

Ad Veritatem

Volume 10 Issue 6

St. Thomas More Society of Orange County

JUNE 2005

Because many things demand our attention, More stressed that active mortifications and set times of prayer are needed to keep the "heart afire" with the love of God.

*Thomas More:
A Portrait of Courage*

JUNE MEETING:

WEDNESDAY JUNE 15, 2005 NOON

**SPEAKER: DR. KENNETH HOWELL, PROFESSOR, AUTHOR
CONVERT, AND DIRECTOR OF CARDINAL NEWMAN
INSTITUTE OF CATHOLIC THOUGHT**

**TOPIC: "WHAT JOHN PAUL REALLY WANTED THE
EUCHARIST TO BE FOR THE CHURCH"**

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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JUNE MEETING

DR. KENNETH J. HOWELL “WHAT JOHN PAUL REALLY WANTED THE EUCHARIST TO BE FOR THE CHURCH”

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NOON

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Dr. Kenneth Howell is Director of the John Henry Cardinal Newman Institute of Catholic Thought and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Illinois where he teaches the history, theology and philosophy of Catholicism. He has authored 3 books: (i) God's Two Books: Copernican Cosmology and Biblical Interpretation in early Modern Science which is a historical study of cosmology and biblical interpretation in the Scientific Revolution; (ii) Mary of Nazareth: Sign and Instrument of Christian Unity which explains troubling doctrines of Mary from the Scriptures; and (iii) Meeting Mary Our Mother in Faith. His fourth book The Eucharist: A Supper for Lovers is due out this year.

Dr. Howell was a Presbyterian minister for 18 years and a theological professor for 7 years at a Protestant seminary where he taught Hebrew, Greek and Latin as well as biblical interpretation and the history of Christianity. His six year study of the Real Presence led him on a journey to Catholicism. Dr. Howell and his wife Sharon have been married for 29 years and have 3 children.

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.

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CALENDAR

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SPEAKING IN TONGUES: AUTHENTIC GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

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

Our Chaplain

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN

Question: *I recently attended a meeting of a charismatic renewal group. I had heard of the phenomenon of “speaking in tongues,” but hadn’t ever witnessed it. A friend explained that it is one of the “original gifts” given to the Church at the time of the Apostles, but that it had become uncommon until the new outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our times. What do you say?*

Answer: Well, it’s not what I say that counts, but what the Scripture and the Sacred Tradition of the Church say. I’ll answer by following St. Paul’s treatment of the “*gift of tongues*” in 1 Corinthians 14.

It has always been the constant and unquestioned teaching of both Scripture and Tradition that the gift of tongues is a miraculous charism, whereby the speaker prays to God or instructs the hearers in a language unknown to him, which he is able to speak by a special grace. If anyone is present who understands that language, either because he knows it naturally or has a special gift of interpretation akin to the gift of prophecy, then the gift of tongues edifies and instructs the hearers. If not, then the speaker speaks only to God in a manner more or less private, and of relatively little importance for the community.

St. Paul is quite clear in his preference of interpreted tongues over the uninterpreted variety, the importance of building up the Church being greater than that of building up the individual. In addition, the use of the gift in church is to be carried out in an orderly fashion. He particularly criticizes a situation in which those present all speak in tongues together. The Apostle describes this as “*a command of the Lord.*”

St. Augustine teaches that in the first days of the Church, this gift was especially necessary in order for the gospel to be preached swiftly to all the nations of the world, in a manner which gave miraculous proof of the divine origin of the doctrine taught. He goes on to say that since now the Church really does speak all the languages of the world and is found in every land, the gift is less necessary. In the 32nd of his treatises of the Gospel of John, he adds: “*Nowadays when the Holy Spirit has just been received, no one speaks in the languages of all the nations, since the Church already speaks the languages of all the nations, and if one is not in her, he does not receive the Holy Spirit.*”

St. Thomas Aquinas, in his **Summa Theologica**, offers the same doctrine as St. Paul and St. Augustine, but he goes on further to infer from St. Augustine’s words a connection between the practice of Christ and of the Church. Aquinas, the Church’s officially proclaimed “*Common Doctor,*” points out that Our Lord surely had the knowledge of all languages, but because He was sent to preach to only one nation, the Jews, He used only His “*mother tongue.*” So, too, the Church, which has the Holy Spirit, being now in every



THE PENTECOST

El Greco

(1596—1600)

Speaking in Tongues (Continued on page 16)

UNFORGIVABLE SIN? BY MICHAEL SHONAFELT, ESQ.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock." (Rv 3:20.)

The Cosmos hums with the rhythm of an intelligible order. There is a normative law immanent in creation that charges the vast continuum, from the smallest particle to the great swarm of galaxies that whirl mysteriously through an ever expanding Universe. The intelligibility of the order of nature enables the human mind, darkened as it may be with sin, to unveil universally applicable laws through the disciplines of the natural sciences; to develop mathematical formulae to predict outcomes; and to apply those laws to the purposes of human society through the achievements of the technological age.

But the order and harmony of the Cosmos stop deferentially at the doorstep of the human soul. Man alone is the free agent of the Universe, loose to wreak havoc or work good. He can say no to God, defy the Eternal Law and send out his own discordant strains to rival the harmony of a Universe ordered by God's decrees. We see the traces of that ominous power everywhere. The sins of humanity have indelibly marred creation and have introduced disorder and chaos into a once perfect system.

Yet, against this backdrop of human freedom run amuck has arisen the most startling aspect of God's self-disclosure: the Cross. An unfallen humanity could never have received the astounding revelation of the incarnation, passion and death. Man could never have witnessed divine forgiveness and the inexorable propensity of God to draw straight with the crooked lines of Man's repeated failures. We never would have experienced God, the Good Shepherd, or have fully fathomed His seemingly reckless love for the Human race.

The "reckless" love of God for man means that His reservoir of forgiveness can never be exhausted. How can such a truth be reconciled with indications in Scripture that there is an "unforgivable sin?" The three synoptic Gospels are clear regarding the possibility of an unpardonable offense against God:

Matthew: "Whoever says a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come." (Mt. 12:31, et seq.)

Mark: "All sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin." (Mk. 3:28.)

Luke: "Every one who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven." (Lk. 12:10.)

The answer to the apparent paradox lies in the radical possibilities that stem from the freedom of man. God's persistent invitation to forgiveness can only take effect upon being accepted. Because we are possessed of free will, we have the power to decline that invitation and make ourselves impervious to grace.

The "unpardonable sin" therefore is unforgivable of its very nature, as St. Thomas Aquinas notes in his *SUMMA THEOLOGICA*, because it removes the very things which are a means towards the pardon of sins. (See Summa Theo.IIa-IIae, q. 14, a. 3.) By shutting the door to the possibility of forgiveness, we, as Pope John Paul II

TRUTH OR MYTH?



ST. JEROME PENITENT

El Greco

(1610—14)

*Yet, against
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the Cross.*

(Continued from page 5) Unforgivable Sin

observed, freely consign ourselves to a “self imposed imprisonment”:

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, then, is the sin committed by the person who claims to have a “right” to persist in evil-in any sin at all- and who thus rejects Redemption. One closes oneself up in sin, thus making impossible one’s conversion, and consequently the remission of sins, which one considers not essential or not important for one’s life. This is a state of spiritual ruin, because blasphemy against the Holy Spirit does not allow one to escape from one’s self-imposed imprisonment and open oneself to the divine sources of the purification of consciences and of the remission of sins.

(Encyclical Letter *Dominum et Vivificantem* ["The Lord and Giver of Life"] 46-47). The “unforgivable sin” therefore consists in not opening the door to Him who is ever outside, knocking.

Not that God stops trying. St. Thomas Aquinas notes that even the unforgivable sin “does not close the way of forgiveness and healing to an all-powerful and merciful God, Who, sometimes, by a miracle, so to speak, restores spiritual health to such men.” (Summa Theo.IIa-IIae, q. 14, a. 3.) Grace can conquer even the will and overcome the interior resistance to forgiveness. Indeed, God will always pursue even the most obstinate, like the “Hound of Heaven” of the English poet Francis Thompson:

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
Up vistaed hopes I sped;
And shot, precipitated,
Adown Titanic glooms of chasmèd fears
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.

Thus is the struggle between a relentless God and the sinner who shuts the door to the demands of grace and careens through the world, seeking love in created things of earth but finding only “shattered shard on shard.” Inevitably, as the poet, those who wield their freedom to flee grace in favor of the illusory goods of the world will find that the One they endeavored to evade was the very One they always searched for in the shadows of created things:

Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee,
Save Me, save only Me?
All which I took from thee I did but take,
Not for thy harms,
But just that thou might’st seek it in my arms,
All which thy child’s mistake
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:
Rise, clasp My hand, and come!

(Francis Thompson, *The Hound of Heaven* (The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse, Oxford University Press, 1917).) †



ST THOMAS INSPIRED
BY THE DOVE OF THE
HOLY GHOST

Sassetta

(1423)

CONFESSION

BY DAVID BELZ, ESQ.

When was the last time you experienced the sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation? If it has been a long time, then maybe it is time to revisit this Sacrament.

Recently, I was sharing my appreciation for this often neglected sacrament with a lawyer friend. As we were talking generally about faith issues, I was telling him that this sacrament dates back to the time of the Apostles. But today, it is grossly underused and grossly under appreciated.

My friend admitted that it had been “years” since he had last received the sacrament of reconciliation. He wanted to know if I confessed “face to face” or from “behind a screen.” He had a look of surprise when I told him the best way to confess is “face to face”!! He wanted to know why. I explained that we are taught by the Psalms, “*He who humbles himself will be exalted*” (Ps 130:1.) In addition, the Catechism of the Catholic Church says that “for those who receive the sacrament of Penance with contrite heart and religious disposition, reconciliation is usually followed by peace and serenity of conscience with strong spiritual consolation.” (Catholic Catechism 1468). From my experience a face to face confession results in a greater outpouring of peace and serenity because of its expression in humility.

What are the historical and scriptural origins of this Sacrament? The origin of the Sacrament of Confession goes back to the words Christ gave us when He taught us the *Our Father* in Matthew 6:12, “*And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*” These words project an ongoing process and the need for ongoing forgiveness and reconciliation.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation derives its origin from the mission of Christ as ‘The Savior’ who came into this world to forgive our sins (Matt 9:6). There is a distinct scriptural reference connecting the Sacrament of Reconciliation with the priesthood. In John 20:22, Jesus tells the Apostles (the first bishops of the Church) in the upper room when he first appears to them (all together) following His Resurrection. Jesus relevant words were, “*as the Father has sent me, even so I send you....receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained*” (John 20:21-23). With these words, Jesus gave the power to forgive directly to His apostles. They in turn passed this on to their successors who in their current roles are “*fulfilling the ministry of the Good Shepherd who seeks the lost sheep.*” (Catholic Catechism, 1465)

St. Paul spoke of Sacrament of Reconciliation in 2 Corinthians. “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new. And all things are of God, who has reconciled himself to us through Christ Jesus, and has given us the Ministry of Reconciliation*”. (2 Cor 17-18).



THE CONFESSION
Pietro Longhi
(Date unknown)

From my experience a face to face confession results in a greater outpouring of peace and serenity because of its expression in humility.

(Continued from page 7) Confession

The Didache, or “The Way”, was one of the earliest Christian teaching documents. Christians were instructed to “Confess your sins in the Church, and do not go up to your prayer with an evil conscience. This is the way of life...on the Lord’s Day gather together, break bread, and give thanks, after confessing your involved transgressions so that your sacrifice may be pure”. (Didache 4:14, 14:1, AD 74).

In the early Church, confessing sins was not merely a private affair. We know, from the early records, that at times when the sin involved apostasy or heresy, the confession would be in public to the entire Church assembly. However, private confession was more common. This importance and practice of this sacrament was often mentioned in the writings of early Church Fathers.

In my own personal spiritual journey at one time I fell prey to the attitude that I did not need this sacrament. In my youth, I remember standing in those lines nervously testing my recollection of the act of contrition before getting into that brown wooden box to talk to Father about my sins. Sadly, this sacrament became a meaningless ritual by the time I entered college in the early 70’s. During my 20’s and the period of my life when I began and finished law school and began to practice law, I lost touch with any appreciation for this sacrament. Quite frankly, it was easier to just avoid dealing the reality of sin. It was a negative and why dwell on a negative. And with that, I also lost touch with the effects of sin. Ultimately, that led to a period of spiritual desolation.

I then began a journey of spiritual reawakening. There was a Cursillo retreat weekend and numerous subsequent Cursillo retreat weekends were I worked as a volunteer. There was a period of time when my non Catholic bible based Christian friends taught me the joys of reading and appreciating holy scripture (I continue to have a strong affinity with my non Catholic Christian friends). There was a renaissance period where I began to explore my Catholic roots and to re-explore the rich spiritual heritage of the Catholic Church. There were numerous meaningful experiences of a spiritual nature.

However, the one moment I still remember and will always remember was the day I completely reconnected with the Sacrament of Reconciliation. That moment occurred on May 23, 1988. It had been countless years since my last confession. At that time, I had made a pilgrimage to a little village in what was then called Yugoslavia. The village’s name was Medjugorje.

When I first arrived in this small town I immediately became aware of the numerous long lines of people waiting to have their confession heard. The priests sat on chairs in an open area outside of the parish church, St. James, with signs on the ground denoting the language in which a person could have his confession heard. (My initial thought was to get into the line for the German priest that way I would be assured of “repentor anonymity.”) The pilgrims arrived from all over the world on a daily basis. There always were lines of pilgrims waiting for these priests

It took me several days to build up the “courage” to get into one of those lines. As I look back, I have to admit there was an internal voice of resistance I

Confession (Continued on page 9)



**THE PENANCE OF
ST. JEROME**

Piero della Francesca

(1450)

(Continued from page 8) ***Confession***

was hearing. (I can laugh about it now because in retrospect it was foolishness) As my turn came near, I struggled to remember the prayer I had been taught for an act of contrition. That was one of those ritual prayers I had discarded during the years I had “broken free” from my “ritualistic past.” However, it was too late to turn back and I had made a personal commitment that I was going to go through with this no matter what. As I sat down, I looked into the face of the priest I was going to share my sins with and was immediately struck by the welcoming gaze from his eyes.

But most of all I remember the moment of absolution. The best way I could describe it is to call it a “healthy spiritual cleansing.” I can’t explain why this confession was different. The answer to that question is a mystery. I just know that on this occasion the sacrament left a mark. It was one of those remarkable moments in one’s life that you don’t forget.

Since that day, I have held firm in my appreciation for this sacrament and always will. I try, although I am not always successful, to enter the confessional every few months. And I must admit, My willingness to do so is a switch from that time in my life when I shunned the confessional. Isn’t it funny how our attitudes can change? †



CONFSSIONALS
Guiliemus Kerricks
(1713)

MORE ON FORGIVING ENEMIES

One telling example of how to deal with an enemy, he said, is the way Jesus treats Judas at the moment of betrayal. Here Christ gives a remarkable example of prudence and patience. In all that he does, Christ wants to teach us “to bear patiently and gently all injuries and snares treacherously set for us; not to smolder with anger, not to seek revenge, not to give vent to our feeling by hurling back insults, not to find any empty pleasure in tripping up an enemy through some clever trick, but rather to set ourselves against deceitful injury with genuine courage, to conquer evil with good—[..], to make every effort by words both gentle and harsh, to insist both in season and out of season, that the wicked may change their ways to good, so that if anyone should be suffering from a disease that does not respond to treatment, he may not blame the failure on our negligence but rather attribute it to the virulence of his own disease.

Throughout his dealings with Judas, Christ acts “as a most conscientious physician” who tries two different “ways of effecting a cure.” First he uses a gentle approach; he asks, “Friend, why have you come?” This kind appeal to Judas’s conscience is of no avail. But Christ, as soon as he sees that Judas is not responding, tries again. He “immediately adds in a grave tone, ‘Judas, do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?’” Unfortunately, Judas uses his free will to reject what could have healed that conscience of his, so “full of guilty sores.”

Thomas More: A Portrait of Courage Gerald B. Wegemer Scepter Publishers (p. 208) †

THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS MORE



Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem*



*Latin for "To turn truth into laughter"

GOLFER'S HELL ON EARTH



The Reverend Francis Norton woke up Sunday morning and, realizing it was an exceptionally beautiful and sunny early spring day, decided he just had to play golf. So... he told the Associate Pastor that he was feeling sick and convinced him to say Mass for him that day.

As soon as the Associate Pastor left the room, Father Norton headed out of town to a golf course about forty miles away. This way he knew he wouldn't accidentally meet anyone he knew from his parish. Setting up on the first tee, he was alone. After all, it was Sunday morning and everyone else was in church!

At about this time, Saint Peter leaned over to the Lord while looking down from the heavens and exclaimed, "You're not going to let him get away with this, are you?"

The Lord sighed, and said, "No, I guess not."

Just then Father Norton hit the ball and it shot straight towards the pin, dropping just short of it, rolled up and fell into the hole. IT WAS A 420 YARD HOLE IN ONE!

St. Peter was astonished. He looked at the Lord and asked, "Why did you let him do that?"

The Lord smiled and replied, "Who's he going to tell?" †

JOHN 20: 21-22



²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, ²²"Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Comment from the Navarre Bible:*

The Church has always understood—and has in fact defined—that Jesus Christ here conferred on the Apostles authority to forgive sins, a power which is exercised in the sacrament of Penance. "The Lord then especially instituted the sacrament of Penance when, after being risen from the dead, he breathed upon his disciples and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit..." The consensus of all the Fathers has always acknowledged that by this action so sublime and words so clear the power of forgiving and retaining sins was given to the Apostles and their lawful successors for reconciling the faithful who have fallen after Baptism" (Council of Trent, *De Paenitentia*, chap. 1).

The sacrament of Penance is the most sublime expression of God's love and mercy towards men, described so vividly in Jesus' Parable of the prodigal son (cf. Lk 15:11-32). The Lord always awaits us, with his arms wide open, waiting for us to repent—and then he will forgive us and restore us to the dignity of being his sons. The Popes have consistently recommended Christians to have regular recourse to this sacrament: "For a constant and speedy advancement in the path of virtue we highly recommend the pious practice of frequent confession, introduced by the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; for by this means we grow in a true knowledge of ourselves and in Christian humility, bad habits are uprooted, spiritual negligence and apathy are prevented, the conscience is purified and the will strengthened, salutary spiritual direction is obtained, and grace is increased by the efficacy of the sacrament itself" (Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*). Page 244 †

SCRIPTURAL CORNER

*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.

**THE FOLLOWING EXCERPT IS FROM CHAPTER 10 OF
IDENTITY AND MEMORY, THE LAST BOOK WRITTEN BY
POPE JOHN PAUL II AND RELEASED SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEATH.**

THE MYSTERY OF MERCY

Holy Father, could we dwell for a moment on the mystery of love and mercy? It seems important to analyze in greater depth the essence of these two divine attributes of such significance for us.

The psalm Miserere is possibly one of the most beautiful prayers that the Church inherited from the Old Testament. The circumstances of its origin are well known. It was born as the cry of a sinner, King David, who took for himself the wife of the soldier Uriah, committed adultery with her, and then, in order to conceal the traces of his crime, arranged for her rightful husband to die on the battlefield. In a striking passage from the Second Book of Samuel, the prophet Nathan points an accusing finger at David, Declaring him responsible for a great crime before God: “You are the man!” (2 Sam12:7) The King experiences a kind of revelation, and is overcome with profound emotion which finds expression in the words of the Miserere. This psalm probably occurs more often in the liturgy than any other:

*Miserer mei, Deus,
Secundum misericordiam tuam;
Et secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum
Dele iniquitatem meam.*

*Amplius lava me ab iniquitate mea,
Et a peccato meo munda me.
Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco,
Et peccatum meum contra me est semper.*

*Tibi, tibi soli peccavi
Et malum coram te feci,
Ut iustus inveniaris in sententia tua
Et aequus in iudicio tuo.....*

There is a particular beauty in these gently flowing Latin words and in the gradual unfolding of thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Clearly the original language of the psalm *Miserere* was different, but our ear is accustomed to the Latin version, perhaps more than to the vernacular translations, although these too are melodious and evocative in their own way:

The Mystery of Mercy (Continued on page 12)



**THE SEVEN
ACTS OF MERCY**

Caravaggio

(1607)

(Continued from page 11) *The Mystery of Mercy*

Have mercy on me, O God, in your kindness,
In your compassion blot out my offense.
O wash me more and more from my guilt,
And cleanse me from my sin.

My offenses truly I know them;
My sin is always before me.
Against you, you alone, have I sinned,
What is evil in your sight I have done.

That you may be justified when you give sentence,
And be without reproach when you judge,
O see, in guilt I was born,
A sinner was I conceived.

Indeed you love truth in the heart;
Then in the secret of my heart teach me wisdom.
O purify me, then I shall be clean;
O wash me, I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me hear rejoicing and gladness,
That the bones you have crushed may revive.
From my sins turn away your face
And blot out all my guilt.

A pure heart create for me, O God,
Put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence
Nor deprive me of your holy spirit.

Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervor sustain me,
That I may teach transgressors your ways
And sinners may return to you.

O rescue me, God, my helper,
And my tongue shall ring out your goodness.
O Lord, open my lips
And my mouth shall declare your praise.

(Psalms 50/51:3-17) ((12)) †



**RETURN OF THE
PRODIGAL SON**

*Bartolome Esteban
Murillo*

(1667—1670)

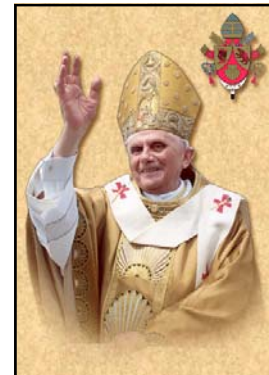
HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI*

MASS, IMPOSITION OF THE PALLIUM AND CONFERRAL OF THE FISHERMAN'S RING FOR THE BEGINNING OF THE PETRINE MINISTRY OF THE BISHOP OF ROME

*Your Eminences,
My dear Brother Bishops and Priests,
Distinguished Authorities and Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

During these days of great intensity, we have chanted the litany of the saints on three different occasions: at the funeral of our Holy Father John Paul II; as the Cardinals entered the Conclave; and again today, when we sang it with the response: *Tu illum adiuva* – sustain the new Successor of Saint Peter. On each occasion, in a particular way, I found great consolation in listening to this prayerful chant. How alone we all felt after the passing of John Paul II – the Pope who for over twenty-six years had been our shepherd and guide on our journey through life! He crossed the threshold of the next life, entering into the mystery of God. But he did not take this step alone. Those who believe are never alone – neither in life nor in death. At that moment, we could call upon the Saints from every age – his friends, his brothers and sisters in the faith – knowing that they would form a living procession to accompany him into the next world, into the glory of God. We knew that his arrival was awaited. Now we know that he is among his own and is truly at home. We were also consoled as we made our solemn entrance into Conclave, to elect the one whom the Lord had chosen. How would we be able to discern his name? How could 115 Bishops, from every culture and every country, discover the one on whom the Lord wished to confer the mission of binding and loosing? Once again, we knew that we were not alone, we knew that we were surrounded, led and guided by the friends of God. And now, at this moment, weak servant of God that I am, I must assume this enormous task, which truly exceeds all human capacity. How can I do this? How will I be able to do it? All of you, my dear friends, have just invoked the entire host of Saints, represented by some of the great names in the history of God's dealings with mankind. In this way, I too can say with renewed conviction: I am not alone. I do not have to carry alone what in truth I could never carry alone. All the Saints of God are there to protect me, to sustain me and to carry me. And your prayers, my dear friends, your indulgence, your love, your faith and your hope accompany me. Indeed, the communion of Saints consists not only of the great men and women who went before us and whose names we know. All of us belong to the communion of Saints, we who have been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we who draw life from the gift of Christ's Body and Blood, through which he transforms us and makes us like himself. Yes, the Church is alive – this is the wonderful experience of these days. During those sad days of the Pope's illness and death, it became wonderfully evident to us that the Church is alive. And the Church is young. She holds within herself the future of the world and therefore shows each of us the way towards the future. The Church is alive and we are seeing it: we are experiencing the joy that the Risen Lord promised his followers. The Church is alive – she is alive because Christ is alive, because he is truly risen. In the suffering that we saw on the Holy Father's face in those days of Easter, we contemplated the mystery of Christ's Passion and we touched his wounds. But throughout these days we have also been able, in a profound sense, to touch the Risen One. We have been able to experience the joy that he promised, after a brief period of darkness, as the fruit of his resurrection.

The Church is alive – with these words, I greet with great joy and gratitude all of you



PETER'S SUCCESSOR, POPE BENEDICT XVI



**Sunday April 24, 2005
St. Peter's Square*

Papal Homily (Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13) **Papal Homily**

gathered here, my venerable brother Cardinals and Bishops, my dear priests, deacons, Church workers, catechists. I greet you, men and women Religious, witnesses of the transfiguring presence of God. I greet you, members of the lay faithful, immersed in the great task of building up the Kingdom of God which spreads throughout the world, in every area of life. With great affection I also greet all those who have been reborn in the sacrament of Baptism but are not yet in full communion with us; and you, my brothers and sisters of the Jewish people, to whom we are joined by a great shared spiritual heritage, one rooted in God's irrevocable promises. Finally, like a wave gathering force, my thoughts go out to all men and women of today, to believers and non-believers alike.

Dear friends! At this moment there is no need for me to present a programme of governance. I was able to give an indication of what I see as my task in my Message of Wednesday 20 April, and there will be other opportunities to do so. My real programme of governance is not to do my own will, not to pursue my own ideas, but to listen, together with the whole Church, to the word and the will of the Lord, to be guided by Him, so that He himself will lead the Church at this hour of our history. Instead of putting forward a programme, I should simply like to comment on the two liturgical symbols which represent the inauguration of the Petrine Ministry; both these symbols, moreover, reflect clearly what we heard proclaimed in today's readings.

The first symbol is the Pallium, woven in pure wool, which will be placed on my shoulders. This ancient sign, which the Bishops of Rome have worn since the fourth century, may be considered an image of the yoke of Christ, which the Bishop of this City, the Servant of the Servants of God, takes upon his shoulders. God's yoke is God's will, which we accept. And this will does not weigh down on us, oppressing us and taking away our freedom. To know what God wants, to know where the path of life is found – this was Israel's joy, this was her great privilege. It is also our joy: God's will does not alienate us, it purifies us – even if this can be painful – and so it leads us to ourselves. In this way, we serve not only him, but the salvation of the whole world, of all history. The symbolism of the Pallium is even more concrete: the lamb's wool is meant to represent the lost, sick or weak sheep which the shepherd places on his shoulders and carries to the waters of life. For the Fathers of the Church, the parable of the lost sheep, which the shepherd seeks in the desert, was an image of the mystery of Christ and the Church. The human race – every one of us – is the sheep lost in the desert which no longer knows the way. The Son of God will not let this happen; he cannot abandon humanity in so wretched a condition. He leaps to his feet and abandons the glory of heaven, in order to go in search of the sheep and pursue it, all the way to the Cross. He takes it upon his shoulders and carries our humanity; he carries us all – he is the good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. What the Pallium indicates first and foremost is that we are all carried by Christ. But at the same time it invites us to carry one another. Hence the Pallium becomes a symbol of the shepherd's mission, of which the Second Reading and the Gospel speak. The pastor must be inspired by Christ's holy zeal: for him it is not a matter of indifference that so many people are living in the desert. And there are so many kinds of desert. There is the desert of poverty, the desert of hunger and thirst, the desert of abandonment, of loneliness, of destroyed love. There is the desert of God's darkness, the emptiness of souls no longer aware of their dignity or the goal of human life. The external deserts in the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast. Therefore the earth's treasures no longer serve to build God's garden for all to live in, but they have been made to serve the powers of exploitation and destruction. The Church as a whole and all her Pastors, like Christ, must set out to lead people out of the desert, towards the place of life, towards friendship with the Son of God, towards the One who gives us life, and life in abundance. The symbol of the lamb also has a deeper meaning. In the Ancient Near East, it was customary for kings to style themselves shepherds of their people. This was an image of their power, a cynical image: to them their subjects were like sheep, which the shepherd could dispose of as he wished. When the shepherd of all humanity, the living God, himself became a lamb, he stood on the side of the lambs, with those who are downtrodden and killed. This is how he reveals himself to be the true shepherd: "I am the Good Shepherd . . . I lay down my life for the sheep", Jesus says of himself (*Jn* 10:14f). It is not power, but love that redeems us! This is God's sign: he himself is love. How often we wish that God would show himself stronger, that he would strike decisively, defeating evil and creating a better world. All ideologies of power justify themselves in exactly this way, they justify the destruction of whatever would stand in the way of progress and the liberation of humanity. We suffer on account of God's patience. And yet, we need his patience. God, who became a lamb, tells us that the world is saved by the Crucified One, not by those who crucified him. The world is redeemed by the patience of God. It is destroyed by the impatience of man.

One of the basic characteristics of a shepherd must be to love the people entrusted to him, even as he loves Christ whom he serves. "Feed my sheep", says Christ to Peter, and now, at this moment, he says it to me as well. Feeding means loving, and loving also means being ready to suffer. Loving means giving the sheep what is truly good, the nourishment of God's truth, of God's word, the nourishment of his presence, which he gives us in the Blessed Sacrament.

Papal Homily (Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14) ***Papal Homily***

My dear friends – at this moment I can only say: pray for me, that I may learn to love the Lord more and more. Pray for me, that I may learn to love his flock more and more – in other words, you, the holy Church, each one of you and all of you together. Pray for me, that I may not flee for fear of the wolves. Let us pray for one another, that the Lord will carry us and that we will learn to carry one another.

The second symbol used in today's liturgy to express the inauguration of the Petrine Ministry is the presentation of the fisherman's ring. Peter's call to be a shepherd, which we heard in the Gospel, comes after the account of a miraculous catch of fish: after a night in which the disciples had let down their nets without success, they see the Risen Lord on the shore. He tells them to let down their nets once more, and the nets become so full that they can hardly pull them in; 153 large fish: "and although there were so many, the net was not torn" (*Jn 21:11*). This account, coming at the end of Jesus's earthly journey with his disciples, corresponds to an account found at the beginning: there too, the disciples had caught nothing the entire night; there too, Jesus had invited Simon once more to put out into the deep. And Simon, who was not yet called Peter, gave the wonderful reply: "Master, at your word I will let down the nets." And then came the conferral of his mission: "Do not be afraid. Henceforth you will be catching men" (*Lk 5:1-11*). Today too the Church and the successors of the Apostles are told to put out into the deep sea of history and to let down the nets, so as to win men and women over to the Gospel – to God, to Christ, to true life. The Fathers made a very significant commentary on this singular task. This is what they say: for a fish, created for water, it is fatal to be taken out of the sea, to be removed from its vital element to serve as human food. But in the mission of a fisher of men, the reverse is true. We are living in alienation, in the salt waters of suffering and death; in a sea of darkness without light. The net of the Gospel pulls us out of the waters of death and brings us into the splendour of God's light, into true life. It is really true: as we follow Christ in this mission to be fishers of men, we must bring men and women out of the sea that is salted with so many forms of alienation and onto the land of life, into the light of God. It is really so: the purpose of our lives is to reveal God to men. And only where God is seen does life truly begin. Only when we meet the living God in Christ do we know what life is. We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution. Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary. There is nothing more beautiful than to be surprised by the Gospel, by the encounter with Christ. There is nothing more beautiful than to know Him and to speak to others of our friendship with Him. The task of the shepherd, the task of the fisher of men, can often seem wearisome. But it is beautiful and wonderful, because it is truly a service to joy, to God's joy which longs to break into the world.

Here I want to add something: both the image of the shepherd and that of the fisherman issue an explicit call to unity. "I have other sheep that are not of this fold; I must lead them too, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd" (*Jn 10:16*); these are the words of Jesus at the end of his discourse on the Good Shepherd. And the account of the 153 large fish ends with the joyful statement: "although there were so many, the net was not torn" (*Jn 21:11*). Alas, beloved Lord, with sorrow we must now acknowledge that it has been torn! But no – we must not be sad! Let us rejoice because of your promise, which does not disappoint, and let us do all we can to pursue the path towards the unity you have promised. Let us remember it in our prayer to the Lord, as we plead with him: yes, Lord, remember your promise. Grant that we may be one flock and one shepherd! Do not allow your net to be torn, help us to be servants of unity!

At this point, my mind goes back to 22 October 1978, when Pope John Paul II began his ministry here in Saint Peter's Square. His words on that occasion constantly echo in my ears: "Do not be afraid! Open wide the doors for Christ!" The Pope was addressing the mighty, the powerful of this world, who feared that Christ might take away something of their power if they were to let him in, if they were to allow the faith to be free. Yes, he would certainly have taken something away from them: the dominion of corruption, the manipulation of law and the freedom to do as they pleased. But he would not have taken away anything that pertains to human freedom or dignity, or to the building of a just society. The Pope was also speaking to everyone, especially the young. Are we not perhaps all afraid in some way? If we let Christ enter fully into our lives, if we open ourselves totally to him, are we not afraid that He might take something away from us? Are we not perhaps afraid to give up something significant, something unique, something that makes life so beautiful? Do we not then risk ending up diminished and deprived of our freedom? And once again the Pope said: No! If we let Christ into our lives, we lose nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful and great. No! Only in this friendship are the doors of life opened wide. Only in this friendship is the great potential of human existence truly revealed. Only in this friendship do we experience beauty and liberation. And so, today, with great strength and great conviction, on the basis of long personal experience of life, I say to you, dear young people: Do not be afraid of Christ! He takes nothing away, and he gives you everything. When we give ourselves to him, we receive a hundredfold in return. Yes, open, open wide the doors to Christ – and you will find true life. Amen. ✠

(Continued from page 4) *Speaking in Tongues*

land and speaking all languages naturally, does not need to use this miraculous gift as much as she did previously.

Even so the gift is still given. There are true examples of this gift in the lives of saints. For example, St. Pachomius in the fourth century, St. Norbert in the 12th century, St. Anthony of Padua in the 13th century, St. Vincent Ferrer in the 14th century and St. Bernadine of Siena in the 15th century. I even know personally a priest who, while leading a pilgrimage at the monastery where Padre Pio lived in San Giovanni Rotondo in Italy, invoked Padre Pio and was able to hear confessions and give advice in English even before he learned English. This was a clear example of the gift used to “*disclose the secrets of hearts,*” as St. Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 14:25.

What is often referred to as tongues today might be better described as ecstatic speaking---the expression of devout emotion which cannot be put into words. Even so, it can have an orderly, practical artistic expression, like the long, protracted syllables in some Gregorian chants, or the beautiful ison or “*droning*” in Eastern Christian chant.

St. Augustine speaks of the “*jubilation*” which exceeds the bounds of words and set melody, like workers in the field who sing a kind of “*fa-la-la.*” Indeed, this kind of musical passage is called a *jubilus* in Gregorian chant.

Any true spiritual renewal must involve a return to profound depths of Catholic Tradition and to the sound tastes and preferences of the saints.

On a personal note, I was present at an international Charismatic gathering in Rome in 1984. One of the conference leaders, a famous writer and speaker in the renewal, vehemently encouraged all those present to speak in tongues right away and all at once. He said that every Christian has this gift and that “*all you have to do is open your mouth*” to do it. Not exactly the teaching of St. Paul.

At the end of the conference, there was a Papal Mass in St. Peters, when the Holy Father preached to the assembly of priests involved in the Charismatic renewal. Hardly by chance, he spoke of St. John of the Cross’ “*Dark Nights of the Soul*” of the senses and of faith, not of emotional release or of special charisms. Although his hearers prayed and sang with curious utterances after Holy Communion, he simply watched and listened with fatherly attention. He was the example and authoritative “*word of knowledge and of wisdom.*” †



**DESCENT OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT**

Andrea da Firenze
(1365—68)

**FRANK
ERNEST**



A KIND ACT CAN HAVE UNEXPECTED EFFECTS



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

One day, when I was a freshman in high school, I saw a kid from my class was walking home from school. His name was Kyle. It looked like he was carrying all of his books. I thought to myself, “Why would anyone bring home all his books on a Friday? He must really be a nerd.”

I had quite a weekend planned (parties and a football game with my friends tomorrow afternoon), so I shrugged my shoulders and went on.

As I was walking, I saw a bunch of kids running toward him. They ran at him, knocking all his books out of his arms and tripping him so he landed in the dirt. His glasses went flying, and I saw them land in the grass about ten feet from him. He looked up and I saw this terrible sadness in his eyes.

My heart went out to him. So, I jogged over to him and as he crawled around looking for his glasses, and I saw a tear in his eye. As I handed him his glasses, I said, “Those guys are jerks. They really should get lives.” He looked at me and said, “Hey, thanks!” There was a big smile on his face. It was one of those smiles that showed real gratitude.

I helped him pick up his books, and asked him where he lived. As it turned out, he lived near me, so I asked him why I had never seen him before. He said he had gone to private school before now.

I would have never hung out with a private school kid before. We talked all the way home, and I carried some of his books. He turned out to be a pretty cool kid. I asked him if he wanted to play a little football with my friends. He said yes. We hung out all weekend and the more I got to know Kyle, the more I liked him, and my friends thought the same of him.

Monday morning came, and there was Kyle with the huge stack of books again. I stopped him and said, “Boy, you are gonna really build some serious muscles with this pile of books everyday!” He just laughed and handed me half the books.

Over the next four years, Kyle and I became best friends. When we were seniors, we began to think about college. Kyle decided on Georgetown, and I was going to Duke. I knew that we would always be friends, that the miles would never be a problem. He was going to be a doctor, and I was going for business on a football scholarship.

Kyle was valedictorian of our class. I teased him all the time about being a nerd. He had to prepare a speech for graduation.

I was so glad it wasn't me having to get up there and speak. Graduation day, I saw Kyle. He looked great. He was one of those guys that really found himself during high school. He filled out and actually looked good in glasses. He had more dates than I had and all the girls loved him.

Boy, sometimes I was jealous.

Today was one of those days. I could see that he was nervous about his



(Continued from page 17) ***A Kind Act***

speech. So, I smacked him on the back and said, “Hey, Big Guy, you’ll be great!” He looked at me with one of those looks (the really grateful one) and smiled. “Thanks,” he said.

As he started his speech, he cleared his throat, and began. “Graduation is a time to thank those who helped you make it through those tough years. Your parents, your teachers, your siblings, maybe a coach...but mostly your friends. I am here to tell all of you that being a friend to someone is the best gift you can give them. I am going to tell you a story.”

I just looked at my friend with disbelief as he told the story of the first day we met. He had planned to kill himself over the weekend. He talked of how he had cleaned out his locker so his Mom wouldn’t have to do it later and was carrying his stuff home. He looked hard at me and gave me a little smile.

“Thankfully, I was saved. My friend saved me from doing the unspeakable.”

I heard the gasp go through the crowd as this handsome, popular boy told us all about his weakest moment. I saw his Mom and dad looking at me and smiling that same grateful smile. Not until that moment did I realize it’s depth.

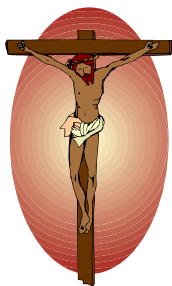
Never underestimate the power of your actions. With one small gesture you can change a person’s life - for better or for worse.

God puts us all in each other’s lives to impact one another in some way. Look for God in others and listen when He whispers in your heart. †



PRAYER PETITIONS

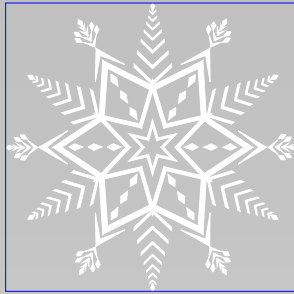
***Heavenly Father,
I offer you this day
all that I shall think
or do or say, uniting it with
what was done by Jesus Christ,
your only Son. Amen***



- ◆ Jonathon Schulte (deceased)
 - ◆ Eric & Marie Bessem
- ◆ Charles Godwin (serious illness)
 - ◆ Kevin Guice (serious illness)
 - ◆ Julia Nelson (serious illness)
 - ◆ Sean Nelson (illness).
 - ◆ Jose Alvarez (illness).
- ◆ 3 yr old Kallie Townsend (serious illness).
 - ◆ Mary Keelan (illness).
- ◆ Frank J. Dumbauskas (serving in Iraq).
 - ◆ Karl Abeyta (serious illness).
- ◆ Lauri Becker Kalinowski (serious illness).
 - ◆ John Thompson (employment).
 - ◆ St. Thomas More Society of Jackson Mississippi.
 - ◆ Duain Cruzat (serious disease).
- ◆ Baby Fiona Flagsted (brain tumor).
 - ◆ Keith Wilson (serious illness).
- ◆ Milos & Edith Myrik (serious illness).
 - ◆ Scott Smith (illness).
 - ◆ Ryan Ronk (serious injury)
 - ◆ John Flynn IV (life changes).
- ◆ All members of the US Armed Forces.
 - ◆ Kristin Burkett (serious illness).
 - ◆ Darren M (questioning the Faith).
 - ◆ Fr. Matt Munoz (special intention).
 - ◆ Ryan McEachen (special intention).
 - ◆ Cindie Burnes (serious illness).
- ◆ John Flynn & his wife (serious illness).
 - ◆ Ron Gable (special intention).
 - ◆ Mary Erickson (special intention)
 - ◆ Earle Nelson (epiphany) †

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

SIMPLE TRUTHS



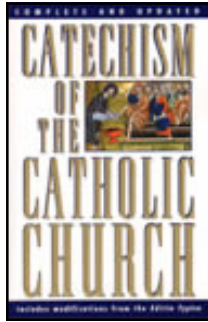
Fulton J. Sheen

"What is conscience? Conscience is a judgment of our reason telling us that we ought to do good and avoid evil. That brings up the question: What makes anything 'good?' A thing is good if it attains the end and the highest purpose for which it is made. A pencil is good if it writes, for that is the purpose of the pencil. But the pencil is 'not' good to open a can with, for it was not made to open cans. If we use a pencil to open a can, not only do we not open it, but we break the pencil. If we use our lives for other purposes than those given by God, not only do we miss happiness, but we actually hurt ourselves and beget in us queer little 'kinks...'

Apply that to man. When is man 'good?' A man is good when he attains the highest purpose for which he was made. This supreme goal cannot be to get the maximum pleasure out of life, because those who concentrate on having a good time rarely have it. Pleasure is only a bonus or a by-product of a duty. One does not eat ice cream to have pleasure; one has pleasure because one eats ice cream. If we set our affections not, say, on the family but on the pleasure a man hopes to have from having a family, the pleasure vanishes. Furthermore, our experience proves that we are most happy when we do not seek our own pleasure at all; the glutton, the jaded, the satiated are more miserable than the man who lives to serve his neighbor.

Fame, reputation, a full safety-deposit vault cannot be the supreme goal of life either, because all these things are extrinsic to man; it matters little how much one has on the *outside* if he is not happy on the inside." †

THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
PART ONE: THE PROFESSION OF FAITH
SECTION TWO: THE PROFESSION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH
CHAPTER THREE: I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT
ARTICLE 10: I BELIEVE IN THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS



976 The Apostle's Creed associates faith in the forgiveness of sins not only with faith in the Holy Spirit, but also with faith in the Church and in the communion of saints. It was when he gave the Holy Spirit to his apostles that the risen Christ conferred on them his own divine power to forgive sins: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

(Part Two of the catechism will deal explicitly with the forgiveness of sins through Baptism, the sacrament of Penance, and the other sacraments, especially the Eucharist. Here it will suffice to suggest some basic facts briefly.)

CATECHISM
CORNER

.....

II THE POWER OF THE KEYS

981 After his Resurrection, Christ sent his apostles "so that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations." The apostles and their successors carry out this "ministry of reconciliation," not only by announcing to men God's forgiveness merited for us by Christ, and calling them to conversion and faith; but also by communicating to them the forgiveness of sins in Baptism, and reconciling them with God and with the Church through the power of the keys, received from Christ:

The Church has received the keys of the Kingdom of heaven so that, in her, sins may be forgiven through Christ's blood and the Holy Spirit's action. In this Church, the soul dead through sin comes back to life in order to live with Christ, whose grace has saved us.

982 There is no offense, however serious, that the Church cannot forgive. "There is no one, however wicked and guilty, who may not confidently hope for forgiveness, provided his repentance is honest." Christ who died for all men desires that in his Church the gates of forgiveness should always be open to anyone who turns away from sin.

983 Catechesis strives to awaken and nourish in the faithful faith in the incomparable greatness of the risen Christ's gift to his Church: the mission and the power to forgive sins through the ministry of the apostles and their successors:

The Lord wills that his disciples possess a tremendous power: that his lowly servants accomplish in his name all that he did when he was on earth.

Priests have received from God a power that he has given neither to angels nor to archangels. . . . God above confirms what priests do here below.

Were there no forgiveness of sins in the Church, there would be no hope of life to come or eternal liberation. Let us thank God who has given his Church such a gift. †



**THE RETURN OF THE
 PRODIGAL SON**

Rembrandt

(1559)

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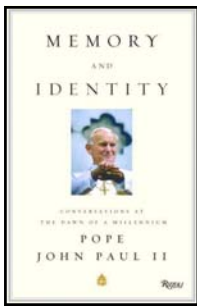
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**MEMORY AND IDENTITY:
CONVERSATIONS AT THE DAWN OF THE MILLENIUM
By: Pope John Paul II**

**FROM
THE
LIBRARY**



When the world remembers Pope John Paul II, what themes from his papacy will come to mind? In this philosophical meditation, the Holy Father reflects on values he deems critical to the destiny of humankind, with freedom and the value of life underlying all others. Pope John Paul II's theology of evil and suffering was forged in the crucible of Nazism and communism in his native Poland, as was his belief in the importance of cultural identity. He points out that "evil, in a realist sense, can only exist in relation to good, and in particular, in relation to God, the supreme Good," which underlies even the darkest moments in history with the promise of redemption and hope. His encounters with those dark moments lend credibility when he writes, "All human suffering, all pain, all infirmity contains within itself a promise of salvation, a promise of joy..."

He champions freedom, yet cautions the faithful that when freedom is no longer linked with the truth, it sets the premise for "dangerous moral consequences." The West must overcome its moral permissiveness, he exhorts, listing divorce, free love, abortion, contraception, euthanasia, and genetic engineering as evidence of its degeneration. He also issues a plea for the church, a repository of historical memory, to remember its primary mission: to proclaim the Gospel.

The world will remember Pope John Paul II for espousing many of the convictions he expresses here: that good is ultimately victorious, life conquers death, and love triumphs over hate. --Cindy Crosby

Publisher: Rizzoli ISBN: 0847827615 Pages 192 Cost: \$13.57 †

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WHEN: WEDNESDAY JUNE 15 @ NOON (LUNCH \$10)

TOPIC: "WHAT JOHN PAUL REALLY WANTED THE EUCHARIST TO BE FOR THE CHURCH"

SPEAKER: Dr. Kenneth Howell, Professor, Author & Convert

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