul to our Lord is devotion to Mary, his Holy Mother, and that the more a soul is consecrated to her the more will it be consecrated to Jesus Christ.' Never as in the Rosary do the life of Jesus and that of Mary appear so deeply joined. Mary lives only in Christ and for Christ!"

The Pope proposes five additional mysteries ("Luminous Mysteries" or "Mysteries of Light") from the public life of Jesus. The Holy Father singles out: (1) His Baptism in the Jordan, (2) His self-manifestation at the wedding of Cana, (3) His proclamation of the Kingdom of God, with His call to conversion, (4) His Transfiguration, and finally, (5) His institution of the Eucharist, as the sacramental expression of the Paschal Mystery.

The Holy Father says it is his desire that during the course of this year the Rosary should be especially emphasized and promoted in the various Christian communities. "I, therefore, proclaim the year from October 2002 to October 2003 'the Year of the Rosary." ₽

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY*



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The Society was born in 1833 in Paris, France. Its founder was a layman, Frederic Ozanam. Frédéric Ozanam left his home in Lyon, France, in the autumn of 1831, for Paris. He registered in the School of Law at the Sorbonne, University of Paris.

Frédéric met with other students to form a discussion group. At such a meeting, one challenged Frédéric and the practicing Catholics. He admitted that the Catholic Church had done much good work in the past, but "What do you do now?" Inspired, the group decided to found the "Conference of Charity" to assist the poor. The name was quickly changed to THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL after their patron.

In 1845, the first conference in the United States was formed in St. Louis.

The Society is formed into parish conferences consisting of 2 to 10 persons who meet weekly, pray together and discuss current cases being handled. All calls are made in pairs to avoid scandal and to help the recipients feel more at ease. Wherever there is a need the Vincentians go two-by-two and do what they can to ease the suffering of their fellow human beings.

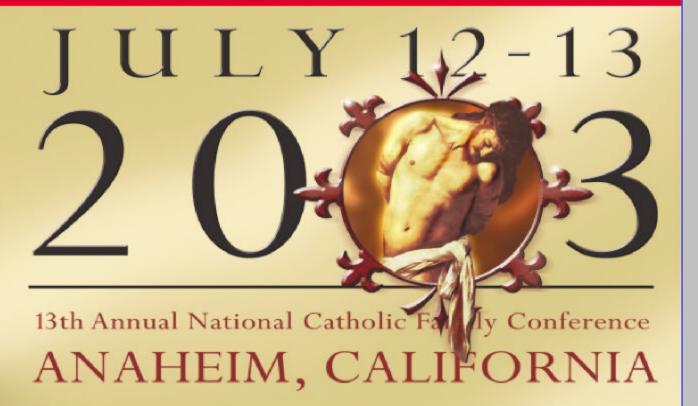
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Page 10 Ad Veritatem



DR. SCOTT HAHN, esteemed professor of theology at the Praints on University of Steuberville, is a popular author, speaker and father of six. His books include the best-selling Hall, Holy Queez and The Lamb'r Supper. Dr. Halmit impressive body of work also includes over severity-five Catholic tape series available from St. Joseph Communications.



ALEX C. JONES was a Persecostal/Evangelical minister for twenty-five years before converting to Catholicism. After much research and reflection, Alex discovered both biblioid and historical support for the Catholic Church's dain of originality and apostolicity. He has since led his family and many members of his former congregation to Catholicism. Our ently, Alex is the Associate Director for Sign Me Up!, an evangelisation project for the Archdiocese of Detroit, MI



PATHER MICHAEL MANNING is a Catholic priest whose unique ministry is television. With degrees in Philosophy and Theology (plus an M.F.A. in play writing), he is presently seen nationally on Cornerstone Television and the Trinity Broadcasting Network. Father has also written many books and booklets, including Fusion My Leaven Smale!, and Proclaimed from the Rossboys.



TIM STAPLES is a full-time evangelist and Director of Evangelization at the Catholic Resource Center. Tim was raised a Baptist and was an Assembly of God Youth Pastor Since his conversion he has given hundreds of talks and helped thousands of Catholics find their way back bome. Tim can speak extensively on every Catholic issue and is especially effective in apologetics, bible study, Mary, and the Eucharist

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MICHAEL CUMBIE is an evangelical convert to Catholicism. Before entering into the Catholic Church in 2001, be had been ordained to the prienthood in the Chartematic Episcopal Church in 1993. Michael now shares with others his incredible spiritual journey into the fullness of the Paith and teaches about the importance of authentic liturgical worship.



JEFF CAVINS returned to Catholicism after pastoring in Protestant Churches for 12 years. Jeff is an accomplished speaker and travels throughout the country speaking to Catholics of all ages. He is especially gifted it relating to teems, speaking on apologetics, and teaching the Bible timeline and salvation history



VERY REV. WILLIAM CASEY, C.P.M. is the Superior Ceneral of the Fathers of Mercy, a Roman Catholic Congregation of priests headquartered in South Union, Kentucky Their primary apostolate is to preach parish missions, to give retreats, with a special emphasis on the Eucharist and Confession. As the Superior General, Father oversees the apostolic activities of this rapidly growing religious community



OTHER SPEAKERS INCLUDE: Kimberly Hahn, Stephen Ray, Ken Hensley, Fr. Shannon Michael Collins, C.P.M., Matthew Arnold Tom Wilson, Johnny Romero, Barbara McGuigan, Fr. Antoine Thomas, Shevawn Pearson, Ed Visenor, Ruben Quezada, And Morell

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GOD'S GIFT TO US

A baby asked God, "They tell me you are sending me to earth Tomorrow, but how am I going to live there being so small and helpless?"

God answered, "Your angel will be waiting for you and will take care of you."

The child further inquired, "But tell me, here in heaven I don't have to do anything but sing and smile to be happy."

God said, "Your angel will sing for you and will also smile for you. And you will feel your angel's love and be very happy."

Again the child asked, "And how am I going to be able to understand when people talk to me if I don't know the language?"

God said, "Your angel will tell you the most beautiful and sweet words you will ever hear, and with much patience and care, your angel will teach you how to speak."

"And what am I going to do when I want to talk to you?"

God said, "Your angel will place your hands together and will teach you how to pray."

"Who will protect me?"

God said, "Your angel will defend you even if it means risking it's life."

"But I will always be sad because I will not see you anymore."

God said, "Your angel will always talk to you about Me and will teach you the way to come back to Me, even though I will always be next to you."

At that moment there was much peace in Heaven, but voices from Earth could be heard and the child hurriedly asked, "God, if I am to leave now, please tell me my angel's name."

"You will simply call her, 'Mom." \$\P\$





SPECIAL JUNE DINNER MEETING

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SPEAKER: PROFESSOR RONALD RYCHLAK AUTHOR OF HITLER, THE WAR & THE POPE

RSVP REQUIRED ANNE LANPHAR alanphar@firstam.com or (714) 800-3215 †

Page 12 Ad Veritatem

(Continued from page 6) Combat Boots

During the last 150 years, heralded as the Marian Age, there has been a dramatic increase in Marian apparitions: LaSalette (France), Lourdes (France), Knock (Ireland), Beauraing and Banneux (Belgium), Tepeyac (Mexico), Fatima (Portugal), Akita (Japan), Kibeho (Africa), Zeitun (Egypt), Betania (Venezuela), Medjugorje (Yugoslavia) and many more.

The visionaries in these events, both adult and child, possess a common bond: they were simple and innocent, uneducated, humble and with a deep love of God. Mary did not appear to the educated, the influential, the wealthy or the worldly. The chosen visionaries were people whose minds and souls were untainted with pretentious philosophies and ideologies. Their simplicity reflects Christ's life as well as his Apostles. Our Lady tries to tell us that before God, unconditional faith is much more important than worldly knowledge or worldly success.



STATUE OF MARY AT THE GROTTO IN LOURDES

Joseph Fabish of Lyons (1863)

LOURDES

On February 11, 1858, a beautiful Lady appeared in a flash of white light to Bernadette Soubirous, a 14-year-old girl, at Lourdes, France. Our Blessed Lady appeared to Bernadette 18 times in a period of 6 weeks. She was an average student from a poor family. The world saw nothing extraordinary about her. She lived a very simple unremarkable life in a small village in southern France.

On March 25, 1858, the Feast of the Annunciation, the Lady made her final appearance to Bernadette. When Bernadette asked her who she was, the beautiful Lady replied "Que so era Immaculado Conceptious." ("I am the Immaculate Conception.") By these words, she confirmed the papal decree of Pope Pius IX issued in 1854 which had confirmed the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, which declares that Mary was conceived in the womb of her mother, St. Anne, without the taint of original sin. (It is a common misconception that the term "Immaculate Conception" refers to the Incarnation of Christ.)

Mary's message to the world, "her children," at Lourdes was to remind us that Satan and hell are both real. She asked Bernadette to exhort the people to do penance and to pray for sinners. The miracle performed to prove her presence was a pool of water that sprang up at the naturally barren grotto has made Lourdes a world famous site for medically-documented miraculous healings resulting from the water.

Bernadette became a Sister of Charity at Nevers, France and lived in the convent for 13 years, suffering from serious health problems. In 1879, she died at the age of 35. The Lady had promised Bernadette that her life on earth would be difficult but promised that she would have a special place in heaven with our Lord.

Exhumed in 1909, Bernadette's body was found to be incorrupt. Known as the most perfect of the incorruptibles, her body lays in state today in a glass coffin in the chapel of her convent in Nevers, France. Her arms and face are completely unaffected from the process of death. She appears as beautiful and simple in her grace as the day she died in 1879.

FATIMA

On October 13, 1884, after celebrating Mass in the Vatican Chapel, attended by a few Cardinals and members of the Vatican staff, Pope Leo XIII suddenly stopped at the foot of the altar and stood there for about 10 minutes, as if in a trance, his face ashen white. In a vision, Pope Leo XIII was told that Satan was to have power in the world for a period of 100 years and that there would be much harm to the Church.

On May 13, 1917, three children, Lucia Santo (age 10), Jacinto and Francisco Marto (ages 9 & 7), were tending sheep at the Cova de Iria in Fatima, Portugal. Suddenly a bright flash of light startled them. Dressed in brilliant white with a Rosary around her hands appeared a beautiful lady. She asked the three children to return to the Cova on the same day of the month for each of the next five months. She also asked them to say the Rosary every

Combat Boots (Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12) <u>Combat Boots</u> day.

On June 13, 1917, the beautiful Lady again appeared to Lucia, Jacinto and Francisco at the Cova and told them that the sins of humanity were offending God and again asked them to pray the Rosary in reparation for the sins of the world.

July 13, 1917, was a significant day. The Lady again appeared to the children and warned of the souls being lost. The children were told that Satan was real, were shown a powerful vision of hell and again asked to pray for sinners to save souls. The terrifying vision of souls falling into hell made a lasting impression on all three children. They willingly agreed to offer prayers for the salvation of souls. During that same appearance, the Lady also gave the children three secrets.

The first secret warned that World War I would soon end but that another worse world war would begin "during the pontificate of Pope Pius XI" (1922-1939!) and that an unknown light in the night sky would forewarn the coming of the war. On January 25, 1938, a great light illuminated the northern sky from 9:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. It was reported in the major newspapers of the world. On March 12, 1938, Hitler moved to occupy Austria starting the timeline of World War II.

The Lady's second secret predicted the fall of Russia to Communism. She asked for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart to combat this great evil. She told the children that this evil would arise in Russia and would be responsible for the annihilation of many nations and many people. On November 7, 1917 (one month after the final apparition at Fatima), the Bolshevik Revolution began under the direction Lenin and Trotsky. It has been estimated that since 1917 more than 100 million people have died worldwide at the hands of atheistic Communism.

The Lady also revealed a third secret to the children. This secret became the most famous because it was not revealed for a significant amount of time. The content of the third secret was finally revealed by John Paul II in the year 2000: it prophesied the persecution of the Church throughout the twentieth century at the hands of Communism but also predicted that the Pope would be shot by an assassin. The third secret was not about World War III as many people had speculated. In a 1984 interview, Sr. Lucia confirmed that the wars of the third secret were the wars of *atheism*, *heresy and apostasy*.

Pope Pius XI (1922-1939) commented on the worldly events which occurred during his papacy: "Today we see something that world history has never seen before; the waving of the flag of Satan in the battle against God and religion, against all peoples, and in all parts of the world; a phenomenon that outdoes all that happened before."

The final appearance at Fatima occurred on October 13, 1917, exactly 33 years to the day after the vision of Pope Leo XIII on October 13, 1884. Because a miracle had been predicted, more than 70,000 people, both believers and non-believers alike, gathered at the Cova despite a major rainstorm. Journalists from all over Europe were present. Many of them were eager to dispel what they perceived as "the ridiculous claims of mindless believers." The children and their "apparitions" had become a media event.

The Lady declared that she was "The Lady of the Rosary" and gave the children this final message, "People must amend their lives, ask pardon for their sins, and not offend my Son any more for He is already greatly offended." She assured them that in the end, her Immaculate Heart would triumph.

The children were also given a vision of heaven and saw both Jesus and St. Joseph. Lucia asked if they all could be taken to heaven at that time. Our Lady told Lucia that Jacinto and Francisco would soon be taken to heaven but that Lucia was to stay on earth to fulfill God's desire to spread the messages of Fatima. Francisco died on April 2, 1919 and Jacinto died on February 16, 1920. Both Jacinto and Francisco were aware of their impending deaths and spoke openly of the joy of looking forward to rejoining Our Lady in heaven.



JACINTO, FRANCISCO & LUCIA (1917)



PICTURES
TAKEN BY A
JOURNALIST
PRESENT DURING THE MIRACLE OF THE SUN
AT FATIMA

October 13, 1917



Page 14 Ad Veritatem

JOHN 19: 26-27

²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

Comment from the Navarre Bible:*

²⁶⁻²⁷ Our Lord's gesture in entrusting his Blessed Mother to the disciple's care, has a dual meaning (see p. 19 above and pp. 35ff). For one thing it expresses his filial love for the Virgin Mary. St Augustine sees it as a lesson Jesus gives us on how to keep the fourth commandment: "Here is a lesson in morals. He is doing what he tells us to do and, like a good Teacher, he instructs his own by example, that it is the duty of good children to take care of their parents; as though the wood on which his dying members were fixed were also the chair of the teaching Master." (St Augustine, *In loann. Evang.*, 119, 2).

Our Lord's words also declare that Mary is our Mother: "The Blessed Virgin also advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross, where she stood, in keeping with the divine plan, enduring with her only begotten Son the intensity of his suffering, associating herself with his sacrifice in her mother's heart, and lovingly consenting to the immolation of this victim who was born of her. Finally, she was given by the same Christ Jesus dying on the cross as a mother to his disciple." (Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, 58).

All Christians, who are represented in the person of John, are children of Mary. By giving us his Mother to be our Mother, Christ demonstrates his love for his own to the end (cf. Jn 13:1). Our Lady's acceptance of John as her son shows her motherly care for us: "the Son of God, and your Son, from the Cross indicated a man to you, Mary, and said: 'Behold, your son' (Jn 19:26). And in that man he entrusted to you every person, he entrusted everyone to you. And you, who at the moment of the Annunciation, concentrated the whole program of your life in those simple words: 'Behold I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.' (Lk 1:38): embrace everyone, draw close to everyone, seek everyone out with motherly care. Thus is accomplished what the last Council said about your presence in the mystery of Christ and the Church. In a wonderful way you are always found in the mystery of Christ, your only Son, because you are present wherever men and women, his brothers and sisters, are present, wherever the Church is present." (John Paul II, *Homily in the Basilica of Guadalupe*, 27 January 1979).

John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, brought Mary into his home, into his life. Spiritual writers have seen these words of the Gospel as an invitation to all Christians to bring Mary into their lives. Mary certainly wants us to invoke her, to approach her confidently, to appeal to her as our mother, asking her to "show that you are our mother." (J. Escriva, *Christ is passing by*, 140). \$\frac{1}{4}\$



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





INCORRUPTIBLES

MICHAEL SHONAFELT, ESQ.

Most of us are familiar with the pristine countenance of St. Bernadette Soubirous, visible from beneath the glass of her ornate sarcophagus in the motherhouse of her order in Nevers, France, where she died in 1879 at the age of 35. Still beautiful after the passage of over one hundred and twenty years, she is the most stunning example of small society of saints known as the "incorruptibles," whose bodies appear miraculously preserved in defiance of the natural processes of decay.

The phenomenon of bodily incorruptibility received global attention on Pentecost Sunday, 2001, when the body of Blessed Pope John XXIII was displayed in St. Peters Basilica. Like that of Bernadette, the body of the saintly pope was in perfect condition after 37 years of interment in the Grotto of St. Peters: "His eyes closed, his mouth slightly open, and his features immediately bringing to mind the familiar face of the venerable pontiff." While the phenomenon caused a stir even among the medical examiners who exhumed the body, the Vatican denied any miracle. The state of the pope's body, it reported, could be wholly attributable to the use of a preservative called formalin and to air-tight seals on the pope's casket.

The Vatican's caution regarding the cause of John XXIII's apparent state of incorruptibility is not without sound basis. According to forensic medical experts, the phenomenon of bodily preservation is not uncommon. Many of the bodies of the deceased naturally convert into a waxy substance known as "adipocere." The change can occur quite quickly and result in a remarkable state of preservation. The adipocere process accounts for a number of seemingly miraculous cases of incorruptibility, including the breathtaking preservation of a seven-year-old girl whose body has rested in a Palermo, Italy charnel house since 1902. The adipocere process also explains the preservation of bodies from ancient burials, such as that of "St. Bees Man," a fourteenth century noble whose body was unearthed at the cemetery of St. Bees Priory in Cumbria, England in a remarkably preserved state.

The existence of a possible natural explanation for incorruptibility calls into question the miraculous nature of the occurrence. Along this line, the Church has made no formal pronouncement regarding whether any example of incorruptibility qualifies as a "miracle." The Church generally confines true "miracles" to those sensibly perceptible effects which surpass the powers of visible nature and which are produced by God to witness to some truth or testify to someone's sanctity. The definition implies that there must be an effect that transcends natural causes. If the phenomenon of incorruptibility can be attributed solely to natural organic causes, such as the relatively common chemical "adipocere" process, nothing about the phenomenon of incorruptible saints can be deemed miraculous.

But the explanations tendered by forensic medical science are not definitive. Our faith opens realms of possibilities beyond those offered by the skeptic. It allows us to keep our eyes open to the possibility that God, in His infinite wisdom, may suspend the natural laws and preserve a body from the ravages of decay. Our faith, therefore, invites the intellect to higher realms. It allows us to permit the possibility of a purely natural explanation while keeping our mind open to the possibility of a miracle.

The Incorruptibles (Continued on page 16)

TRUTH OR MYTH?



ST. B ERNADETTE
IN HER COFFIN
TODAY
AT THE SISTERS
OF CHARITY
CONVENT IN
NEVERS, FRANCE

(1844-1879)

Page 16 Ad Veritatem

(Continued from page 15) **The Incorruptibles**

Assuming the latter explanation, namely, that God can and does act to preserve the bodies of His saints, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- (1) *Incorruptibility is not necessary for saintliness*: While scores of saints, including St. Catherine Laboure, St. Bernadette, St. John Vianney, St. Cecilia, St. Vincent de Paul and St. Catherine of Bologna are numbered among the incorruptibles, other individuals of undeniable sanctity, including St. Francis of Assisi, Padre Pio, and St. Therese Lisieux, are not.
- (2) Incorruptibility is not limited to canonized saints: As noted above, exhumations have revealed that many ordinary individuals are "incorrupt." Among the more recent examples is that of Julia Petta, "the Italian bride," who, after six years of interment in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Chicago, was discovered to be in a state of such remarkable preservation that she appeared as if she were only sleeping in her casket.
- (3) *Incorruptibility is not limited to Catholics*: Some examples of incorruptibility include non-Catholics. Most notably, the body of civil rights activist Medgar Evers, who was murdered by an assassin on June 12, 1963, was found to be in a remarkable state of preservation after 28 years of burial.

There is no definitive answer to the question of whether or not the "incorruptibility" of the bodies of the saints is truly miraculous or merely the product of some natural process. Nevertheless, it seems fitting that God would act to preserve some of His saints from decay. Such an act would be laden with profound meaning and endless fodder for meditation. It would serve as a reminder of the holiness of the body and its eventual participation in the beatific vision. It would tell us that the body is not the enemy of the soul, but, to the contrary, is a vessel of grace, a visible sign of God's image, and a temple of the Godhead. Finally, it would call to mind the truth that, one day, the bodies of all of the blessed will be free from the rigors of death, as St. Paul observed: "It is sown corruptible; it is raised incorruptible. It is sown dishonorable; it is raised glorious. It is sown weak; it is raised powerful. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15:42-44.) When viewed with the eyes of faith, the incorruptibles are signs of hope and heralds of our destiny as children of God. \$\P\$



ST. VINCENT
DE PAUL
AT THE CHAPEL OF
THE VINCENTIAN
FATHERS, IN
PARIS, FRANCE
(1580-1660)

CYBER HEAVEN

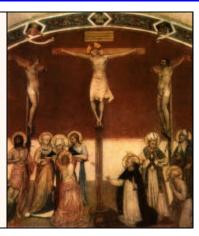
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> Pope John XXIII, Ad Petri Cathedram and popularly attributed to St. Augustine



Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem* *Latin for "To turn truth into laughter"



THE CURSE OF THE SQUIRRELS

There were three country churches in a small Texas town: the Presbyterian church, the Methodist church and the Catholic church. Each church was overrun with pesky squirrels.

One day, the Presbyterian church called a meeting to decide what to do about the squirrels. After much prayer and consideration they determined that the squirrels were predestined to be there and they shouldn't interfere with God's divine will.

The Methodist group got together and decided that they were not in a position to harm any of God's creations. So, they humanely trapped the squirrels and set them free a few miles outside of town. Three days later, the squirrels were back.

It was only the Catholics who were able to come up with the best and most effective solution. They baptized the squirrels and registered them as members of the parish. Now they only see them on Christmas and Easter. ‡



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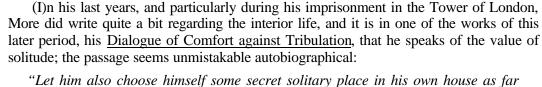
Fulton J. Sheen

"Not one hundred in the United States hate the Roman Catholic Church, but millions hate what they mistakenly think that the Roman Catholic Church is." &

Page 18 Ad Veritatem

MORE ON THE INTERIOR LIFE

THE
WRITINGS
OF
THOMAS
MORE



from noise and company as he conveniently can. And thither let him some time secretly resort alone, imagining himself as one going out of the world even straight unto the giving up his reckoning unto God of his sinful living. Then let him there before an altar or some pitiful image of Christ's bitter passion, the beholding whereof may put him in remembrance of the thing and move to devout compassion, kneel down or fall prostrate as at the feet of almighty God, verily believing him to be there invisibly present as without any doubt he is. There let him open his heart to God and confess his faults such as he can call to mind and pray God of forgiveness. Let him call to remembrance the benefits that God hath given him, either in general among other men, or privately to himself, and give him humble hearty thanks therefore. There let him declare unto God, the temptations of the devil, the suggestions of the flesh, the occasions of the world, and of his worldly friends much worse many times in the drawing a man from God than are his most mortal enemies..."

The King's Good Servant But God's First: The Life and Writings of St. Thomas More
By: James Monti ♥



PRAYER PETITIONS

I offer you this day all that I shall think or do or say, uniting it with what was done by Jesus Christ, your only Son. Amen

Heavenly Father,



We all need prayers—at some times more than others. If you have a special need for prayer, please let us know so we can join in prayer for each other. Leave a message on Anne Lanphar's voicemail (714) 800-3225, or email your request to alanphar@firstam.com

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

 ¥ Lieutenant Seth Wolcott & his family.

 ¥ US Air Force Pilot John Flynn
 (son of Carol Flynn).

♣ All members of the US Armed Forces and their families.

₩ Myron Cohn (serious illness).

▼ Baby Thomas Peter Council (serious illness).

▼ Kristin Burkett (serious illness),

*Ronald Moore (pass the bar exam).

A Robyn Belz (serious illness).

¥ Fr Hugh Barbour's Father (serious illness).

₩ Myron Cohen (serious illness).

▼ Terry & Julie N (special intention).

▼ Darren M (questioning the Faith).

▼ Fr. Matt Munoz (special intention).

▼ Ryan McEachon (special intention).

¥ John Thompson (employment).

▼ Selma Mann's family (2 medical conditions).

♣ Cindie Burnes, a young mother recovering from chemotherapy.

▼ Michael Shonafelt (special intention).

¥ John Flynn & his wife (serious illness).

₩ Ron Gable (special intention). 🕆

"WHERE DO THEY GET YOUNG MEN LIKE THIS?"

Martin Savidge of CNN, embedded with the 1st Marine battalion, was talking with 4 young Marines near his foxhole this morning live on CNN. He had been telling the story of how well the Marines had been looking out for and taking care of him since the war started. He went on to tell about the many hardships the Marines had endured since the war began and how they all look after one another. He turned to the four and said he had cleared it with their commanders and they could use his video phone to call home.



The 19 year old Marine next to him asked Martin if he would allow his platoon sergeant to use his call to call his pregnant wife back home whom he had not been able to talk to in three months. A stunned Savidge who was visibly moved by the request shook his head and the young Marine ran off to get the sergeant. Savidge recovered after a few seconds and turned back to the three young Marines still sitting with him and asked which one of them would like to call home first, the Marine closest to him responded with out a moments hesitation "Sir, if is all the same to you we would like to call the parents of a buddy of ours, Lance Cpl Brian Buesing of Cedar Key, Florida who was killed on 3-23-03 near Nasiriya to see how they are doing."

THOUGHT
FOR
THE
DAY

At that Martin Savidge totally broke down and was unable to speak. All he could get out before signing off was "Where do they get young men like this?"

One of the commentators finally responded, "America."

April 2, 2003 ₺









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Page 20 Ad Veritatem

(Continued from page 13) Combat Boots

Sr. Lucia is still alive today, at age 96.

While these children were experiencing the vision of the Holy Family, the promised miracle took place at the Cova de Iria and was witnessed by all present both at the meadow as well as many people as far away as 50 miles from the Cova.

The editor of O Seculo, a major Lisbon newspaper, reported this story in the newspaper the following day: "From the road, where the vehicles were parked and where hundreds of people who had dared to brave the mud were congregated, one could see the immense multitude turn toward the Sun, which appeared free from clouds and in its zenith. It looked like a plaque of dull silver and it was possible to look at it without the least discomfort. It might have been an eclipse, which was taking place. But at that moment a great shout went up and one could hear the spectators nearest at hand shouting: "A miracle! A miracle!" Before the astonished eyes of the crowd, whose aspect was Biblical as they stood bareheaded, eagerly searching the sky, the sun trembled, made sudden incredible movements outside any cosmic law - the sun "danced" according to the typical expression of people."

Another witness, Joseph Garrett, a natural sciences professor at Coimbra University, described the event in this way:

"This was not the sparkling of a heavenly body, for it spun round on itself in a mad whirl, when suddenly a clamor was heard from all the people. The sun, whirling, seemed to loosen itself from the firmament and advance threateningly up the earth as if to crush us with its huge fiery weight. The sensation during these moments was terrible."

Thus came to pass the great miracle of the dancing sun at Fatima. Although well-documented by eye-witnesses, the manifestation of the dancing sun was a minor event in comparison to the great numbers of non-believers who became Christians at Fatima on October 13, 1917. There weren't many atheists in the Cova at the end of that day.

On May 13, 1981, the 64th anniversary of the first apparition at Fatima, an Islamic extremist shot Pope John Paul II which fulfilled the prediction contained in the third secret that the blood of the Pope would be shed. As the Pope passed amongst the crowds in St. Peter's square, he turned his head to look at a young girl wearing a picture of our Lady of Fatima. The first bullet just missed his head. The next bullets hit him in the torso but missed all major organs. Later when he visited his would-be assassin in prison to offer forgiveness, the man stated that he could not believe he had not killed him. The Pope told him that one hand had fired the bullet but another hand guided it. Pope John Paul II, a long devotee of Mary, has acknowledged Fatima as the key Marian apparition of the Twentieth Century.

During his recovery, John Paul II asked to read the third secret of Fatima, and told a bishop friend that he realized the message's importance. Two years later, on March 25, 1984, the Feast of the Annunciation, the Holy Father together with all the Bishops consecrated the world, including Russia, to Mary's Immaculate Heart. This event marked the end of the 100-year period of evil prophesied to Pope Leo XIII in 1884 and at Fatima in 1917.

Sr. Lucia later said that this consecration fulfilled the request of our Lady of Fatima that Russia be consecrated to her Immaculate Heart. Less than a year later, on March 11, 1985, Mikel Gorbachev was elected as the General Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee, the last leader of the USSR and the key figure in the subsequent disintegration of the Soviet Union.

On December 8, 1991, the feast day of the Immaculate Conception, the presidents of the various republics voted to dissolve the Soviet Union. Eighteen days later on Christmas day, December 25, 1991, the Communist flag was removed from the Kremlin marking both the end of the great "evil" which had dominated Russia as well as the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary as prophesied at the Cova de Iria in 1917.

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Page 22 Ad Veritatem



HAIL, HOLY QUEEN: THE MOTHER OF GOD IN THE WORD OF GOD

BY SCOTT HAHN

FROM
THE
LIBRARY

A fresh and enlightening new perspective on Mary, Mother of God, and her central importance in the Christian faith, from the author of the highly successful **The Lamb's Supper**.

In **The Lamb's Supper**, Catholic scholar and apologist Scott Hahn explored the relationship between the Book of Revelation and the Roman Catholic Mass, deftly clarifying the most subtle of theological points with analogies and anecdotes from everyday life. In **Hail, Holy Queen**, he employs the same accessible, entertaining style to demonstrate Mary's essential role in Christianity's redemptive message.

Most Christians know that the life of Jesus is foreshadowed throughout the Old Testament. Through a close examination of the Bible, as well as the work of both Catholic and Protestant scholars and clergy, Hahn brings to light the small but significant details showing that just as Jesus is the "New Adam," so Mary is the "New Eve." He unveils the Marian mystery at the heart of the Book of Revelation and reveals how it is foretold in the very first pages of the Book of Genesis and in the story of King David's monarchy, which speaks of a privileged place for the mother of the king.

Building on these scriptural and historical foundations, Hahn presents a new look at the Marian doctrines: Her Immaculate Conception, Perpetual Virginity, Assumption, and Coronation. As he guides modern-day readers through passages filled with mysteries and poetry, Hahn helps them rediscover the ancient art and science of reading the Scriptures and gain a more profound understanding of their truthfulness and relevance to faith and the practice of religion in the contemporary world.

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St. Thomas More Society of Orange County

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OUR NEXT MEETING:

WHEN: WEDNESDAY MAY 21ST @ NOON (LUNCH \$10)

TOPIC: "MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH"

SPEAKER: Fr. Norbert Wood, O. Praem