

# Ad Veritatem

Volume 8 Issue

St. Thomas More Society of Orange County

DECEMBER 2003

*More himself led the family's night prayers showing through daily example that his life had a clear purpose and direction.*

Thomas More:  
Portrait of Courage  
By Gerard Wegemer

## DECEMBER MEETING:

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 17, 2003 NOON

COLLEEN HAMMOND, MODEL, ACTRESS & TV ANCHOR

*"CHOOSING THE NARROW GATE:  
KEEPING THE FAITH IN A FAITHLESS WORLD"*

DETAILS ON PAGE 3

"Ad Veritatem" is Latin for "Toward the truth."



## 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. ☩*

### FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE at [www.stthomasmore.net](http://www.stthomasmore.net)

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**DECEMBER**  
**MEETING**

**COLLEEN HAMMOND**

**“CHOOSING THE NARROW GATE:  
KEEPING THE FAITH IN A FAITHLESS WORLD”**

**WHEN:**

**NOON**  
**Wed. Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>**

**WHERE:**

**First American  
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A former Miss Michigan, actress, model, anchor at CNN, and an On-Camera Meteorologist for The Weather Channel, Colleen Hammond lived the American Dream and found it to be a nightmare.

While working in television, she reverted to the Catholic Faith. The moment their first baby was born, Colleen “saw the light” and abandoned her highly successful career in television to become a stay-at-home-mother.

She can currently be heard as the host of “St. Joseph Radio Presents” on WEWN. A freelance journalist, Colleen writes the “Out of Eden” column for *Canticle* magazine and is in the process of writing four different books. In her spare time, Colleen also speaks internationally about women's issues.

Colleen, her husband Dennis, and their four young children now live on a small family farm in North Texas where she homeschools her children.

For more information, please contact either David Belz at (949) 347-0447 or email to [dbelz@kuhnbelz.com](mailto:dbelz@kuhnbelz.com), or Anne Lanphar at (714) 800-3225 or [alanphar@firstam.com](mailto:alanphar@firstam.com). **EVERYONE IS WELCOME!** †

**ST. THOMAS MORE  
MCLE CLASS**

**SATURDAY JANUARY 24, 2004**  
**EARN MCLE CREDITS!**  
**LEARN THE FAITH!**

**FOR DETAILS SEE PAGE 15** †

**FIRST THURSDAY MASS**

**BUSCH LAW PRIVATE CHAPEL**  
**FATHER JOHN HILTZ**  
**FREE LUNCH PROVIDED.**  
**2532 DUPONT AVE, IRVINE**  
**TIME: NOON**

**Rsvp NOT REQUIRED**  
**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!** †

**CALENDAR  
REMINDERS**



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## DOES SALVATION DEPEND ON BELIEVING MARIAN DOCTRINE?

FR. HUGH BARBOUR, O. PRAEM, PH.D.  
*Our Chaplain*

### A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN



THE ANNUCIATION

*Philippe  
de Champaigne  
(1645)*

**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 had 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 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 in 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

*Marian Doctrine (Continued on page 15)*

## AN ADVENT REFLECTION ON MARY

BY HON. MARY FINGAL ERICKSON, ESQ.

This short essay is not intended to be any sort of theological work on Mary the Mother of God. Nor will it offer any apologetics on the Marian doctrines (Immaculate Conception, the Assumption, Mary's perpetual virginity). Rather, as Advent approaches (and will be upon us by the time you are reading these words), I wanted to share some simple reflections I have as a woman and a mother, on my namesake.

I always had a special devotion to Mary as I was growing up. I neglected that devotion during my long years away from the Catholic Church, in various Evangelical faith communities. In making my journey back to the Catholic Church over 5 years ago, ironically, Mary was, or so I thought, the greatest barrier to my return. With the help of some good books and tapes, and reading of Scripture, I came to a better understanding of and appreciation for the Church's teachings on Mary, and my love for Mary was renewed. As I pondered and meditated in my heart on what a gift from God motherhood has been for me, and as I reflected on the relationship between mother and child, "the problem of Mary" disappeared. The most awesome experience in my life, no question about it, has been to feel human life grow and move within me for 9 months, to give birth, and to nurse that infant and watch him thrive and grow. The intimate bond between mother and child is not easily described; it is lived, experienced.

During Advent, we anticipate and celebrate the coming of Our Lord, in the flesh, to this sinful and beleaguered planet. Do we really stop to reflect on the meaning of the Incarnation? We profess faith in the God who spoke all life into existence, the God who transcends time, the God whose name is "I Am," the God who emptied Himself, yet contained Himself in the form of an embryo, a developing fetus, a baby kicking and moving about in his mother's womb, a helpless newborn, a baby in diapers, a little boy taking his first steps, learning how to eat and talk and read. I invite you to think about Mary's role in all this. She did not stand idly by. She was not just an incubator, or some vessel God used and then cast aside. She was chosen from the beginning of time and for all eternity to be the Mother of our God, who has no beginning, and no ending. Jesus is the Word made flesh, part of Mary's flesh. She carried Him, the Alpha and the Omega, in her womb. Talk about the Ark of the Covenant! She delivered the Prince of Peace in the humble setting of a stable. She bathed him, changed his diapers, rocked him to sleep, nursed him, and held him when he needed comforting. God chose a woman, Mary, to be united with Him (and all of us) in this incredibly intimate way.

Those who know me and those who visit my chambers with its photo gallery of my children know what devotion flows between me and my sons (two who are age 22 and one who is age 20). There isn't a moment in my day when they are far from my thoughts or prayers: Dan in graduate school in Northern



CORONATION OF  
THE VIRGIN

*El Greco*

(1591)

*I invite you to think about Mary's role in all this. She was not just an incubator, or some vessel God used and then cast aside. She was chosen from the beginning of time and for all eternity to be the Mother of our God, who has no beginning, and no ending.*

(Continued from page 5) *Advent Reflections on Mary*

California, Jim in college in Cambridge, and Billy in the U.S. Army serving in Baghdad. So it was with Mary and her son Jesus, the King of Kings. How deeply she loved him, and he clearly loved her. When Lent arrives, I reflect on Mary's sorrow in watching her son's final horrifying days. I imagine her cradling this beloved man-child of hers at the foot of the cross, all signs of human life extinguished. I see her weeping inconsolably at his tomb. I feel her loneliness and desolation, her unspeakable sorrow. As a mother, my heart screams out at her agony.

God chose Mary. But, He didn't force himself on her. Mary also freely chose God. She said "yes" to Him every day of her life. How then can we as Christians not love and thank and honor her? Why would we not ask her to intercede on our behalf, to her Son? Wouldn't a devoted Son hear and respond—as he did at the Marriage feast in Cana?

May we reflect this Advent on the prayer many of us learned from our own mothers:

*Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women. Blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, prayer for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen! †*

## KISSING THE FACE OF GOD



*“This painting was first inspired by a song that I heard one day. I started to contemplate the awesome privilege that Mary was given, being able to hold God in her arms, but also keeping in mind that He was still her baby. This cute little child whom she bore was also God in the flesh. And yet, she cuddled and kissed Him, just as all mothers do with their babies. This thought propelled me right into this painting which I wanted to be a very human representation of divinity. My prayer is that the viewer will be struck, as I am, with the amazing way that God chose to send His Son into this world -- in pure humility.”*

--- Morgan Weistling

Reproductions can be purchased on-line at:  
[www.christcenteredmall.com/stores/art/weistling/kissing-the-face-of-god.htm](http://www.christcenteredmall.com/stores/art/weistling/kissing-the-face-of-god.htm)

## DID THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY DIE?

BY MICHAEL SHONAFELT, ESQ.

*“Tota pulchra es, O Maria, et macula non est in te.”* (You are wholly beautiful, O Mary, and the stain of original sin is not in thee.) -- from an Ancient Marian Hymn.

Death, the irreversible separation of body from soul, is the ultimate stumbling block of the human psyche. Deep within each of us is an unmistakable, visceral rebellion against the thought that our days here are numbered, that our earthly affairs will arrive at a final termination, and that each of us in a very real sense, is a *“terminal case.”* This reaction seems to be rooted in a vestigial memory of life before the Fall. In short, we were not made to die and *we know it*. Death came only as an unnatural and unintended consequence of sin:

*Because God did not make death, nor does he rejoice in the destruction of the living. For he fashioned all things that they might have being; and the creatures of the world are wholesome, And there is not a destructive drug among them nor any domain of the nether world on earth, For justice is undying. It was the wicked who with hands and words invited death, considered it a friend, and pined for it, and made a covenant with it, Because they deserve to be in its possession . . . (Wisdom 1:13-16)*

Accordingly, whether you are for or against the death penalty, you -- and every child of Adam -- have received that sentence, for *“the wages of sin is death.”* (Romans 6:23.) That reality prompts the topic of this month’s Truth of Myth feature: if the Blessed Virgin Mary was *“preserved from all stain of original sin,”* why should she have been subject to that same sentence?

If one were to plot out the points of theology on this question, one could easily arrive at the conclusion that Mary did *not* die. It is a deduction born of a simple syllogism: (1) Death is a consequence of original sin. (2) Mary was exempted from original sin. (3) Therefore, Mary did not die. On the basis of the same reasoning, many theologians have maintained that the Blessed Virgin did not die and was immediately raised from earthly life to heavenly glory.

Yet, the writings of the early Church Fathers reveal an ancient and unquestioned acceptance of the idea that Mary experienced death. Saint John of Damascus, who died somewhere in the early Eighth Century, relates what, even at his time, was an ancient account of the Apostles bearing Mary to her tomb while signing hymns in her honor:

*It was thou who didst break the force of death, paying its penalty, and making it gracious. Hence, when thy holy and sinless body was taken to the tomb, the choirs of angels bore it, and were all around, leaving nothing undone for the honor of our Lord's Mother, whilst apostles and all the assembly of the Church burst into prophetic song ... lifting the true ark of the Lord God on their shoulders, as the priests of old the typical ark, and placing thy body in the tomb, made it, as if another Jordan, the way to the true land of the gospel,*

## TRUTH OR MYTH?



ASSUMPTION OF  
MARY

*Mateo Cerezo*

(Date Unknown)

(Continued from page 7) **Mary**

*the heavenly Jerusalem, the mother of all the faithful, God being its Lord and architect. (John of Damascus, Sermon I, On the Assumption.)*

In another sermon, St. John of Damascus asks, “Why is it that she who in giving birth surpassed all the limits of nature should now bend to its laws, and her immaculate body be subjected to death?” In reply, he notes:

*To be clothed in immortality, it is of course necessary that the mortal part be shed, since even the master of nature did not refuse the experience of death. Indeed, he died according to the flesh and by dying destroyed death; on corruption he bestowed incorruption and made death the source of resurrection. (Panegyric on the Dormition of the Mother of God, n. 10: SC 80, 107).*

The Church’s only official pronouncement on the end of Mary’s earthly affairs omits any explicit reference to her death: “*The Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, when her earthly life was over.*” (Lumen Gentium, n. 59; Catechism of the Catholic Church at ¶¶ 966, 974). Nevertheless, Pope John Paul II has not been silent on the matter. At a 1997 general audience address, he noted the apparent conflict between Mary’s sinlessness and her death and -- as St. John Damascene some 1,200 years earlier -- found an answer rooted in the death of Christ:

*It is true that in Revelation death is presented as a punishment for sin. However, the fact that the Church proclaims Mary free from original sin by a unique divine privilege does not lead to the conclusion that she also received physical immortality. The Mother is not superior to the Son who underwent death, giving it a new meaning and changing it into a means of salvation. Involved in Christ's redemptive work and associated in his saving sacrifice, Mary was able to share in his suffering and death for the sake of humanity's Redemption. What Severus of Antioch says about Christ also applies to her: "Without a preliminary death, how could the Resurrection have taken place?" To share in Christ's Resurrection, Mary had first to share in his death. (General Audience of Wednesday, 25 June, 1997.)*

Put another way, the reality of Christ’s death and resurrection has radically transformed death from the ultimate punishment for sin into an invitation to enter the Paschal mystery. Mary’s death, or “dormition,” reminds us that this world is radically different now that it has been trodden upon by the God-man. Now, *even death* is no longer an evil. God’s life, death and resurrection have transformed the dross of our human existence into an unspeakably glorious occasion of grace. Christ, to borrow from the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, has seized upon the evil wrought by the sin of Adam as an opportunity to change our “mortal trash” into “immortal diamond.” Because she has gone before us to experience every aspect of this great human mystery, we can more confidently pray, “*Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death.*” †



ASSUMPTION OF  
THE VIRGIN

*El Greco*  
(1577)



## MESSAGE OF JOHN PAUL II TO THE ORDER OF THE FRIARS SERVANTS OF MARY

SEPTEMBER 29, 2001

To the Very Reverend Father HUBERT M. MOONS, Prior General of the Order of Friar Servants of Mary

“The Grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus” (I Cor 16, 23). With these words of the Apostle Paul I greet you and the whole Order of Friar Servants of Mary on the occasion of your General Chapter at Ariccia (8-30 October 2001).

You have chosen “Together with Mary, from hearing God’s word to life-giving service” as the theme for your Chapter and it highlights the need to give witness that is both faithful to your original charism and responsive to the needs of contemporary mankind.

Very Reverend Father, I send you my cordial greetings and sincere thanks for your twelve years of service to the Order as Prior General. I greet all the participants of your General Chapter and through them all the members of your religious family, and send each of you a word of encouragement along with the assurance that you are always in my prayers.

You have sought guidance from the Holy Spirit for your Chapter, I am certain, and have prepared this meeting with great care, defining priorities and choosing subjects for discussion. The Chapter provides us with an occasion to stress certain elements of Our Lady’s participation in the mystery of Christ and the Church that can inspire the choices and decisions you make. From its very origin the Order of Friar Servants of Mary has seen Our Lady as the Star that guides their journey, the frame of reference for their every apostolate.

**1. With Mary seeking God.** Seeking God is an essential component of consecrated life. Mary is our most certain guide in this quest. Seek the Lord! You have made this the object of your reflection it is the heart of your vocation it is the first item on your Chapter agenda. Yes! Seek Christ, seek his face (cf. Ps 27, 8). Seek him daily from dawn (cf. Ps 63, 2), with your whole heart (cf. Dt 4, 29; Ps 119, 2 ). Seek him with the tenacity of the Shulamite woman (cf. Sg 3, 1-3), the wonder of the Apostle Andrew (cf. Jn 1, 35-39) and the eagerness of Mary Magdalene (Jn 20, 1-18).

In the Ritual for the Celebration of a Chapter, you invoke the memory of the Seven Holy Founders as “Seekers after God.” This is exactly what they were: they sought the Kingdom of God and his righteousness (Mt 6, 33), they sought the wisdom of the Gospel tirelessly. Following their example you too seek the Lord in the hour of your joy and in the time of your desolation. You imitate the anxious Mary seeking her twelve-year-old son in Jerusalem (Lk 2, 44-49); or the beginning of her son's public ministry, when Mary went looking for him (Mk 3, 32) worried by the rumors concerning him (Mk 3, 20-21).

To realize the need to seek God is something for which we should be grateful. In reality it is God who seeks us out he it is who has first loved us (I Jn 4, 10). Seeking God can be a source of consolation but it is also demanding: we must be prepared for renunciation and radical choices.

*Address to the Friars Servants of Mary (Continued on page 10)*



FROM  
PETER’S  
SUCCESSOR,  
POPE  
JOHN  
PAUL  
II



(Continued from page 9) *Address to the Friars Servants of Mary*

What does all this mean for you in your present situation? It implies renewed emphasis on contemplation, an intensification of personal prayer, a re-evaluation of the silence of the heart.

There is no opposition between contemplation and action, between prayer in one's cell and liturgical celebrations, between the necessary "flight from the world" and the need to stand with those who suffer all of these things are present in the traditions of your Order and in your Constitutions (cf. *Const. OSM* [1987] 16a, 31a-b, 116). Experience teaches us that fervent and effective apostolic action is the fruit of intense contemplation.

**2. With Mary listening to the voice of God.** Hearing the Saving Word is closely connected with the quest for God. Mary is an example and a guide on this journey. The Church emphasizes her unique relationship to the Word. Our Lady is the "Virgin who listens." With humility and wisdom she is eager and ready to take the Angel's message to heart. With her *fiat* she welcomes the Son of God; through her the Subsistent Word becomes incarnate for the salvation of the world.



THE SISTINE  
MADONNA  
*Raffaello*  
(1534-35)

*Lectio Divina* which you hold in great esteem is an especially appropriate method for listening to the Word. There is an explicit mention of this practice in the formula for solemn profession: you commit yourselves to a life of "listening to the Word of God" (*Rituale della professione religiosa dei Frati Servi di S. Maria [Ritual of the religious profession of the Friars Servants of Mary]*, Second printed edition, 211, Rome, General Curia OSM, 1993, pp. 128-148). Mary listens and accepts the Word into her heart before it enters her virginal womb. In imitation of her *fiat* (cf. Lk 1, 38), you too pronounce your total *yes* to the God who reveals himself (Rom 16, 26). In the words of Holy Scripture God reveals the riches of his love; he unveils his plan of salvation and charges each of us with a specific mission in his kingdom.

Love for his Word will move you to re-think community prayer, to give special attention to your liturgical life to make it a more heartfelt and shared experience. Let your community prayer be such that your personal prayer becomes a preparation for and extension of the liturgy you celebrate in common. In this way the words of the Apostle will become a reality in your Order: "May the Word of Christ dwell among you in abundance" (Col 3, 16).

**3. With Mary in a life of service.** The second priority of the General Chapter is an examination of the various forms of your apostolic service. To serve the Church and mankind is an essential part of the charism of the Friar Servants of Mary. With eyes fixed on Our Lady the humble and eager handmaid of the Lord, each member of the Order is imbued with zeal, energy and a cheerful concern for his brothers. You are sensitive to human needs and appreciate the value of human relationships.

Your style is not primarily concerned with efficiency and technological progress rather you rely on the efficacy of God's grace (I Cor 3, 6-7). You read the signs of the times and weigh the possibility of suspending certain activities to respond to new missionary needs in Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe. Stay true to the original inspiration of your religious family, founded to "bear witness to the human and evangelical values seen in Mary" (*Const. OSM*, 7). In the mendicant spirit of your Order learn to live with that sense of transience and security found in the Gospel; be ready to go wherever there is need (*ibid.*, 3).

Among the many forms of service mentioned in the outline of your Chapter,

*Address to the Friars Servants of Mary* (Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10) Address to the Friars Servants of Mary

there is “service to life.” In a world where a culture of death predominates you are servants of life faithful to a God who “is not the God of the dead but of the living” (Mt 22, 32). You are heralds of the Gospel of hope under the protection of Mary the “Mother of Life.”

**4. With Mary in promoting vocations.** Finally the Chapter should consider vocation recruiting something of great interest and urgency. We must pray ceaselessly for vocations; they are a gift to the Order and to the Church. May the image of Our Lady at Pentecost guide your considerations. In the cenacle Mary is represented as *Orans* (praying). Together with the apostles she is calling down the Holy Spirit the source of every vocation. Mary is *the Mother of the Church*: in the cenacle the Virgin begins to exercise her motherhood toward the community of disciples, which her dying Son entrusted to her care on the cross.

Along with prayer (Lk 10, 2), the consistent and faithful witness of all those who are called to radical evangelical discipleship produce vocations. Future generations look to you and are attracted to consecrated life not because it is “easy” but because it lives the Gospel without compromise.

The seventh of October 2001, marks the 750th anniversary of that “*Act of Poverty*” of the first community on Mount Senario. With that act of generosity your friars committed themselves to possessing nothing like the Master who “had no place to rest his head” (Lk 9, 58). May the memory of this event move you to give an ever more authentic witness to poverty by living modestly (cf. *Const. OSM*, 57) and by sharing your possessions.

I entrust the work of your Chapter to the maternal care of Our Lady the Queen of her Servants. I assure you of my prayers and cordially impart to you, to all the members of the Chapter and to the entire Servite Family my Apostolic Blessing, as a pledge of the Lord’s infinite mercy. †



THE VIRGIN MARY

*El Greco*

(1594-1604)

SIMPLE TRUTHS



Fulton J. Sheen

**“There is an estrangement of the human heart from God, as conscience bears witness. However much room there be for other guests in the soul, the Bethlehem story is still true:**

**‘There is no room in the inn.’**

**It is more often in souls that recognize their own misery and sinfulness that He is given room, as it was the stable rather than the inn which welcomed Him.**

**What we call fate is actually opening the door, for He Who knocks never comes empty-handed.” †**

## JOHN 19: 26-27

SCRIPTURAL  
CORNERCRUCIFIX WITH  
MARY, MARY  
MAGDALIN AND  
ST. JOHN

*Hans Burgkmair*  
(1519)

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

<sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” <sup>27</sup> 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. “The spotless purity of John's whole life makes him strong before the Cross. The other apostles fly from Golgotha: he, with the Mother of Christ, remains. Don't forget that purity strengthens and invigorates the character.” (J. Escriva, *The Way*, 144).

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 Ioann. 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).

John Paul II constantly treats our Lady as his Mother. In bidding farewell to the Virgin of Czestochowa he prayed in this way: “Our Lady of the Bright Mountain, Mother of the Church! Once more I consecrate myself to you ‘in your maternal slavery of love.’ *Totus tuus!* I am all yours! I consecrate to you the whole Church--everywhere and to the ends of the earth! I consecrate to you humanity; I consecrate to you all men and women, my brothers and sisters. All peoples and all nations. I consecrate to you Europe and all the continents. I consecrate to you Rome and Poland, united, through your servant, by a fresh bond of love. Mother, accept us! Mother, do not abandon us! Mother, be our guide!” (Farewell Address at Jasna Gora Shrine, 6 June 1979). †

## MORE ON EDUCATION AND WOMEN

As More put it, the liberal arts can “prepare the soul for virtue.” They can quicken the reason; they can form and perfect good judgment; they can clarify the highest principles which “both instruct and inspire the mind in the pursuit of virtue;” they can develop prudence in human affairs. By themselves, however, they cannot produce virtue or strong character.

That More did a great deal of thinking about these issues is particularly evident in the fact that he raised five brilliant daughters (including his adopted daughter and a ward) who would have been denied a liberal arts education by the custom of the times. More considered this education so important that he hired tutors from Oxford and personally supervised not only his son’s but also his daughters’ education in languages, mathematics, science, history, literature, and philosophy. In doing so, he was criticized by the European literati, Erasmus included, but he soon won them over to his novel educational practices.

More’s fundamental principle in education was crystal clear: “*Put virtue in the first place..., learning in the second.*” In this way, as we have seen, he was convinced that his children would grow to be “*inwardly calm and at peace and neither stirred by praise of flatterers nor stung by the follies of unlearned mockers of learning.*” In stating this principle, More was simply reaffirming the commonsense observations of Plato and Aristotle that a person needs stability of character to see the world with objectivity. Since passion and pride cloud the intellect, he realized, the point of a complete education is to help a person achieve the self-mastery needed for reason to reign.

The liberal arts, he said, can foster this self-mastery not only by developing reason, but also by helping people reach “*the contemplation of celestial realities through the study of nature.*” Such contemplation can bring about a profound grasp of first principles. When this depth of understanding is combined with the experience found especially in the study of history, law, and literature, students can “*learn prudence in human affairs*”—and thus acquire the “*one special thing without which all learning is half lame...; [a] good mother wit.*”

**Thomas More: A Portrait of Courage**

Gerard Wegemer

Pg 90 †

## THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS MORE



**Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem\*** \*Latin for “To turn truth into laughter”



## SANTA’S REINDEER

While both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer each year, according to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid-December. Female reindeer retain their antlers until after they give birth in the spring.

Therefore, according to every historical rendition depicting Santa’s reindeer, every single one of them - from Rudolph to Blitzen - had to be a girl.

We should’ve known: only women would be able to drag a fat man in a red velvet suit all around the world in one night and not get lost! †



## PRAYER PETITIONS



*Heavenly Father,  
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*

- ◆ Billy Erickson (serving in Baghdad)
  - ◆ Jim Moore (special intention)
    - ◆ St Thomas More Society of Jackson Mississippi
  - ◆ Duain Cruzat (serious disease).
- ◆ Baby Fiona Flagsted (brain tumor).
  - ◆ Keith Wilson (serious illness).
  - ◆ Evelyn Munoz (deceased).
  - ◆ Julia Nelson (thanksgiving).
- ◆ Milos & Edith Myrik (serious illness).
  - ◆ Scott Smith (illness).
  - ◆ Ryan Ronk (serious injury).
- ◆ Massimo (child with serious illness).
  - ◆ Pope Paul John II.
  - ◆ John Flynn IV (life changes).
- ◆ Lieutenant Seth Wolcott & his family.
  - ◆ US Air Force Pilot John Flynn.
- ◆ All members of the US Armed Forces.
- ◆ Baby Thomas Council (serious illness).
  - ◆ Kristin Burkett (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 problems).
  - ◆ Cindie Burnes (serious illness).
  - ◆ Michael Shonafelt (special intention).
  - ◆ John Flynn & his wife (serious illness).
  - ◆ Ron Gable (special intention). †

*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](mailto:alanphar@firstam.com)*

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### Why Conversio?

Vatican II, the Council of renewal, closed in 1965. Certainly the look of the Church has changed considerably since then, but it is at times difficult to escape the intuition that renewal seems in other ways to have been nearly immobilized. The debate about the meaning of renewal often seems fundamentally misdirected, as if the key to renewal lay merely in the choice of correct liturgical forms. There is no denying the integral relationship of liturgy to renewal, but the Church has a heart, as the newest doctor of the Church, St. Therese of Lisieux, once fervidly declared, and there is where renewal begins.



## SHARE OUR SELVES MISSION

*We are servants who provide free care and assistance to those in need and act as advocates for systemic change.*

To carry out this mission, Share Our Selves (SOS) provides free emergency assistance to those in need of basic living essentials, including food, clothes, health services, and financial aid.

As a volunteer-based organization, SOS acts as a caring and non-discriminating servant and works for increased awareness and systemic change in response to the needs of thousands of homeless and financially disadvantaged in our community. Fostering an environment of respect and compassion, SOS makes the inherent dignity of the individual a top priority.

## ABOUT US

Founded in 1970 by a group of concerned individuals, primarily members of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Costa Mesa, Share Our Selves (SOS) has grown to become an important nonprofit, volunteer based organization serving Orange County's impoverished and working poor populations. For more than 30 years SOS has provided a safety net to those needing emergency assistance. We pride ourselves on our fast response time, lack of bureaucracy, and caring response to those in crisis. Because of our volunteers, 90 cents of every dollar donated goes directly to our support programs.

We depend on the community for 90% of our budget. Government funding accounts for 10% of our annual income. Gifts and pledges of cash, securities, and planned giving instruments are used to maintain and grow our services. Gifts of food, clothing, pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, and services help defer costs.

SOS is:

- ◆ 200 Emergency Services volunteers.
- ◆ 200 Medical/Dental volunteers.
- ◆ 38 employees.
- ◆ The largest Emergency Relief agency giving out direct aid in Orange County.
- ◆ The only free comprehensive Chronic Care program in Orange County.
- ◆ The only free comprehensive adult dental clinic in Orange County. †



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(Continued from page 4) **Marian Doctrine**

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 10:16; cf. Matt. 16:18, 18:18).

And remember what Christ commanded 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). †

## THE ORIGIN OF THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

*Extravagant gifts is not what the song was originally about*

by Clark Humphrey



### THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

You know the traditional song, “*The Twelve Days of Christmas*.” The one you always thought was about an English rich person whose “*true love*” gives a more extravagant present on each of the twelve days after Christmas.

It wasn’t really about that. At least not originally.

Like many British holiday traditions, the song has its origin in the years when the British crown outlawed the Catholic faith (1558 to 1829). Catholic families often had to resort to secrecy and subterfuge when they taught their traditions to their children.

“*The Twelve Days of Christmas*” was written in England as one of the “*catechism songs*” to help young Catholics learn the basics of their faith. In short, it was a memory aid. Since the song sounded like rhyming nonsense, young Catholics could sing the song without fear of imprisonment. The authorities would not know that it was a religious song. Actually, the catechism to which it referred was rather ecumenical so could probably be claimed to be protestant if cornered.

“*The song’s gifts had hidden meanings to the teachings of the Catholic faith. The ‘true love’ mentioned in the song doesn’t refer to an earthly suitor, but it refers to God Himself. The ‘me’ who receives the presents refers to every baptized person. i.e. the church. The partridge in a pear tree is Christ Jesus, the Son of God.*”

Father Hal Stockert, in an article distributed by the Catholic Information Network, identified the twelve gifts in the song as follows:

**1 Partridge in a Pear Tree:** *The one true God revealed in Jesus Christ.*

**2 Turtle Doves:** *The Old and New Testaments.*

**3 French Hens:** *Faith, hope, and charity.*

**4 Calling Birds:** *The four gospels and/or the four evangelists.*

**5 Golden Rings:** *The first five books of the Old Testament (the ‘Pentateuch’), which contain the law condemning us of our sins.*

**6 Geese A-laying:** *The six days of creation.*

**7 Swans A-swimming:** *The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and the seven sacraments of the Catholic faith.*

**8 Maids A-milking:** *The eight beatitudes.*

**9 Ladies Dancing:** *The nine fruits of the Holy Spirit.*

**10 Lords A-leaping:** *The ten commandments.*

**11 Pipers Piping:** *The eleven faithful apostles.*

**12 Drummers Drumming:** *The twelve points of doctrine in the Apostle’s Creed.*

So the next time you try to remember all the song’s words, also remember that the song is not really a tribute to material excess on this often materialistic holiday:

*It’s about keeping the Faith! †*



**FRANK & ERNEST**





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9:45—10:45 am	SESSION 2: <b>ELIMINATING BIAS THE CHRISTIAN WAY</b> (1 hr Elimination of Bias)	<b>FR. SIMON O'DONNELL</b> <i>Prior at St Andrew's Monastery in Val-lyermo</i>
11:00 — Noon	SESSION 3: <b>DOES THE END JUSTIFY THE MEANS: IS WINNING EVERYTHING?</b> (1 hr Ethics)	<b>DAVID SCHIPPERS, ESQ.</b> <i>Schippers &amp; Bailey; Former Chief Investigative Counsel for US House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary</i>
Noon	<b>MASS</b> (optional)	

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# THE PRIVILEGE OF BEING A WOMAN

BY DR. ALICE VON HILDEBRAND

**FROM  
THE  
LIBRARY**

Women historically have been denigrated as lower than men or viewed as privileged. Dr. Alice von Hildebrand characterizes the difference between such views as based on whether man's vision is secularistic or steeped in the supernatural. She shows that feminism's attempts to gain equality with men by imitation of men is unnatural, foolish, destructive, and self-defeating. The Blessed Mother's role in the Incarnation points to the true privilege of being a woman. Both virginity and maternity meet in Mary who exhibits the feminine gifts of purity, receptivity to God's word, and life-giving nurturance at their highest.



**About the Author:** Alice von Hildebrand received a master's degree and doctorate in philosophy from Fordham University in New York. She taught at the Hunter College of the City in New York, the Catechetical Institute in Arlington, Virginia, the Thomas More College in Rome, Italy, Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, and Ave Maria College in Ypsilanti, Michigan. She lectures in Canada, South America, Western Europe and the United States, and is the author of several books including *Greek Culture; The Adventure of the Human Spirit, A Philosophy of Religion, By Love Refined, By Grief Refined*, and the *Soul of a Lion*. She co-authored several books with her husband, Dietrich von Hildebrand, including *The Art of Living, Situation Ethics*, and *Graven Images*.

**Publisher:** Sapientia Press      **ISBN** O-9706106-7-X      **Pages:** 118      **Price:** \$ 6.95 †

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★ **TOPIC:** "CHOOSING THE NARROW GATE: KEEPING THE  
★ FAITH IN A FAITHLESS WORLD"  
★ **SPEAKER:** COLLEEN HAMMOND, MODEL, ACTRESS & TV ANCHOR  
\*\*\*\*\*



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