

Ad Veritatem

Volume 11 Issue 1

St. Thomas More Society of Orange County

JANUARY 2006

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
Gerard Wegemert*

JANUARY MEETING:

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 18, 2006 NOON

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

**TOPIC: "GOD IS LOVE: WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?
INSIGHTS INTO POPE BENEDICT'S FIRST ENCYCLICAL"**

DETAILS ON PAGE 3



**PLEASE NOTE: MONTHLY MEETINGS WILL BE IN THE
FIRST AMERICAN TRUST BLDG (BLDG 5)**

"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

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O. PRAEM, PH.D.
St. Michael's Abbey

AD VERITATEM EDITORS

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JANUARY
MEETING

FR. HUGH BARBOUR, O. PRAEM, PH.D.
“GOD IS LOVE: WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?”
INSIGHT INTO POPE BENEDICT’S FIRST ENCYCLICAL”

Norbertine Father Hugh Barbour, 44, is Prior of St. Michael’s Abbey in Silverado. The gentle, good-humored, erudite cleric was ordained for the Order in 1990, and presently teaches philosophy. He has a license in Patristic Theology (Theology of the Fathers) and a doctorate in philosophy. In 1991, Fr. Hugh was appointed *Censor Librorum* for the Diocese by Bishop Norman McFarland, a unique honor for such a young Priest. He is a convert having grown up the son of an Episcopalian priest. Fr. Hugh also has served as the Chaplain for the St Thomas More Society since its inception in 1997 providing inspiration and spiritual guidance.

For more information, please contact either David Belz at (949) 347-0447 dbelz@kuhnbelz.com, or Anne Lanphar at (714) 250-8605 alanphar@firstam.com

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NOON
Wed. Jan. 18th

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St Thomas More Society
Annual MCLE Seminar
Saturday January 14, 2006

Earn 3 hours of credit for Ethics,
Bias Elimination & Substance Abuse
See Page 13 for details! †

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MCLE INVITATION
January 14, 2006

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**A
MESSAGE
FROM
OUR
CHAPLAIN**

**CONVERSION OF THE HEART:
THE WAY TO TRUE WISDOM***

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

*Down in adoration falling
Lo! the sacred Host we hail,
Lo! oe'r ancient forms departing
Newer rites of grace prevail;
Faith for all defects supplying,
Where the feeble senses fail.*



**TRIUMPH OF
ST THOMAS AQUINAS**

Benozzo Gozzoli
(1471)

** Fr. Barbour is the Prior of St. Michael's Abbey in Orange, California. This was the Baccalaureate Homily he gave for the Mass of the Holy Spirit as part of Commencement Ceremonies on June 2000 at St. Thomas Aquinas College.*

The words of a hymn most familiar to us is the *Tantum Ergo* – one which surely, a number of times, if not countless times, you have sung or heard sung even here – the words of the Angelic Doctor. Faith for all defects supplying, Where the feeble senses fail.

When St. Thomas was a little boy, a very little boy, he was in bed with his little sister in a cradle by a window. A flash of lightning entered the room and took her life and saved his, as he startled and moved, obviously from such a tremendous, sudden, frightening object. Ever after, in his life, when there was a thunderstorm, or a tempest, St. Thomas would cross himself, or he might even lay his head on the table of the altar if he was in the church, and he would repeat over and over, “God has become man. God has died and has risen.” Faith for all defects supplying, Where the feeble senses fail.

We know why it is that God revealed to us truths that exceed the capacity of our human reason, our unaided human reason. In addition to truths which He revealed on account of our fallen state, which we could have come to know on our own, He revealed truths which exceed our understanding, that utterly surpass the state of this present life. Why did He do so?

Well, the first answer is very simple and serene and makes eminent good sense from our perspective, as well as, of course, from God's. If we were only in this life to know such things as can be known by our unaided human powers, then we might be led to think that that good, that end which God has established for us for the perfection of our nature and for our beatitude, would be something proportionate to the things which we find in this world.

And so, God revealed, as St. Thomas teaches us in the fifth chapter of the first book of his *Summa* against the Pagans, against the Gentiles. He says that in order that we might desire and tend with zeal towards an object that utterly exceeds the state of this present life, God revealed to us truths which we cannot know on our own – indeed, truths so profound that we cannot even discover with our human mind the inner reason for these truths, their plausibility seen from within the way we know things of science, of human science.

God revealed Himself to us so that we might desire Him as He really is, as one of whom the Apostle speaks when he says, “Eye has not seen, nor has ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of anyone what God has prepared for those who love Him” – that is, for those who desire Him and tend towards Him with zeal, knowing that what He is and what He holds in store for us, utterly exceeds all that we could ever experience or

Conversion of the Heart (Continued on page 14)

A CONVERSION STORY: FROM JEW TO PROTESTANT TO CATHOLIC*

KAREN WALKER

Imagine for a moment that you never knew Christ. Imagine that you grew up Jewish, still waiting for the Anointed One to come into the world. Imagine that even as a little child you were hoping and anticipating, as only a child can, for this holy arrival -- thinking that any ring at the door might be news of His coming, or better yet, Him -- the One for whom you have so long been waiting. Imagine learning of how your grandparents waited, and their grandparents, all the way back to your distant ancestors in Egypt and the Promised Land. Imagine that there was never a time in your life when, at least in the back of your mind, you weren't aware that the Messiah was yet to come.

Now imagine years later being inwardly drawn to consider that maybe, just maybe, the One for whom you'd been waiting all this time had already come. Not only had He come, but you could have a relationship with Him. Imagine being told that He wasn't just an Anointed Man, He was more. He was God. Imagine the shock, the holy shock.

If indeed the Anointed One had come, why hadn't anyone you knew heard about it? After all, it was the Jewish Messiah for whom you'd been waiting. And, where was His kingdom? There seemed to be no evidence of it in the world today. If He had come, why did He leave? What was the point? And you'd never heard that He was to be God, no, only the Anointed One.

These questions were those of Rosalind Moss, 53, a former resident of Orange County and now a frequently requested guest lecturer at local parishes.

In her early years, Rosalind grew up in a conservative Jewish home in Brooklyn. "Conservative" describes a particular branch of the Jewish faith, as opposed to the stricter "orthodox" or the more lax "reform." And although Rosalind never missed the Jewish high holy days, by her teen years both she and her brother had drifted from the devoutness of their youth. By the time they left home, her brother was atheist and she agnostic.

She remarks, "There was a hole in my heart which widened as I grew older. Even understanding that we were God's chosen people didn't help me understand where man was going and why. What was man's purpose on earth? What was my purpose?"

When she was 32, Rosalind's brother, David, read an article about Jews for Jesus, Jews who believed that Jesus Christ was the Messiah. Neither David nor Rosalind had heard of anything so "absolutely insane" in their lives.

Less than three months later, with curiosity about the Jews for Jesus movement tucked in the back of her mind, Rosalind moved to California. At the time, she had everything the world says will make us happy: money, a successful career and an active social life. But deep inside, there was still that hole in her heart.

Soon after arriving, Rosalind saw "A bearded, hippie-looking man" wearing a T-shirt with Jews for Jesus in bold letters. "Here was a living specimen of the



**THE CONVERSION OF
ST PAUL**
Caravaggio
(1600)

* Reprinted from the
Orange Diocesan Bulletin
(April 1997 issue)

A Conversion Story (Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5) *A Conversion Story*

people in the article," thought Rosalind. "I couldn't believe these people actually existed and I went to talk with them. The man handed me a little tract that said 'If being born hasn't given you much satisfaction, try being born again.' I didn't want to admit it but those words struck my heart."

Although deciding that these Jews for Jesus were quirky and had problems, Rosalind nonetheless decided to attend their Bible study. "I went mostly to mock them," she admitted. But instead, she noted, "I was sick to my stomach to see Jews teaching and singing about Jesus Christ. But here again there was something that gripped my heart. They told me two things, that God existed and we can know it, and that we can know Him." She understood "knowing Him" in the sense of having a relationship with God and found this mind-boggling. She wanted to learn more. So, despite their odd ways, Rosalind continued to ask probing questions, debating and struggling with what they told her.

"For a Jewish person to believe that a man is God is a crime punishable by death," explained Rosalind. "This is evident in the New Testament because any time Jesus claims divinity, the Jews are ready to run Him out of town or stone Him. Even though they await the Anointed One, they do not expect this person to actually be God and to claim such would be pure blasphemy to the Jewish mind, even today. A Jew knew you could not look on God and live."

Then in 1976, in one life-changing evening with these Jewish evangelical Christians, Rosalind understood for the first time that the entire Old Testament sacrificial system, including thousands upon thousands of lambs slain, pointed to Christ, **THE** Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world. And it dawned on her that God could do anything He wanted. It didn't make sense to her that a man could be God, but there wasn't anything wrong with God deciding to become a man. This freed her to surrender her entire heart to knowing, loving and serving God through His Son, Jesus Christ.

For 14 years, Rosalind grew in her evangelical Christian faith. She studied at a theological seminary in Southern California and served as a chaplain for a nearby women's jail facility. In 1990, Rosalind accepted a position at a well-respected Protestant church as Director of Women's Ministries.

Meanwhile, Rosalind's atheist brother had become Catholic three years after reading the article about Jews who believed in Christ. In sharp contrast, 14 years of Christian interior growth included, for Rosalind, actively trying to get Catholics out of what she innocently perceived to be a false religious system leading millions astray. You can imagine the animated phone conversations and visits these two deeply devoted siblings shared over the years, given their different beliefs.

In the midst of her preparation and move to take on her ministry position, David gave her the Catholic apologetics magazine entitled **This Rock**.

Rosalind was intrigued. First, she respected any attempt to defend a belief system, no matter how misguided she might perceive it to be, and second, she had never met any Catholic who could defend the Catholic Faith. "What defense could the Catholic Church possibly give for its existence?," she wondered. The magazine had an advertisement which read "Presbyterian Minister Becomes

A Conversion Story (Continued on page 7)



ST. PAUL
El Greco
(1610-14)

(Continued from page 6) **A Conversion Story**

Catholic" and offered a four-tape series featuring Scott Hahn. Rosalind ordered the tapes. "At the end of the tape series, as I was packing up my kitchen to go to my new church assignment, I listened as Scott Hahn summarized 2,000 years of Church history and then said that 'for one who look into the claims of the Catholic Church; to that one would come a holy shock and glorious amazement to find out that that which he'd been fighting and trying to save people from was the true Church founded by Christ.' And holy shock perfectly describes what went through me at that time. I was paralyzed by the thought that there could be any truth to the Catholic Church."

And so began Rosalind's quiet, behind-the-scenes search for more answers. She privately spent every spare moment reading and researching until, two years later, she could no longer stay in her position in California. She left for New York where she could pursue her investigation of the Catholic Church uninterrupted.

"As Fulton Sheen said a generation ago, there aren't 100 people in America who hate the Catholic Church, but there are millions who hate what they mistakenly think the Catholic Church teaches," said Rosalind. "I first got hold of every anti-Catholic book I could find because I wanted to be saved from being deceived and from ever becoming Catholic. At the same time, I was learning what the Church taught from official Church teachings and the writings of the Church Fathers. It was just as Fulton Sheen said." Rosalind was disappointed to learn that the anti-Catholic rhetoric did not address what the Church actually taught.

Compelled by what she was learning, drawn almost against her will to embrace the Catholic Church, it was Fr. James O'Connor, author of **The Hidden Manna**, who helped her overcome her last obstacle. "If the sacrifice of Christ was sufficient," she reasoned, "how could we add to it? Yet, at Mass, Catholics are asked to offer themselves with Christ." Fr. O'Connor explained that indeed we do add to the sacrifice of Christ, but not because His sacrifice was insufficient. Christ's sacrifice was sufficient and He does not need ours. But love receives. He who loves us, He who IS Love and doesn't need us, allows us to enter into His sacrifice even after we put Him to death. It not only made sense, but the thought of such love consumed her and led her at last to enter the Catholic Church.

At the Easter Vigil, 1995, Rosalind Moss received Christ, the Jewish Messiah, for the first time under the species of consecrated bread and wine; His body, blood, soul and divinity were now hers in a sacramental way. "God has done a transforming work in me the last two years. In every way I've entered into a whole new way of seeing life."

In a sense, Rosalind experienced the ultimate Easter. She came full circle in her beliefs. Growing up, she celebrated the Passover, recalling when the Israelites would sacrifice a spotless lamb whose blood sprinkled on the lintels of the doorposts in Egypt spared the lives of the first-born as the Angel of Death passed over their homes that night. But every lamb slain ultimately pointed to Him the Lamb of God, whose blood would not only take away the sin of the first-born, but of everyone ever born through all time--the spotless Lamb of God who takes

A Conversion Story (Continued on page 8)



**MARY MAGDALEN
IN PENITENCE**

El Greco
(1576)

(Continued from page 7) A Conversion Story

away the sin of the world. The ultimate Easter is Christ, our Paschal Lamb, sacrificed for us. It is the Resurrection of the Passover Lamb. What was hoped for in her youth and symbolized by Rosalind's non-Catholic Christian years was now realized in the Catholic Church as she received Him, the very Lamb of God, not only at Easter but daily through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.



Christ:
The Paschal Lamb

"What's on my heart to say," adds Rosalind, "is that there is nothing more that we could have on earth than what God has given in giving us His Son and His Church. I don't know anything that could please the heart of God more than that His Catholic people know their faith thoroughly; tradition and scripture both. Because in knowing their faith, they will know Him, and in knowing Him will be able to bring Christ and the reality of His life to a dying world which so desperately needs the Savior." †

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

A SUDDEN CONVERSION

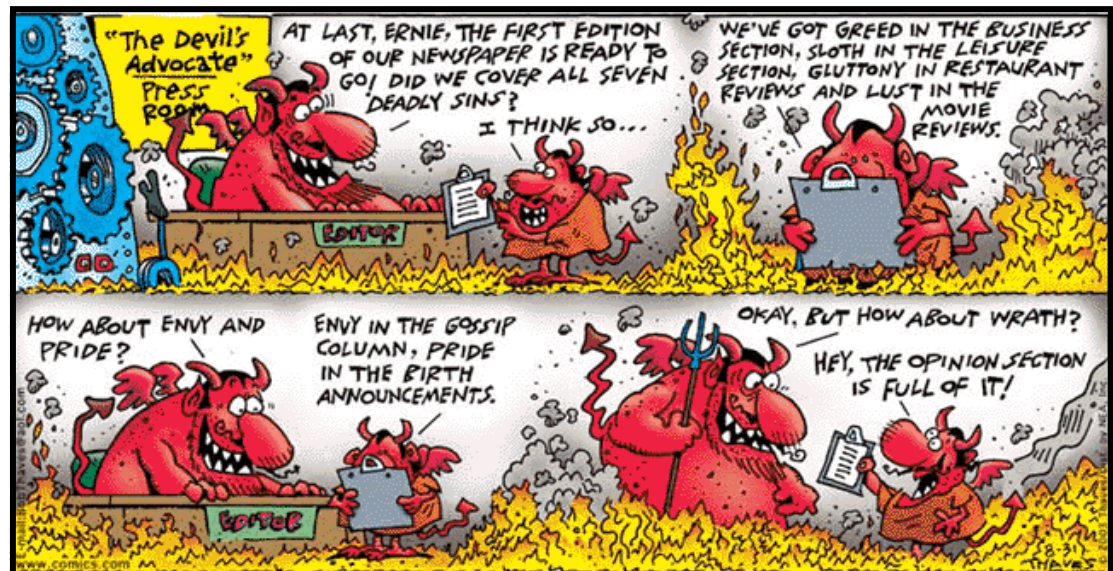
An atheist was spending a quiet day fishing when suddenly his boat was attacked by the Loch Ness monster. In one easy flip, the beast tossed him and his boat high into the air. Then it opened its mouth to swallow both. As the man sailed head over heels, he cried out, "Oh, my God! Help me!"



At once, the ferocious attack scene froze in place, and as the atheist hung in mid-air, a booming voice came down from the clouds. "I thought you didn't believe in Me!"

"Come on, God, give me a break!" the man pleaded. "Two minutes ago I didn't believe in the Loch Ness monster either!" †

FRANK ERNEST



LE JONGLEUR DE DIEU FROM "ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI"

BY G. K. CHESTERTON*

...The conversion of St. Francis, like the conversion of St. Paul, involved his being in some sense flung suddenly from a horse; but in a sense it was an even worse fall; for it was a war-horse. Anyhow, there was not a rag of him left that was not ridiculous. Everybody knew that at the best he had made a fool of himself. It was a solid objective fact, like the stones in the road, that he had made a fool of himself. He saw himself as an object, very small and distinct like a fly walking on a clear window pane; and it was unmistakably a fool. And as he stared at the word "fool" written in luminous letters before him, the word itself began to shine and change.

We used to be told in the nursery that if a man were to bore a hole through the centre of the earth and climb continually down and down, there would come a moment at the centre when he would seem to be climbing up and up. I do not know whether this is true. The reason I do not know whether it is true is that I never happened to bore a hole through the centre of the earth, still less to crawl through it. If I do not know what this reversal or inversion feels like, it is because I have never been there.

And this also is an allegory. It is certain that the writer, it is even possible that the reader, is an ordinary person who has never been there. We cannot follow St. Francis to that final spiritual overturn in which complete humiliation becomes complete holiness or happiness, because we have never been there.....

We have never gone up like that because we have never gone down like that; we are obviously incapable of saying that it does not happen; and the more candidly and calmly we read human history, and especially the history of the wisest men, the more we shall come to the conclusion that it does happen. Of the intrinsic internal essence of the experience, I make no pretence of writing at all. But the external effect of it, for the purpose of this narrative, may be expressed by saying that when Francis came forth from his cave of vision, he was wearing the same word "fool" as a feather in his cap; as a crest or even a crown. He would go on being a fool; he would become more and more of a fool; he would be the court fool of the King of Paradise.

This state can only be represented in symbol; but the symbol of inversion is true in another way. If a man saw the world upside down, with all the trees and towers hanging head downwards as in a pool, one effect would be to emphasize the idea of dependence. There is a Latin and literal connection; for the very word dependence only means hanging. It would make vivid the Scriptural text which says that God has hung the world upon nothing.

If St. Francis had seen, in one of his strange dreams, the town of Assisi upside down, it need not have differed in a single detail from itself except in being entirely the other way round. But the point is this: that whereas to the normal eye the large masonry of its walls or the massive foundations of its watchtowers and its high citadel would make it seem safer and more permanent, the moment it was turned over the very same weight would make it seem more helpless and more in peril. It is but a symbol; but it happens to fit the psychological fact.

St. Francis might love his little town as much as before, or more than before; but the nature of the love would be altered even in being increased. He might see and love every tile on the steep roofs or every bird on the battlements; but he would see them



**ST. FRANCIS OF
ASSISI AT PRAYER**

*Bartolome Esteban
Murillo*

(1645)

(Continued from page 9) *St Francis of Assisi*

all in a new and divine light of eternal danger and dependence. Instead of being merely proud of his strong city because it could not be moved, he would be thankful to God Almighty that it had not been dropped; he would be thankful to God for not dropping the whole cosmos like a vast crystal to be shattered into falling stars. Perhaps St. Peter saw the world so, when he was crucified head-downwards.

It is commonly in a somewhat cynical sense that men have said, "Blessed is he that expecteth nothing, for he shall not be disappointed." It was in a wholly happy and enthusiastic sense that St. Francis said, "Blessed is he who expecteth nothing, for he shall enjoy everything."

It was by this deliberate idea of starting from zero, from the dark nothingness of his own deserts, that he did come to enjoy even earthly things as few people have enjoyed them; and they are in themselves the best working example of the idea. For there is no way in which a man can earn a star or deserve a sunset. But there is more than this involved, and more indeed than is easily to be expressed in words. It is not only true that the less a man thinks of himself, the more he thinks of his good luck and of all the gifts of God.

It is also true that he sees more of the things themselves when he sees more of their origin; for their origin is a part of them and indeed the most important part of them. Thus they become more extraordinary by being explained. He has more wonder at them but less fear of them; for a thing is really wonderful when it is significant and not when it is insignificant; and a monster, shapeless or dumb or merely destructive, may be larger than the mountains, but is still in a literal sense insignificant. For a mystic like St. Francis the monsters had a meaning; that is, they had delivered their message. They spoke no longer in an unknown tongue. That is the meaning of all those stories, whether legendary or historical, in which he appears as a magician speaking the language of beasts and birds. The mystic will have nothing to do with mere mystery; mere mystery is generally a mystery of iniquity.

The transition from the good man to the saint is a sort of revolution; by which one for whom all things illustrate and illuminate God becomes one for whom God illustrates and illuminates all things. It is rather like the reversal whereby a lover might say at first sight that a lady looked like a flower, and say afterwards that all flowers reminded him of his lady. A saint and a poet standing by the same flower might seem to say the same thing; but indeed though they would both be telling the truth, they would be telling different truths.

For one the joy of life is a cause of faith, for the other rather a result of faith. But one effect of the difference is that the sense of a divine dependence, which for the artist is like the brilliant levin-blaze, for the saint is like the broad daylight. Being in some mystical sense on the other side of things, he sees things go forth from the divine as children going forth from a familiar and accepted home, instead of meeting them as they come out, as most of us do, upon the roads of the world. And it is the paradox that by this privilege he is more familiar, more free and fraternal, more carelessly hospitable than we.

For us the elements are like heralds who tell us with trumpet and tabard that we are drawing near the city of a great king; but he hails them with an old familiarity that is almost an old frivolity. He calls them his Brother Fire and his Sister Water.

So arises out of this almost nihilistic abyss the noble thing that is called Praise; which no one will ever understand while he identifies it with nature worship or pantheistic optimism. When we say that a poet praises the whole creation, we commonly mean

St Francis of Assisi (Continued on page 11)



**ST FRANCIS
OF ASSISI**

Giovanni da Milano

(1360)

(Continued from page 10) St Francis of Assisi

only that he praises the whole cosmos. But this sort of poet does really praise creation, in the sense of the act of creation. He praises the passage or transition from nonentity to entity; there falls here also the shadow of that archetypal image of the bridge, which has given to the priest his archaic and mysterious name.

The mystic who passes through the moment when there is nothing but God does in some sense behold the beginningless beginnings in which there was really nothing else. He not only appreciates everything but the nothing of which everything was made. In a fashion he endures and answers even the earthquake irony of the Book of Job; in some sense he is there when the foundations of the world are laid, with the morning stars singing together and the sons of God shouting for joy. That is but a distant adumbration of the reason why the Franciscan, ragged, penniless, homeless and apparently hopeless, did indeed come forth singing such songs as might come from the stars of morning; and shouting, a son of God. This sense of the great gratitude and the sublime dependence was not a phrase or even a sentiment; it is the whole point that this was the very rock of reality. It was not a fancy but a fact; rather it is true that beside it all facts are fancies. That we all depend in every detail, at every instant, as a Christian would say upon God, as even an agnostic would say, upon existence and the nature of things, is not an illusion of imagination; on the contrary, it is the fundamental fact which we cover up, as with curtains, with the illusion of ordinary life. That ordinary life is an admirable thing in itself, just as imagination is an admirable thing in itself. But it is much more the ordinary life that is made of imagination than the contemplative life. He who has seen the whole world hanging on a hair of the mercy of God has seen the truth; we might almost say the cold truth. He who has seen the vision of his city upside-down has seen it the right way up.... ✚



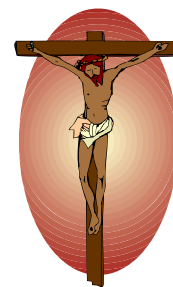
ST. FRANCIS AND BROTHER RUFUS

El Greco
(1600-06)

***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***

***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) 250-8605 or email your request to
alanphar@firstam.com***

PRAYER PETITIONS



- ◆ Janet Prah (illness)
- ◆ Lindsay Stevens (illness)
- ◆ Douglas Kniec (illness)
- ◆ Anne Lanphar (special intention)
- ◆ Eleanor Kott & Family (illness)
 - ◆ Jeff Weber (serious illness)
 - ◆ David Macdonald (illness)
 - ◆ Eric & Marie Bessem
- ◆ Charles Godwin (serious illness).
 - ◆ Kevin Guice (serious illness)
 - ◆ Julia Nelson (serious illness).
 - ◆ Sean Nelson (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).
 - ◆ Duain Cruzat (serious disease).
 - ◆ Keith Wilson (serious illness).
- ◆ Milos & Edith Myrik (serious illness).
 - ◆ Scott Smith (illness).
 - ◆ Ryan Ronk (serious injury)
 - ◆ John Flynn IV (life changes).
 - ◆ Kristin Burkett (serious illness).
 - ◆ Darren M (questioning the Faith).
 - ◆ Fr. Matt Munoz (special intention).
 - ◆ Cindie Burnes (serious illness).
- ◆ John Flynn & his wife (serious illness).
 - ◆ Ron Gable (special intention).
 - ◆ Earle Nelson (epiphany) ✚

THE POISON!



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

A long time ago, a girl named Li-Li got married and went to live with her husband and mother-in-law. In a very short time, Li-Li found that she couldn't get along with her mother-in-law at all. Their personalities were very different, and Li-Li was angered by many of her mother-in-law's habits. In addition, she criticized Li-Li constantly.

Days passed days, and weeks passed weeks. Li-Li and her mother-in-law never stopped arguing and fighting. But what made the situation even worse was that, according to ancient Chinese tradition, Li-Li had to bow to her mother-in-law and obey her every wish. All the anger and unhappiness in the house was causing the poor husband great distress. Finally, Li-Li could not stand her mother-in-law's bad temper and dictatorship any longer, and she decided to do something about it.

Li-Li went to see her father's good friend, Mr. Huang, who sold herbs. She told him the situation and asked if he would give her some poison so that she could solve the problem once and for all. Mr. Huang thought for awhile, and finally said, Li-Li, I will help you solve your problem, but you must listen to me and obey what I tell you. Li-Li said, "Yes, Mr. Huang, I will do whatever you tell me to do." Mr. Huang went into the back room, and returned in a few minutes with a package of herbs. He told Li-Li, "You can't use a quick-acting poison to get rid of your mother-in-law, because that would cause people to become suspicious. Therefore, I have given you a number of herbs that will slowly build up poison in her body. Every other day prepare some pork or chicken and put a little of these herbs in her serving. Now, in order to make sure that nobody suspects you when she dies, you must be very careful to act very friendly towards her. Don't argue with her, obey her every wish, and treat her like a queen." Li-Li was so happy. She thanked Mr. Huang and hurried home to start her plot of murdering her mother-in-law.

Weeks went by, and months went by, and every other day, Li-Li served the specially treated food to her mother-in-law. She remembered what Mr. Huang had said about avoiding suspicion, so she controlled her temper, obeyed her mother-in-law, and treated her like her own mother.

After six months had passed, the whole household had changed. Li-Li had practiced controlling her temper so much that she found that she almost never got mad or upset. She hadn't had an argument in six months with her mother-in-law, who now seemed much kinder and easier to get along with.

The mother-in-law's attitude toward Li-Li changed, and she began to love Li-Li like her own daughter. She kept telling friends and relatives that Li-Li was the best daughter-in-law one could ever find. Li-Li and her mother-in-law were now treating each other like a real mother and daughter. Li-Li's husband was very happy to see what was happening.

One day, Li-Li came to see Mr. Huang and asked for his help again. She said, "Dear Mr. Huang, please help me to keep the poison from killing my mother-in-law! She's changed into such a nice woman, and I love her like my own mother. I do not want her to die because of the poison I gave her." Mr. Huang smiled and nodded his head.

"Li-Li, there's nothing to worry about. I never gave you any poison. The herbs I gave you were vitamins to improve her health. The only poison was in your mind and your attitude toward her, but that has been all washed away by the love which you gave to her."

Have you ever realized that how you treat others is exactly how they will treat you? In China it is said the person who loves others will also be loved which is the other side of the same coin as "Treat others as you would like to be treated." †



ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY OF ORANGE COUNTY

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Limited seating so make your reservation early!

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CLASS SCHEDULE

8:00am—8:30am	MASS	FR. HUGH BARBOUR, O. PRAEM
8:30am—9:00am	REGISTRATION & CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST (included)	
9:00am—10:00am	SESSION 1: “ BIAS ELIMINATION: NATURAL LAW, NATURAL RIGHTS & PHILOSOPHICAL INSIGHTS ” (1 hr Elimination of Bias)	FR. JOSEPH KOTERSKI, S.J. <i>Professor, Fordham University Noted Author on St. Thomas More</i>
10:10am—11:10am	SESSION 2: “ FINDING RHYTHM AND RHYME IN THE RAT RACE ” (1 hr Substance Abuse Prevention/Stress Management)	BISHOP JAIME SOTO <i>Auxiliary Bishop of Diocese of Orange</i>
11:20am—12:20pm	SESSION 3: “ PREPARING ETHICAL LEADERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE ” (1 hr Ethics)	PETER BOWEN <i>President, Servite High School</i>

DIRECTIONS:

From 55 frwy take MacArthur Blvd offramp. Go west on MacArthur. Turn right (north) at Imperial Promenade and turn right at the signal onto First American Way. At stop sign, turn right and proceed through the parking lot to the Home Office Bldg (3 story bldg facing due east toward the 55 frwy.) †

(Continued from page 4) *Conversion of the Heart*

come to know or learn by our own discovery or learn from another.

But, this reason, as helpful as it is and certainly as enlightening as it is, as we pursue studies which are academic – and surely all of the students here, both those graduating and those who still have a ways to go, recognize that they can learn a great deal from the fact that everything that they learn which is good and true and beautiful, that everything which is worth striving for doesn't even approach the majesty, the sublimity, and the capacity to satisfy the divine mysteries once seen face to face – but this reason is a reason for revelation which would have been the case even had we never fallen, even had our first parents never – for them and for us – placed our human nature universally in such a sorry state that we no longer live forever, that we no longer know and penetrate the secrets of nature by particular gifts given by God; that we no longer have that inner harmony and integrity between our understanding and our passions because of the Fall – lost, lost to us.

Even had there been no Fall, there would have been revelations of truths that exceed human reason. For God, being very good indeed, always intended these things for our benefit, that we might see Him as He really is. But given our fallen nature, revelation takes on an even more important (from a practical point of view), even more urgent and necessary, crucially necessary aspect. For, I put it to you today, that as you have discovered in the past, so you will know even more in the future, the principal difficulty, challenge, and, of course, occupation of our life is not to come to know the things we can know, or even to come to know them very well, but to overcome ourselves – the three-fold concupiscence: the concupiscence of the flesh, of the eyes, and of the pride of life. It is these things against which we must struggle our whole life through.

And this is really and truly where the victory is to be won. For although it is necessary that we know in order to desire, it is not enough for us poor fallen creatures, sons and daughters of Eve. There has to be a healing and saving grace that lifts us up from our state and gives us the victory over our passions. Our senses, which are our friends, the friends of our nature through which we receive all that we know in some way or another, become the source of disturbances of memories, imaginations, impressions, the source of passions which will trouble us all our life long.

We are not so fortunate as St. Thomas to have had so innocent a life that the only passion we read of him struggling against was a perfectly understandable passion, the remembrance and the cognitive awareness of judgment of an experience which certainly exceeded the limits of human nature – exceeded the capacities of toleration of a little child's intellect and memory. His struggle was one against a fear long remembered.

But where did he find the consolation for this struggle? In the dogmas of the faith there is a perfect, pure, pristine reason in his reaction to his fear of thunder and lightning – a fear so much like that of the smallest child and yet existing in the wisest, most angelic, most universally sound of human minds and hearts. "God has become man. God has died. God has risen from the dead." This was the consolation for the defect of his senses, for that disorder in his passions, in his memory.

The Christian life is a battle. Job said it and it is so true. Our life is a warfare, and a spiritual one, for the Apostle tells us that we are not warring just against flesh and blood, our own inner difficulties, but also those sources of temptation which transcend our own selves and which are malicious. But first of all, if the battle is to be won, it has to be won by our steadfast profession of faith in the face of all that would keep us from our final goal. All that we know will be of no avail if we do not overcome ourselves.

The great St. Augustine, the perfect example of this, understood that fact so well. And his conversion to the one and Catholic faith was not one only of his mind, but a conversion of his heart and of his sensibility. The truths of our faith, those which are most profound, provide our understanding but also our passions with the remedy which can lead us to eternal life and everlasting happiness and satisfaction in a supreme good. For it is the Cross, after all, which St. Thomas tells us, is the most difficult of the mysteries of faith – difficult, that is for our understanding – that God could take upon Himself a human nature and endure every sort of suffering for our salvation – this is a mystery beyond our comprehension.

And yet, in it is found the remedy for our every ill – the humbling of our mind with that wisdom which is foolishness to the world; and the healing of all of our faculties through Our Lord's five precious Wounds, His Heart open to both give and to receive that which His creatures need and that which they long to return to Him. Someday, sooner or later, maybe sooner for some, later for others, we will finally reach eternal life by the grace

Conversion of the Heart (Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14) *Conversion of the Heart*

of perseverance. We will reach that day on which we will be judged according to our works by the merciful eyes of God.

St. Thomas reached that day in an extraordinary way. For on St. Nicholas Day, in the middle of the 13th century, in the chapel of St. Nicholas, where St. Thomas said Mass every day in Naples, that great Saint, that giver of gifts to children, gave through his intercession, that gift which is of all gifts, the greatest; not just the good, but the supreme good. And after St. Thomas saw that, as he was celebrating the mysteries of the Passion in sacrament, he said, "In comparison to what I have seen, all that I have written appears to be but straw. I can write no more." And he put his writing utensils away.

Someday those feeble senses, defective with all their effects, will be enlightened, healed, lifted up, risen, glorified and will share in the redundancy of that vision which is complete and perfect happiness. Our life after college, during, before, the whole span of it, is ordered toward this and this alone, if we would be truly wise. So let us resolve today to seek those things which do not pass away in whatever it is that we do – and to seek above all to find in the faith, in the mysteries of the faith, the consolation, the power, the healing, the solution to all of our human weaknesses, which, I can assure you, you have only begun to appreciate.

That verse, which I read at the beginning, precedes the conclusion of that hymn – the conclusion which promises us Eternal Life in the vision of the Blessed Trinity. This is the point of today's celebration. And indeed, as I love to repeat from time to time, all of us here will understand and see one day, this day, in the light of an eternal day and will recall in the providential judgments of God the words that were spoken and the inspirations given, those graces actual and efficacious. And so, in view of that happy day when we will recall to our great benefit and joy, God willing and with our cooperation, what we do here today, let us set our hearts wholly on the truths of the faith that St. Thomas expounded so well but which, by God's mercy, his own experience superseded so utterly that he could work no more.

I'll conclude with some words of a disciple of St. Thomas, one who, also like him, shared abundantly in the understanding, penetration, enjoyment of the mysteries of faith and who knew what it was to overcome the obstacles of the senses in order to receive a higher light. St. John of the Cross writes this. And these words could be in fact a profession of faith, a concrete one, for each one of our graduates to be – a statement of what is truest about life and a statement about all of life's experiences in the light of those truths which utterly exceed anything of which we have had experience or will experience. St. John of the Cross writes this: "Mine are the heavens and mine the earth. Mine are the people, the righteous are mine, and mine are the sinners. The angels are mine, and the Mother of God is mine. And God Himself is mine and for me. For Christ is mine and all for me. What do you ask for, what do you seek, my soul? All this is yours and it is all for you." †

SIMPLE TRUTHS



Fulton J. Sheen

"Some seek professional advice regarding their confused mental state, and are told that they are suffering from an 'inferiority complex.' The truth of the matter is, nobody who is self-willed has an inferiority complex; he has a superiority complex. He is so full of conceit, pride and aggressive assertiveness that his hurt feelings may for the moment appear as inferiority. But he would not feel hurt if he did not have a diabolic pride, or superiority which would treat anyone who does not flatter him as Pontius Pilate treated Christ. Pilate washed his hands of Christ and had Him executed." †



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.*

JOHN 15: 6-7

⁶If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

Comment from the Navarre Bible:*

⁶If a person is not united to Christ by means of grace he will ultimately meet the same fate as the dead branches--fire. There is a clear parallelism with other images our Lord uses--the parables of the sound tree and the bad tree (Mt 7:15-20), the dragnet (Mt 13:49-50), and the invitation to the wedding (Mt 22:11-14), etc. Here is how St Augustine comments on this passage: "The wood of the vine is the more contemptible if it does not abide in the vine, and the more glorious if it does abide For, being cut off it is profitable neither for the vinedresser nor for the carpenter. For one of these only is it useful--the vine or the fire. If it is not in the vine, it goes to the fire; to avoid going to the fire it must be joined to the vine" (*In Ioann. Evang.*, 81, 3). †



THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS MORE



*More's Daughter Visits
Him in Prison*

MORE ON CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE

At the end of his life, More frequently expressed his desire to "*be merry together in heaven*" with those who were set on his destruction. Surely this refrain echoed in their consciences as they later recalled the charm of a man whose happiness could not be shaken in any season.

By the end of his life, More had every reason to be angry and pessimistic. He had been betrayed by some of those closest to him, and only one bishop in all of England had joined him in resisting a tyrannical king. In addition, the universal Church he loved had been outlawed in England, he had lost everything he possessed, his health was broken and not even the children he had personally educated agreed with his "*scruple of conscience.*"

Yet he was merry to the end. Why? Because his good humor was not simply a matter of temperament; it was deeply theological, rooted in the cultivated virtues of a faith lived in the present moment, a hope that did not depend on appearances, and a charity rooted in eternity. Not only did More believe in God's providence; he also lived in the confidence that it works through everything. *Omnia in bonum*, "*All things work to the good for those who love God*" (Rom. 8:28). This conviction helped him keep everything in perspective. When his children suffered disappointment, as we have seen, he explained in a homey but vivid and memorable way that they could not "*go to heaven in featherbeds.*" When the leading bishops of England tried to convince an impoverished More to join in attending Anne Boleyn's coronation, he told them in a lighthearted but earthy and extraordinarily pointed way that he would not prostitute himself for any reason or at any price. Lighthearted as it was, this response was as powerful as any that has ever been given to those responsible for public affairs.

Thomas More: A Portrait of Courage

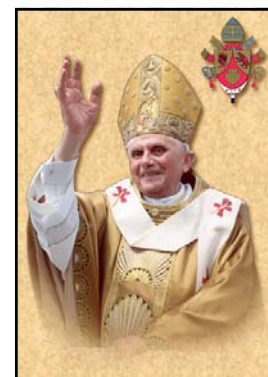
By: Gerard B. Wegemenr

(Pg. 222) †

IN TRUTH, PEACE
MESSAGE FOR THE CELEBRATION
OF WORLD DAY OF PEACE—JANUARY 1, 2006



**FROM
 PETER'S
 SUCCESSOR,
 POPE
 BENEDICT XVI**



1. In this traditional *Message for the World Day of Peace* at the beginning of the New Year, I offer cordial greetings and good wishes to men and women everywhere, especially those who are suffering as a result of violence and armed conflicts. My greeting is one filled with hope for a more serene world, a world in which more and more individuals and communities are committed to the paths of justice and peace.

2. Before all else, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to my Predecessors, the great Popes Paul VI and John Paul II, who were astute promoters of peace. Guided by the spirit of the Beatitudes, they discerned in the many historical events which marked their respective Pontificates the providential intervention of God, who never ceases to be concerned for the future of the human race. As tireless heralds of the Gospel, they constantly invited everyone to make God the starting-point of their efforts on behalf of concord and peace throughout the world. This, my first Message for the World Day of Peace, is meant to follow in the path of their noble teaching; with it, I wish to reiterate the steadfast resolve of the Holy See to continue serving the cause of peace. The very name Benedict, which I chose on the day of my election to the Chair of Peter, is a sign of my personal commitment to peace. In taking this name, I wanted to evoke both the Patron Saint of Europe, who inspired a civilization of peace on the whole continent, and Pope Benedict XV, who condemned the First World War as a "useless slaughter" (1) and worked for a universal acknowledgment of the lofty demands of peace.

3. The theme chosen for this year's reflection—*In truth, peace*—expresses the conviction that wherever and whenever men and women are enlightened by the splendor of truth, they naturally set out on the path of peace. The Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, promulgated forty years ago at the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, stated that mankind will not succeed in "building a truly more human world for everyone, everywhere on earth, unless all people are renewed in spirit and converted to the truth of peace". (2) But what do those words, "the truth of peace", really mean? To respond adequately to this question, we must realize that peace cannot be reduced to the simple absence of armed conflict, but needs to be understood as "the fruit of an order which has been planted in human society by its divine Founder", an order "which must be brought about by humanity in its thirst for ever more perfect justice". (3) As the result of an order planned and willed by the love of God, peace has an intrinsic and invincible truth of its own, and corresponds "to an irrepressible yearning and hope dwelling within us". (4)

4. Seen in this way, peace appears as a heavenly gift and a divine grace which demands at every level the exercise of the highest responsibility: that of conforming human history—in truth, justice, freedom and love—to the divine order. Whenever there is a loss of fidelity to the transcendent order, and a loss of respect for that "grammar" of dialogue which is the universal moral law written on human hearts, (5) whenever the integral development of the person and the protection of his fundamental rights are hindered or denied, whenever countless people are forced to endure intolerable injustices and inequalities, how can we hope that the good of peace will be realized? The essential elements which make up the truth of that good are missing. Saint Augustine described peace as *tranquillitas ordinis* (6), the tranquility of order. By this, he meant a situation which ultimately enables the truth about man to be fully respected and realized.

5. Who and what, then, can prevent the coming of peace? Sacred Scripture, in its very first book, *Genesis*, points to the lie told at the very beginning of history by the animal with a forked tongue, whom the Evangelist John calls "the father of lies" (*Jn* 8:44). Lying is also one of the sins spoken of in the final chapter of the last book of the Bible, *Revelation*, which bars liars from the heavenly Jerusalem: "outside are... all who love falsehood" (22:15). Lying is linked to the tragedy of sin and its perverse consequences, which have had, and continue to have, devastating effects on the lives of individuals and nations. We need but think of the events of the past century, when aberrant ideological and political systems willfully twisted the truth and brought about the exploitation and murder of an appalling number of men and women, wiping out entire

In Truth, Peace (Continued on page 18)

(Continued from page 17) ***In Truth, Peace***

families and communities. After experiences like these, how can we fail to be seriously concerned about lies in our own time, lies which are the framework for menacing scenarios of death in many parts of the world. Any authentic search for peace must begin with the realization that the problem of truth and untruth is the concern of every man and woman; it is decisive for the peaceful future of our planet.

6. Peace is an irrepressible yearning present in the heart of each person, regardless of his or her particular cultural identity. Consequently, everyone should feel committed to service of this great good, and should strive to prevent any form of untruth from poisoning relationships. All people are members of one and the same family. An extreme exaltation of differences clashes with this fundamental truth. We need to regain an awareness that we share a common destiny which is ultimately transcendent, so as to maximize our historical and cultural differences, not in opposition to, but in cooperation with, people belonging to other cultures. These simple truths are what make peace possible; they are easily understood whenever we listen to our own hearts with pure intentions. Peace thus comes to be seen in a new light: not as the mere absence of war, but as a harmonious coexistence of individual citizens within a society governed by justice, one in which the good is also achieved, to the extent possible, for each of them. The truth of peace calls upon everyone to cultivate productive and sincere relationships; it encourages them to seek out and to follow the paths of forgiveness and reconciliation, to be transparent in their dealings with others, and to be faithful to their word. In a particular way, the followers of Christ, recognizing the insidious presence of evil and the need for that liberation brought by the divine Master, look to him with confidence, in the knowledge that "he committed no sin; no guile was found on his lips" (*1 Pet 2:22*; cf. *Is 53:9*). Jesus defined himself as the Truth in person, and, in addressing the seer of the Book of Revelation, he states his complete aversion to "every one who loves and practices falsehood" (*Rev 22:15*). He has disclosed the full truth about humanity and about human history. The power of his grace makes it possible to live "in" and "by" truth, since he alone is completely true and faithful. Jesus is the truth which gives us peace.

7. The truth of peace must also let its beneficial light shine even amid the tragedy of war. The Fathers of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, in the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, pointed out that "not everything automatically becomes permissible between hostile parties once war has regrettably commenced". (7) As a means of limiting the devastating consequences of war as much as possible, especially for civilians, the international community has created an international humanitarian law. In a variety of situations and in different settings, the Holy See has expressed its support for this humanitarian law, and has called for it to be respected and promptly implemented, out of the conviction that the truth of peace exists even in the midst of war. International humanitarian law ought to be considered as one of the finest and most effective expressions of the intrinsic demands of the truth of peace. Precisely for this reason, respect for that law must be considered binding on all peoples. Its value must be appreciated and its correct application ensured; it must also be brought up to date by precise norms applicable to the changing scenarios of today's armed conflicts and the use of ever newer and more sophisticated weapons.

8. Here I wish to express gratitude to the international organizations and to all those who are daily engaged in the application of international humanitarian law. Nor can I fail to mention the many soldiers engaged in the delicate work of resolving conflicts and restoring the necessary conditions for peace. I wish to remind them of the words of the Second Vatican Council: "All those who enter the military in service to their country should look upon themselves as guardians of the security and freedom of their fellow-countrymen, and, in carrying out this duty properly, they too contribute to the establishment of peace". (8) On this demanding front the Catholic Church's military ordinariates carry out their pastoral activity: I encourage both the military Ordinaries and military chaplains to be, in every situation and context, faithful heralds of the truth of peace.

9. Nowadays, the truth of peace continues to be dramatically compromised and rejected by terrorism, whose criminal threats and attacks leave the world in a state of fear and insecurity. My predecessors Paul VI and John Paul II frequently pointed out the awful responsibility borne by terrorists, while at the same time condemning their senseless and deadly strategies. These are often the fruit of a tragic and disturbing nihilism which Pope John Paul II described in these words: "Those who kill by acts of terrorism actually despair of humanity, of life, of the future. In their view, everything is to be hated and destroyed". (9) Not only nihilism, but also religious fanaticism, today often labeled fundamentalism, can inspire and encourage terrorist thinking and activity. From the beginning, John Paul II was aware of the explosive danger represented by fanatical fundamentalism, and he condemned it unsparingly, while warning against attempts to impose, rather than to propose for others freely to accept, one's own convictions about the truth. As he wrote: "To try to impose on others by violent means what we consider to be the truth is an offence against the dignity of the human being, and ultimately an offence against God in whose image he is made". (10)

10. Looked at closely, nihilism and the fundamentalism of which we are speaking share an erroneous relationship to truth: the nihilist denies the very existence of truth, while the fundamentalist claims to be able to impose it by force. Despite their different origins and cultural backgrounds, both show a dangerous contempt for human beings and human life, and

In Truth, Peace (Continued on page 20)

DO THE WORKS OF THE SPIRIT, NOT THE WORKS OF THE FLESH

FATHER ROBERT ALTIER*

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 13, 2004 TWENTY-EIGHTH WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME
READING (GALATIANS 5:18-25) GOSPEL (ST. LUKE 11:42-46)

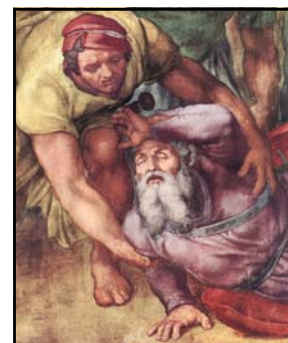
In the Gospel reading, we hear the distinction that certainly has been made many times, that is, the distinction between simply following the law and the love for God. If we are just simply going to follow the external precepts of the law, the Lord says that we are condemned because we are not loving God. He says that we have to do what the law requires but we have to do it with love. That is the primary point.

Now, more importantly for us, as opposed to the people of the Old Testament times, is that we are in Christ, we have been given the Holy Spirit, and the Blessed Trinity dwells within us. Therefore, we look at what Saint Paul says, and he says to us that there are two ways of living. You can live according to the flesh or you can live according to the Spirit. According to the flesh, what is going to happen is that there are going to be external observances of things but internally things are not going to be right. And if things are not right internally, they are going to be expressed externally in ways that are not good.

Saint Paul says that these are the things that follow from the works of the flesh: *“immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness, dissensions, factions, occasions of envy, drinking bouts, orgies, and the like.”* Now we can look down that list and we would say, “Well, thankfully, I don’t fall into all of those.” Whether we do them all was not the point because he says, *...and the like*. In other words, these are some examples of things that happen when we live according to the flesh. It does not mean we are doing them all, but it means that if we see any of those things within ourselves there is something we are doing that is not right. I suspect that if we look down that list again, we are all going to find one or two things that we probably fall into. That tells us that we are not letting the Holy Spirit guide us, that we are trying to control things, that we are saying “yes” to God on one level and saying “no” to Him on another level. That is the part that needs to change. And so as Saint Paul is telling the Galatians, *“If you’re going to try to live according to the law, this is what’s going to happen to you; but if you live according to the Spirit of God, then your life has to be changed.”*

Again, we can ask ourselves, “Are we living according to the Spirit?” If we are, all of the following should be in place: *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control*. Does that sound like you? If not, then we are not living entirely according to the Spirit of God, and that means there is something standing between God and us that needs to go. We may be following external observances and doing things right on one level, but again, it is the heart that is the problem. That is what needs to change.

We need to be willing to go to God and say to Him, “Change me. Do whatever You have to do. Get rid of whatever is standing in the way. Change my heart and transform me according to the Spirit so I can live according to the Spirit of Jesus Christ.” These are the things that Our Lord was about, and if they are not the things that we are about then we are not living the life of Jesus Christ. And if we are not doing that, then



THE CONVERSION
OF SAUL
(DETAIL)

Michelangelo

(1542)

* Fr. Robert Altier was ordained in 1989 and serves at St Agnes parish in St. Paul, MI. His parishioners are so impressed with his inspired sermons that they transcribe them and post them on their website www.desertvoice.org

Do the Works of the Spirit (Continued on page 20)

(Continued from page 19) ***Do the Works of the Spirit***

we are not living according to our baptismal vows and we are not living according to what it means to be a Christian person. So these are the things we need to work on.

Now it is not going to be a simple thing because some of these things are very deeply rooted within us. The devil has got his grip in there and he does not want to let go. So you need to understand what you are saying when you ask God to get rid of all the stuff that does not belong there and to replace it fully with the grace and the fruit and the work of the Spirit. It means we are going to be purified. It means we have to be willing to change. It means we are going to get crushed. These are things that most people do not like, which is exactly why we do not do them. But there is only one way that we are going to be able to get to this point of living according to the Spirit. It requires being purified and it requires a life of prayer. There is no other way, and the two are going to go together. If you pray, you will be purified; if you do not pray, the purifications are just going to be rejected. You are going to fight against them and they are going to make you angry because you are not looking to God.

We need to make sure we are deeply rooted in prayer so that we can become more like Christ, with Whom we are seeking union. And when we are seeking union with Christ in prayer, then as the purifications take place, even though they are not easy or fun, we will be able to accept them, we will be able to cooperate with them. We will see our weaknesses blatantly – they will come right to the fore and it will be pretty humiliating at times – yet it is precisely that which brings about the virtue in us. So if we are going to follow the Spirit, we need to live according to the Spirit; and it is the Spirit of Jesus Christ, not the spirit of the world, that we have to be following. There are only those two options. We need to look again at those lists and ask ourselves, “Which one do I fall under? Am I giving lip service to Jesus but following the spirit of the world? Or am I shunning the ways of the world and following the Spirit of Jesus Christ?” One or the other is where we are going to find ourselves. And I suspect, if we are like most, that we are going to find ourselves more immersed in the world than in Jesus Christ. So we know we have a little bit of work to do, but praise God for the insight and now pray for the grace to be able to do the work of Jesus Christ, the work that needs to be done in your heart and in your soul to transform you so that you will be able to live the life of Jesus Christ even in this world. †

(Continued from page 18) ***In Truth, Peace***

ultimately for God himself. Indeed, this shared tragic outcome results from a distortion of the full truth about God: nihilism denies God's existence and his provident presence in history, while fanatical fundamentalism disfigures his loving and merciful countenance, replacing him with idols made in its own image. In analyzing the causes of the contemporary phenomenon of terrorism, consideration should be given, not only to its political and social causes, but also to its deeper cultural, religious and ideological motivations.

11. In view of the risks which humanity is facing in our time, all Catholics in every part of the world have a duty to proclaim and embody ever more fully the "Gospel of Peace", and to show that acknowledgment of the full truth of God is the first, indispensable condition for consolidating the truth of peace. God is Love which saves, a loving Father who wants to see his children look upon one another as brothers and sisters, working responsibly to place their various talents at the service of the common good of the human family. God is the unfailing source of the hope which gives meaning to personal and community life. God, and God alone, brings to fulfillment every work of good and of peace. History has amply demonstrated that declaring war on God in order to eradicate him from human hearts only leads a fearful and impoverished humanity toward decisions which are ultimately futile. This realization must impel believers in Christ to become convincing witnesses of the God who is inseparably truth and love, placing themselves at the service of peace in broad cooperation with other Christians, the followers of other religions and with all men and women of good will.

12. Looking at the present world situation, we can note with satisfaction certain signs of hope in the work of building peace. I think, for example, of the decrease in the number of armed conflicts. Here we are speaking of a few, very tentative steps forward along the path of peace, yet ones which even now are able to hold out a future of greater serenity, particularly for the suffering people of Palestine, the land of Jesus, and for those living in some areas of Africa and Asia, who have waited for years for the positive conclusion of the ongoing processes of pacification and reconciliation. These are reassuring signs which need to be confirmed and consolidated by tireless cooperation and activity, above all on the part of the international community and its agencies charged with preventing conflicts and providing a peaceful solution to those in course.

In Truth, Peace (Continued on page 21)

(Continued from page 20) *In Truth, Peace*

13. All this must not, however, lead to a naive optimism. It must not be forgotten that, tragically, violent fratricidal conflicts and devastating wars still continue to sow tears and death in vast parts of the world. Situations exist where conflict, hidden like flame beneath ashes, can flare up anew and cause immense destruction. Those authorities who, rather than making every effort to promote peace, incite their citizens to hostility towards other nations, bear a heavy burden of responsibility: in regions particularly at risk, they jeopardize the delicate balance achieved at the cost of patient negotiations and thus help make the future of humanity more uncertain and ominous. What can be said, too, about those governments which count on nuclear arms as a means of ensuring the security of their countries? Along with countless persons of good will, one can state that this point of view is not only baneful but also completely fallacious. In a nuclear war there would be no victors, only victims. The truth of peace requires that all —whether those governments which openly or secretly possess nuclear arms, or those planning to acquire them— agree to change their course by clear and firm decisions, and strive for a progressive and concerted nuclear disarmament. The resources which would be saved could then be employed in projects of development capable of benefiting all their people, especially the poor.

14. In this regard, one can only note with dismay the evidence of a continuing growth in military expenditure and the flourishing arms trade, while the political and juridic process established by the international community for promoting disarmament is bogged down in general indifference. How can there ever be a future of peace when investments are still made in the production of arms and in research aimed at developing new ones? It can only be hoped that the international community will find the wisdom and courage to take up once more, jointly and with renewed conviction, the process of disarmament, and thus concretely ensure the right to peace enjoyed by every individual and every people. By their commitment to safeguarding the good of peace, the various agencies of the international community will regain the authority needed to make their initiatives credible and effective.

15. The first to benefit from a decisive choice for disarmament will be the poor countries, which rightly demand, after having heard so many promises, the concrete implementation of their right to development. That right was solemnly reaffirmed in the recent General Assembly of the United Nations Organization, which this year celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of its foundation. The Catholic Church, while confirming her confidence in this international body, calls for the institutional and operative renewal which would enable it to respond to the changed needs of the present time, characterized by the vast phenomenon of globalization. The United Nations Organization must become a more efficient instrument for promoting the values of justice, solidarity and peace in the world. For her part, the Church, in fidelity to the mission she has received from her Founder, is committed to proclaiming everywhere "the Gospel of peace". In the firm conviction that she offers an indispensable service to all those who strive to promote peace, she reminds everyone that, if peace is to be authentic and lasting, it must be built on the bedrock of the truth about God and the truth about man. This truth alone can create a sensitivity to justice and openness to love and solidarity, while encouraging everyone to work for a truly free and harmonious human family. The foundations of authentic peace rest on the truth about God and man.

16. At the conclusion of this Message, I would like to address a particular word to all believers in Christ, inviting them once again to be attentive and generous disciples of the Lord. When we hear the Gospel, dear brothers and sisters, we learn to build peace on the truth of a daily life inspired by the commandment of love. Every community should undertake an extensive process of education and witness aimed at making everyone more aware of the need for a fuller appreciation of the truth of peace. At the same time I ask for an increase of prayers, since peace is above all a gift of God, a gift to be implored incessantly. By God's help, our proclamation and witness to the truth of peace will be all the more convincing and illuminating. With confidence and filial abandonment let us lift up our eyes to Mary, Mother of the Prince of Peace. At the beginning of this New Year, let us ask her to help all God's People, wherever they may be, to work for peace and to be guided by the light of the truth that sets man free (cf. *Jn* 8:32). Through Mary's intercession, may all mankind grow in esteem for this fundamental good and strive to make it ever more present in our world, and, in this way, to offer a safer and more serene future to generations yet to come.

From the Vatican, 8 December 2005.

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

1. *Appeal to the Heads of the Warring Peoples* (1 August 1917): AAS 9 (1917), 423.
2. No. 77.
3. *Ibid.*, 78.
4. John Paul II, *Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace*, 9.
5. Cf. John Paul II, *Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations* (5 October 1995), No. 3.
6. *De Civitate Dei*, XIX, 13.
7. No. 79.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Message for the 2002 World Day of Peace*, 6.
10. *Ibid.* †

THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

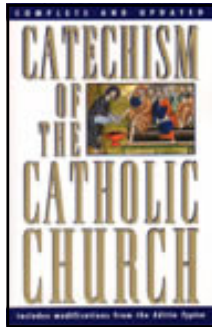
PART TWO: THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

SECTION TWO: "I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT"

CHAPTER TWO: THE SACRAMENTS OF HEALING

ARTICLE 4: THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE & RECONCILIATION

V. THE MANY FORMS OF PENANCE IN CHRISTIAN LIFE



CATECHISM CORNER

1434 The interior penance of the Christian can be expressed in many and various ways. Scripture and the Fathers insist above all on three forms, *fasting, prayer, and almsgiving*, which express conversion in relation to oneself, to God, and to others. Alongside the radical purification brought about by Baptism or martyrdom they cite as means of obtaining forgiveness of sins: efforts at reconciliation with one's neighbor, tears of repentance, concern for the salvation of one's neighbor, the intercession of the saints, and the practice of charity "which covers a multitude of sins."

1435 Conversion is accomplished in daily life by gestures of reconciliation, concern for the poor, the exercise and defense of justice and right, by the admission of faults to one's brethren, fraternal correction, revision of life, examination of conscience, spiritual direction, acceptance of suffering, endurance of persecution for the sake of righteousness. Taking up one's cross each day and following Jesus is the surest way of penance.

1436 *Eucharist and Penance.* Daily conversion and penance find their source and nourishment in the Eucharist, for in it is made present the sacrifice of Christ which has reconciled us with God. Through the Eucharist those who live from the life of Christ are fed and strengthened. "It is a remedy to free us from our daily faults and to preserve us from mortal sins."

1437 Reading Sacred Scripture, praying the Liturgy of the Hours and the Our Father - every sincere act of worship or devotion revives the spirit of conversion and repentance within us and contributes to the forgiveness of our sins.

1438 *The seasons and days of penance* in the course of the liturgical year (Lent, and each Friday in memory of the death of the Lord) are intense moments of the Church's penitential practice. These times are particularly appropriate for spiritual exercises, penitential liturgies, pilgrimages as signs of penance, voluntary self-denial such as fasting and almsgiving, and fraternal sharing (charitable and missionary works).

1439 *The process of conversion and repentance* was described by Jesus in the parable of the prodigal son, the center of which is the merciful father: the fascination of illusory freedom, the abandonment of the father's house; extreme misery in which the son finds himself after squandering his fortune; his deep humiliation at finding himself obliged to feed swine, and still worse, at wanting to feed on the husks the pigs ate; his reflection on all he has lost; his repentance and decision to declare himself guilty before his father; the journey back; the father's generous welcome; the father's joy - all these are characteristic of the process of conversion. The beautiful robe, the ring, and the festive banquet are symbols of that new life - pure, worthy, and joyful - of anyone who returns to God and to the bosom of his family, which is the Church. Only the heart of Christ who knows the depths of his Father's love could reveal to us the abyss of his mercy in so simple and beautiful a way. ✚



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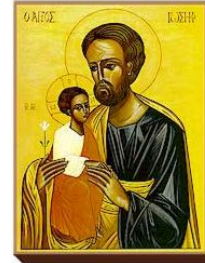
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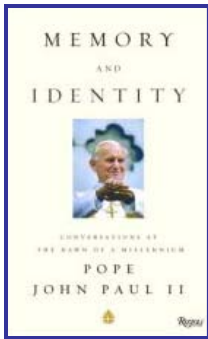
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When the world remembers Pope John Paul II, what themes from his papacy will come to mind? In this philosophical meditation, the Holy Father reflects on values he deems critical to the destiny of humankind, with freedom and the value of life underlying 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

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